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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VOLUME II

CHAPTER SIX

TRADITIONAL TRANSITIONS

6.1 Introduction

One of the central principles of both British political parties between 1945 and the 1970s was a commitment to 'full-employment'. The 1979 Conservtive Government was the first not to make full employment one of its policy objectives (*cf* Edgell and Duke 1991 : 9). Though it was never universal, the principle of full employment served to establish the parameters within which the traditional transition from school and dependent status to employment and independent adult status was achieved. In 1959, for example, most young people in the designated age range of the Youth Service had jobs (Smith 1991 : 5). In the 1960s, it was possible for sociologists to produce studies of post-school transitions with such titles as *Into Work* (Carter 1966) and *Adolescent Needs: The Transition from School to Work* (Maizels 1970). The traditional transition from school into primary (adult) occupations was largely the norm for most school leavers in Britain until the mid-1970s. In 1975, for example, 60% of 16 year olds went from school directly into employment; by 1987, this number had shrunk to 18% (D.E.S. 1988).

The established transition routes forged in the post-war political consensus and prosperity held until the sudden quadrupling of oil prices in the mid-1970s (MacDonald and Coffield 1991 : 1). The resulting economic recession combined with changes in technology produced a near collapse of manufacturing industry, wiping out substantial areas of the traditional youth labour market (Ashton and Maguire 1983). The national economic and subsequent employment crisis had significant local consequences 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.

These general trends were acutely reflected amongst my study participants in several respects, most notably in the propensity towards unemployment amongst school leavers in Hartingleigh. More tangentially, the trends were similarly reflected in the severely restricted numbers of study participants who had secured a traditional transition route from school into primary adult occupations. In 1985-86, during the 'third phase' of preliminary sampling and fieldwork, I was able to establish that of the nine fully employed participants in my study group (three female, six male) only three, two female (Denise Weldon and Deirdre Sharp) and one male (John Conleigh), had successfully secured full-time adult employment upon school leaving. This despite the overwhelming desire expressed by the majority of my study group in their 1980 Community Project Questionnaire for paid work following school leaving. This last point conforms to attitudinal evidence provided by the recent ESCR 16-19 Initiative (Banks *et al* 1992):

> "Despite widespread efforts to establish a 'training culture', there was still evidence that young people wanted to take the quickest possible route into employment ... the desire of British working class teenagers to leave school and find a job seemed overwhelming" (Abrams 1992 : 2-3).

The transition from dependent statuses, associated with residence in the parental home and reliance on parents for material support, to an adult independent status has, among working class youth in general, been closely correlated with getting a job. For the three participants in my study group who had successfully secured post-school transitions to employment careers, there was a notable complementary 'domestic career' transition into adult roles and statuses. Thus, the notion of 'career' can be defined " ... not only in the narrow sense of entry into and progress through the labour market, but also in the wider sense of entry into adult domestic life" (Banks *et al* 1992 ; 8).

This traditional domestic career transition, typically involved a life-course of courtship, engagement, departure from the parental home, marriage and parenthood. The success of the traditional domestic career trajectory may be seen as predicated upon the income derived from secure employment, a regular wage providing the financial basis not only

for the traditional working class post school, leisure and courtship rituals of 'going out', but also ensuring the material foundation for future planning with regard to traditional relationship patterns such as 'saving up' for marriage, to provide for a home, and to start a family. In the following section I will draw out some of the critical career points in this traditional transition route to adulthood, the most important of which is securing stable employment upon school leaving.

6.2 Into Work: It's not what you know but who you know

The common sense view of job finding held by some of my study participants was based on a fatalistic and almost conspiratorial opinion of labour market processes, a labour market from which they believed themselves excluded through lack of appropriate 'contacts'. Often this view was expressed in terms of, 'it's not what you know but who you know'. Lack of qualifications or skills were not the issue as far as these young people were concerned; like 'Yosser Hughes' in Alan Bleasedale's trilogy of plays, *Boys from the Blackstuff*, they had intrinsic belief in their own indigenous capacities: 'I could do that, gissa job'. On more than one occasion this sentiment was expressed to me during my youthwork practice when, for example, unsuccessfully attempting construction work in the adventure playground, or simply 'hanging about', participants would, with exaggerated incredulity, exclaim, "how much are they paying you for doing that!". In a general sense, participants held the view that their unemployment was a consequence of lack of 'friends in high places' (and Margaret Thatcher's characterisation of the unemployed as 'moaning minnies' (quoted in More and Howell 1986 : 13) lends some support to their viewpoint). The common sense view of labour market processes is to some extent substantiated by my research which indicates that all three study participants who contrived to secure post-school transitions into jobs had done so as a result of informal family contacts. The significance of these informal job-finding methods for the three participants who had secured employment upon school leaving are examined in the following section.

John Conleigh: John's transition into the world of adult employment was facilitated by his older brother Martin who, at the time of John's school leaving in Spring 1980, was employed as a 'line foreman' in a large footwear manufacturing and retailing concern. The footwear manufacturers is located on an industrial estate some twenty five miles from Hartingleigh in the extreme south of the Greater Manchester conurbation.

John was originally contacted early in 1980 when he was interviewed by Tony Boyle, one of my co-youthworkers during the Project's 1980 youth survey. At that time, John was living in the parental home described by Tony as a 'tidy terrace', in the owner-occupied terraced houses in the Canton Street area of Hartingleigh. Also resident in the family home were John's older brother and sister, Martin and Sue, as well as their mother who was partially infirm as a result of suffering several 'strokes'. John's father had died of cancer in 1977 when John was thirteen and, as a result of his mother's inability to work, the responsibility for providing the family income had fallen to the two older siblings.

However, following his engagement in 1979, Martin, John's older brother, was anxious to leave the family home in order to move into a house he had bought and was renovating in preparation for his future marriage. Towards this end, Martin was especially keen to assist his younger brother in securing suitable employment when he left school, to ensure the family's income would be maintained after his departure from the parental home. Martin had been employed in the footwear manufacturers for over twelve years by the time John was approaching school leaving age and, as a result of a series of promotions, held a fairly senior shop-floor role supervising part of the production process.

It was Martin who initially alerted John to the possibility of gaining a training apprenticeship within the shoe factory, a route Martin had taken into employment himself following school leaving in 1968. Following this initial 'tip off' from his older brother, John was interviewed in March 1980 for one of three available training vacancies along with 'about sixty' other prospective school leavers. Prior to John's interview however,

Martin had identified the personnel manager as the person who would be responsible for conducting the interview and had sought to 'pull strings' on his younger brother's behalf. As a result of his informal contacts with personnel staff, a consequence of his supervisory shop-floor role, Martin was able to intercede, putting in a "good word in John's favour". John's interview was consequently successful and he started the training apprenticeship in April 1980 just two days after prematurely leaving school; initially travelling to and from his workplace with Martin, in his brother's car.

Deirdre Sharp: Deirdre's transition from school into adult employment actually began when she was fourteen, two years before she had left school, when she worked as a 'Saturday girl' in a large, "internationally famous", City Centre "unisex hair-studio - don't call it a hairdressers". Again, informal family networks were responsible for gaining Deirdre a tentative foothold in the adult job market as a result of the intervention of her older sister, Carole, who was at that time employed as a fully qualified stylist in the same salon. It was Carole who initially arranged for her younger sister to be paid a nominal wage for her Saturday job of 'helping out' in the hair-studio. In her role as Saturday girl, Deirdre was encouraged to prepare 'clients' for their appointments by providing them with protective gowns, serving coffee, and later shampooing hair in preparation for the stylists. She was also given various tasks around the salon, including cleaning and running errands.

When she was nearing school leaving age, Deirdre was approached by the regional manageress in charge of the Manchester studio and offered a place under their four-year, internationally acknowledged and accredited, 'in-house' training scheme. This offer was based on the enthusiasm she had displayed for the work as a result of her Saturday job and partially as a consequence of her older sister's intercession. Deirdre started 'on the job' training immediately upon school leaving in Summer 1980. In later interviews, she was keen to emphasise the importance of her sister's role and influence on her choice of career. Carole had supplied Deirdre with the initial introduction into her future place of work, had

exercised some leverage to secure her training, and was subsequently able to provide support and advice during Deirdre's period as a trainee stylist.

Denise Weldon: Denise's post-school transition to employment, as a trainee dental nurse assistant, was the product of a considerable degree of informal influence which her mother was able to exert on her behalf. Much of this persuasion was exercised upon her daughter's prospective employers, even before the vacancy had been advertised in the regional press. The details of Denise's transition from school to work are examined in depth in her case study (Section 6.6.3).

Each of the three trajectories into post-school employment was the direct consequence of informal job-finding methods; a product of family influences and social networks. Several researchers have similarly noted the significance of these factors particularly for the transition of young working class women into employment (Callender 1987 : 41-43; Griffin 1985 : 88-95; Wallace 1987 : 58). According to Callender, for example: "Those women who succeeded [in finding work] were highly reliant upon other people through their social networks for information about jobs and for recommendations" (1987 : 41). Griffin emphasises the role of families in the informal job-finding process: "The families of young working class women played an important role in their job finding through informal contacts in local workplaces (1985 : 88).

Griffin also stresses the significance of an adult, preferably a relative, who is able to provide a character reference to prospective employers (*ibid*). Having a relative who could 'vouch for' the young job-seeker was significant in each of the three traditional career transitions I have examined in this section. The emphasis in Wallace's (1987) study is upon the ways in which local networks and family contacts were alerted even before a young person had left school, again an influential factor in the three transitions I have explored. Wallace's study makes the final point that in a 'tight labour market': "Who you know is better than what you know" (1987 : 58).

Such local networks and family contacts are crucially dependent upon access to the primary (adult) labour market. For the three study participants who had secured post-school transitions to work, contacts were derived either from parental employment as in Denise's case, or from the employment of older members of the family, as was the case with both Deirdre and John. What is significant in each of the three transitions is that family members had been in full-time employment for a number of years and therefore had the necessary informal contacts to secure access to jobs for other members of the family. As such, the prolonged employment of family members resulted in the ability to confer labour market advantages through informal workplace contacts.

6.3 The 'Respectable' Working Class

> "One of the most fertile grounds of intra-class differentiation has been the whole repertoire of 'respectability' ... the rough-respectable division has been firmly lodged in the visible signs of the home, street, neighbourhood and patterns of consumption" (Clarke 1979 : 246).

Each of the three study participants who had secured the traditional transition into employment were further distinguished from the majority of my study group in that they were drawn from 'respectable' working class families (Jackson and Marsden 1972). These were families who lived in the small pockets of owner-occupied terraced houses of Hartingleigh. Both Denise and Deirdre, for example, were from families who lived in the Kings Road area of Hartingleigh, the district locally considered to be the most 'respectable' part of the ward. In the detail of Denise Weldon's case study, I have sought to examine the source of this distinction and its implications for my youthwork practice (Section 6.6.2). John Conleigh's family lived in the Canton Street area of terraced housing. The families from both of these areas of owner-occupied terraced houses can, in general, be distinguished from the majority of families from the council owned estates of Hartingleigh in terms of the labour market position held by their main income providers. Allen and Hamnett (1991) have recently explored the connections between housing and labour markets.

The owner-occupied terraced houses in the early 1980s contained at least one family income provider who was drawn from the skilled or semi-skilled sectors of the labour force (Allen and Hamnett 1991). Unlike the majority of families from Hartingleigh's council estates, whose main income providers were generally drawn from the more vulnerable unqualified and unskilled sections of the local labour force, the income providers from the owner-occupied terraces had marketable skills and employment contacts which had enabled them to exercise some leverage within the job market. Despite the recession and its subsequent toll of local redundancies and unemployment, the families of the three study participants who had secured work following school leaving had maintained or improved their positions within the local labour market.

Within these families there was a high level of employment activity and work commitment. For example, both of Denise Weldon's parents, as well as her older sister, Cheryl, had been in full-time employment for a considerable amount of time in skilled or semi-skilled occupations. In the late 1970s, this income security and mobility had enabled them to completely modernise, extend, and refurbish their home in the Kings Road area. Similarly, both the parents of Deirdre Sharp, her two older brothers and older sister, Carole, were employed in skilled or semi-skilled occupations - as were the income providers within John Conleigh's family. The employment history of Deirdre Sharp's family illustrates the level of labour market activity typically evident within these families. It also provides some insight into the influential respectable working class ethos of 'getting on' (Brown 1987) through a traditionally conscientious employment commitment, formative influences within the family backgrounds of all three study participants who had secured post-school transitions into work.

Deirdre's father had been an army chauffeur for the "top brass" until 1976 when ill-health had forced his 'pensionable' retirement from army service. Nevertheless, following his service 'retirement', what he described as being "invalided out", he continued to work as a civilian, though only in a 'limited' capacity as full-time employment held negative

implications for his pension entitlement. However, Deirdere's father was keen to stress both his desire and ability to work, and, when pressed, confessed to using the skills and experience he had acquired in the army to work both as an 'off the books' (Mattera 1985) taxi driver, and motor mechanic, in a small repair workshop he ran with his eldest sons. The income derived from these occupations supplemented his army pension and contributed to the family's standard of living, which he described as being "quite well off".

Deirdre's mother was employed full-time in one of Manchester's largest commercial hotels, where she had worked for almost ten years. In this period, she had advanced from the position of chambermaid to the role of 'domestic supervisor', her task being to organise and deploy domestic staff within the hotel, including the cleaners, chambermaids, etc. Both Deirdre's parents were eager to emphasise the self-evident advantages that can be accrued from "hard work and application". According to Deirdre's father, for example: "Hard graft is good for the soul". Deirdre's mother laid greater stress on the material, rather than spiritual, rewards which could be derived from regular wage earning: "We've always been able to afford meat; every Sunday we have a roast and all the trimmings ...". Apart from being able to afford roast meat on Sundays, the family also owned their own home, ran two cars, and enjoyed holidays 'abroad' every year. In fact, as Deirdre's mother testified: "Life's been good to us, we want for nothing".

Deirdre was from a large family of four brothers and two sisters. Thus apart from the domestic background of parental employment, her two eldest brothers were also both 'self-employed'. They ran a small 'motor repair workshop' as a 'family' business, in concert with their father. Although they had both left the parental home by the time Deirdre started work in 1980, her brothers had, nevertheless, been in full-time work and resident in the parental home during much of Deirdre's secondary education. Similarly, Deirdre's older sister, Carole, had been in work since 1972, and had been resident in the parental home until her marriage in 1976. In the previous section, I examined the significance of Carole's workplace intercession which had facilitated Deirdre's transition to employment in the hair-

studio; in the following section I explore the importance of Carole's influence and career trajectory in providing a role model for Deirdre's employment, and life-style, aspirations.

Thus the three study participants who had made the traditional post-school transition into employment were from the minority of families in Hartingleigh who had moved up "the benign spiral of the securely employed" (White 1985 : 9). Families whose members' prolonged employment and income mobility had produced "changes in consumption patterns" (Mann 1992 : 104) and home ownership; and whose informal workplace contacts had conferred labour market advantages on job-seeking siblings.

Moreover these were families which were characterised by members who were strongly committed to the work ethic as a self-evident means of individual social mobility. The young job-seekers from these three families formed attitudes to training and employment against a domestic background, and class-cultural frame of reference (Brown 1987) whose orientations were, like the 'citizens' in Jenkins's (1983) study, " ... the apotheosis of the respectable working class ideals of sobriety, independence and self-advancement" (1983 : 42)

6.4 Getting On : Getting Out

In the detail of the three previously discussed traditional post-school trajectories I have sought to highlight the important advantages 'respectable' working class families can bestow on family members seeking work in a restricted job market. The factors that were significant include: secure housing status; a domestic background of commitment to employment as a source of self-advancement; a family history of members' prolonged employment; and the consequent ability to confer labour-market advantages through informal workplace contacts. These were the factors that distinguished the three participants in my study who had successfully secured the traditional post-school transition into employment from the vast majority who had not.

A further factor which is germane to the discussion of dissimilarity between the three traditional post-school transitionaries and the majority of study participants can be explored with reference to Brown's (1987) analysis of working class 'frames of reference'. Brown argues that there are among the working class at least three different ways of 'being' or 'becoming' an adult. These represent different 'focal concerns' or 'frames of reference' which structure identity and social orientation (1987 : 34-36). The three frames of reference outlined by Brown are: 'getting in', to the working class culture, identified with the 'alienated orientation' of the anti-school culture; 'getting on', in working class-cultural terms, identified with the 'alienated instrumental orientation' of the 'ordinary kids' of his study title; and 'getting out' of the working class cultural context, identified with the normative or normative-instrumental orientation' of the most 'incorporated' of working class pupils (Brown 1987 : 104-106).

6.4.1 John Conleigh : Getting On

For John Conleigh, a family background of older siblings who laid great stress on the significance and necessity of employment ensured a 'getting on' frame of reference of work commitment. Both his older brother, Martin, and his older sister, Sue, who in 1980 were still resident in the parental home, had been in full-time employment for a number of years. John's brother had been employed in the footwear manufacturers, referred to earlier, since school leaving in 1968, and his sister in clerical work since 1974. Both Martin and Sue were influential in securing John's sense of obligation towards employment, partly through example, but also as a result of emphasising its necessity after their father's premature death in 1977. As a result of his mother's infirmity, a shared onus of inescapable moral responsibility for maintaining a family income was stressed by John's older siblings. These factors were to ensure that John's transition to work took on a wider symbolic significance, a measure of his "social and moral worth" (Brown 1987 : 106), characteristic of the 'getting on' frame of reference.

By 1982, John had come to view his training apprenticeship in negative terms. In particular he was disillusioned with the quality of training he was receiving especially the emphasis on 'mass production' rather than the craft skills he had understood would form a greater component of his workload. As a result, he came to view his employment in the 'alienated instrumental' terms Brown characterises as being the dominant focal concern of the 'getting on' frame of reference. However, this was not the instrumentalism that has been explored by industrial sociologists (Goldthorpe *et al* 1969; Blackburn and Mann 1979), that is, instrumentalism as a minimal commitment for the maximum material rewards, but rather in terms of John's willingness to "stick with the job" rather than risk unemployment and the moral condemnation of his family, at a time of decline in local occupational opportunities.

Sennett and Cobb (1977) have argued that there is no more important task in life than establishing a sense of personal dignity and moral worth. It was this factor above all others that underpinned John's 'getting on' frame of reference and consequent attitude to his training apprenticeship. The work was not what he had hoped it would be. Nevertheless, he was assured a sense of personal moral validity in that he had at least got a job. For it was through employment, in the context of the necessity of providing income for his partially disabled mother, that John was able to demonstrate his moral worth both to himself and to his family. This aspect of John's employment transition conforms to Brown's research findings in that the 'ordinary kids' of his study attributed unemployment to moral failing, a lack of willingness to make an effort: "Being unemployed is interpreted as a moral descent among the ordinary kids in jobs" (1987 : 168). This may be seen as part of a general climate "that has put the burden of blame on those who are unable to defend themselves" (Braun 1979 : 53); fostered by a largely hostile media and the "politics of interpreting unemployment" (Seaton 1986), which focuses on "personal characteristics very much more than any shortage of jobs in the economy" (Youthaid 1981 : 12).

Aside from the moral imperatives which guided the alienated instrumentality of his 'getting on' frame of reference, John also viewed his training as a way of making progress in working class-cultural terms. Although he was unhappy with aspects of his apprenticeship, he did recognise that it offered some potential for shop-floor 'promotion' when the training was complete. This was a route to 'getting on' which his brother had previously charted, and which had demonstrably "paid dividends" in both financial terms and also in terms of improved working conditions. As John asserted:

> "Instead of being on the [production] line, you're doing other things ... driving a stacker [truck] bringing whatever it is, like soles or wedges, what ever, to the [production] line ... just making sure it's ticking over like ... the [production] line's a head crusher ... you could die of boredom."

The potential for shop floor promotion offered John a means to "social advancement within the working class" (Brown 1987 : 106), and, as such, the 'alienated instrumental orientation' to his training apprenticeship offered both a moral and practical strategy for 'getting on' and " ... living a dignified life over which [he] feels to be in command" (Brown 1987 : 106).

6.4.2 Denise and Deirdre : Getting Out

According to Brown, the 'getting out' frame of reference, identified with the more 'respectable' members of the working class, requires a crucial transformation of social identity if 'getting out' is to be achieved. Within Brown's study, this transformation is mediated through a normative, or normative-instrumental, orientation to the school with academic success providing the credentials for class mobility. However, my research indicates that employment experience and 'success' may similarly provide a significant social domain wherein class-cultural identity can either be reinforced through 'getting on', or transformed through 'getting out'. Both Denise Weldon and Deirdre Sharp's employment and domestic career transitions epitomise the 'getting out' frame of reference of the respectable working class, whilst John Conleigh's transition can be understood as 'getting on' in working class-cultural terms.

In Denise Weldon's case study, it is clear that her employment biography as well as her domestic career trajectory produced the necessary changes in her social identity which enabled her to chart a course out of her working class-cultural origins. To some extent, her mother provided significant influences towards the development of her daughter's 'getting out' frame of reference and these are influences I have sought to draw out in the detail of her case study (Section 6.6).

For Deirdre Sharp, her commitment to employment in the hair-studio was never in doubt. The glamour and prestige associated with working in an internationally famous conglomerate with "branches throughout the United Kingdom, Europe and in the USA" was paramount in the development of her 'getting out' frame of reference. In this, she had been greatly influenced by her older sister who had been employed in the hair-studio since the opening of its City-centre franchise in the early 1970s. Carole had trained as a hairdresser from leaving school, taking courses at Marton College of Further Education for three years, before starting work in a small family hairdressers in Newmarch Heath in 1972. When the City-centre studio opened, Carole was among the first intake of stylists recruited and her success in the work subsequently took her to Paris and New York for styling exhibitions and competitions. Carole eventually married one of her hairdressing clients, 'a successful businessman', and had moved out of the parental home in 1976 to a detached house in Withington, a residential area in the south of the City.

Thus Deirdre was sufficiently enamoured by her older sister's career and life-style to seek to emulate it, Carole providing the role model, as well as workplace contacts and influence, that enabled her younger sister to foster realisable ambitions about her future prospects.

Both Deirdre Sharp and Denise Weldon shared similar formative influences in the developmental progression of their employment and domestic career transitions. In Denise's case, her mother exercised considerable influence to facilitate her career trajectory

and residential independence. In Deirdre's case, her sister supplied the informal contacts and role model to enable her to begin the process of upward social mobility. These were formative influences they shared which produced the necessary change in social identity required to allow for a 'getting out' frame of reference to be realised.

During their respective training periods, both Deirdre and Denise's initial training salaries were not sufficient to provide a realistic financial foundation for 'getting out'. Nevertheless, their weekly incomes were, with 'overtime' in Denise's case and 'tips' in Deirdre's case, sometimes up to three times the weekly training allowance (£25 in 1983) of many of their contemporaries in Hartingleigh whose post-school transitions had typically placed them on to government inspired training schemes. Moreover, there is evidence to suggest that 'getting out' for girls depends to a larger extent upon employment which provides the trappings and appearance of 'respectability and upward mobility' (McRobbie 1978; Gaskell 1983). According to Brown, the 'getting out' orientation is developed by those who " ... view their future as ... occupationally and socially distinct from the majority of their ... neighbours and peers who live in the working class neighbourhoods (1987 : 105).

Further factors which distinguished the employment career transitions of Deirdre and Denise from their contemporaries in Hartingleigh, even those who would make an 'extended' or 'protracted (Banks *et al* 1992, Furlong 1992; Roberts 1987) transition into typically unskilled, jobs, can best be understood in terms of their working environments and the people they worked with. For both girls, their working environments, including the people they worked with or encountered, were to provide the appearance of upward mobility, reinforcing a view of their futures as 'occupationally and socially distinct' from their neighbours and peers, a prerequisite for 'getting out'.

In the first dental practice she worked in, Denise's environment was a neonomian blend of hospital and 'Habitat', a tasteful combination of white tiles, pitch-pine, and indoor palms;

a working environment which included the semi-medicalised adornment of an *ersatz* nurses uniform, and predominantly middle class colleagues and patients. Similarly, for Deirdre, it was a spacious, modernistic, multi-level, open plan, 'hair-studio', with smoked glass windows, wall-to-wall quadrophonic music and 'glamorous clients' who could afford the "fucking thirty quid for a bleedin' poxy haircut", as Maz, one of the long-term unemployed participants in my study, had incredulously proclaimed on reading the tariff outside the studio. Moreover, it was a clientele that included professional footballers, fashion models and northern television soap-opera 'stars' who, though they might not have achieved it, like the staff (or 'hair-designers' as they preferred to be known), at least affected the pretensions of urbane sophistication. It was these working environments, and the influences the girls derived from their experiences within them, that further served to reinforce their 'getting out' frame of reference. In McRobbie's words: "The width of experience of these girls is bound to be much wider than that of the youth club girls ... simply because their material horizons are much broader" (1981 : 101).

6.4.3 Getting On, Getting Out : Summary

The significance of introducing the concept of working class frames of reference into this analysis of traditional post-school transitions is that they capture the participants' existential sense of *Being in the World* (Binswanger 1963). Occupational identity is a key to understanding part of the process of transition. However, the attitudes, values and conduct of those like Denise, Deirdre and John who have been fortunate enough to secure a traditional transition route into adult employment have not been invented from nothing. They are the historical product of the shared social and occupational experiences of working class people and are imbued with social significance and convey varying degrees of social status: "They draw upon a fund of experience built into their lives ... and built up historically within working class communities (Giddens 1986 : 299).

Occupational identities like 'getting on' or 'getting out' are situated at the respectable end of a social and moral continuum between the 'rough' and 'respectable' working class.

They are part of the commonly available stock of cultural resources which people in the same class location use to order their social and occupational identity and make sense of their changing life histories and social situations. 'Getting on' and 'getting out' are formed out of cultural resources such as employment commitment, a notion of work as a source of self-advancement, out of family histories of prolonged employment and the consequent ability to bestow social and labour-market advantages. The frames of reference of Deirdre, Denise, and John, 'getting on, getting out', represent a cultural reproduction of the social and moral divisions within Hartingleigh's working class. However, such divisions are crucially predicated on performance in the job-market, which ultimately translates itself into social divisions between families in work, 'the respectable', and families without work, 'the rough'.

Although there are similarities between the 'getting on, getting out' working class frames of reference and those of the lower middle class, deferred gratification, sobriety, independent self-advancement, etc., these are integral parts of the available stock of cultural resources in working class communities. Moreover, they appear to have extensive historical antecedents (Willmott 1966; Ashton and Field 1976; Bell and Newby 1971; Mann 1992; Hargreaves 1967; Lacey 1970). This is not to deny the similarities, but to insist that cultural formations such as working class respectability exist at the blurred edges of class boundaries. The respectable working class, utilising cultural resources such as 'getting on' or 'getting out', may be better equipped for social mobility than their 'rough' counterparts, but " ... if so, it is largely on indigenous working class principles and practices that they draw" (Jenkins 1983 : 42).

6.5 Domestic Careers : Traditional Transitions

6.5.1 Introduction

For the three study participants who had secured the traditional post-school transition into employment, their 'getting on, getting out' frames of reference were reinforced through income acquisition, enhanced social and leisure opportunities, and a general expansion of

material, social and cognitive horizons. Reinforced social opportunity was translated into a concomitant traditional domestic career transition into adulthood. This traditional domestic trajectory into adult roles and statuses typically involved a process of 'going out', courtship, leaving home, engagement, marriage, parenthood, and home ownership. Central to this process was the financial independence provided by the post-school transition to work. Secure employment supplied the financial foundations upon which stable adult roles and identities were constructed.

6.5.2 Going Out

All three study participants were in receipt of fairly limited training incomes during the early period of their employment. John's initial training wage of £36 (gross) was nevertheless double that of many of his benefit-dependent contemporaries in Hartingleigh whose incomes were derived from the basic supplementary benefit rate of £16.85 (in 1982). Deirdre and Denise earned even more than John. Deirdre's initial gross monthly salary was approximately £175 and Denise's £185 and all three were to more than double their basic incomes over the next four years. Moreover, all three participants were afforded the opportunity to augment their basic income through working 'overtime', and in Denise's case through 'tips'. Deirdre's tips from attending clients in the hair-studio could at certain times, for example during the Christmas period, exceed her actual salary. On one or two memorable occasions, she recalled receiving extremely generous gratuities from clients:

> "There was an Arab who used to come in every week. He was a Prince ... no really ... a real one ... he had a 'Rolls' and a 'minder' ... he used to give me twenty quid every time he came in and once I got a 'tenner' {off a professional footballer] but he was really drunk."

At this stage of their career transitions, though generally not excessive, their basic incomes were stable and regular and afforded them the opportunity to plan social outings and to 'go out' to enjoy the range of commercial leisure provision available to young people in the City. Travelling to Manchester City Centre to go out to the cinema, the

disco's or the video arcades further distinguished them from many of their unemployed contemporaries in Hartingleigh, whose leisure mobility was often restricted through lack of income. Although John and Denise also used the facilities within the developing Youth and Community Project, particularly in their early post-school years, the social divisions within Hartingleigh's young working class (examined in detail in Denise Weldon's case study) resulted in them and their friends frequently being subjected to hostile verbal abuse and (as was the case with Denise on one occasion) physical assault (see Section 6.6.2).

What is discernible amongst the three study participants' early patterns of post-school sociability is a pattern of 'going out' of the local community; a pattern of workplace experiences, contacts, and friendships increasingly removing them from the social networks and leisure provision of their local community; a pattern of social and recreational contact derived through their work that would in each case eventually lead to courtship and then marriage; a broadening of social opportunities and horizons that would result in residential mobility and home ownership. I have examined this pattern in detail in Denise Weldon's case study (Section 6.6). Similar trends can be discerned in the early stages of Deirdre and John's domestic career transitions presented in the following sections.

6.5.3 Deirdre Sharp

Deirdre did not avail herself of facilities within the Youth and Community Project. Instead she quickly developed friendships in and through her workplace and developed a pattern of recreation that involved 'going out' to the wine bars, clubs, and commercial disco's in the City Centre. In particular, she developed close friendships with three young women in the hair-studio who, like Deirdre, were also trainees at various stages of their four year apprenticeships. The four, including Denise, were in turn socially affiliated to a larger group of twelve young men and women who were the hair-studio's fully qualified 'hair-designers'. Despite the official veneer of informality amongst the hair-studio employees, there existed a subtle hierarchy, based on seniority; among the trainees, because she was

'last in', Deirdre was, in particular, at the bottom of the sacerdotal order. However, Deirdre was able to largely transcend this informal structure as a consequence of her sister's venerable position within it.

Deirdre quickly fitted into the pattern of 'informal' sociability that the hair-studio employees had evolved over time, a pattern that had been established long before she had started working on a full-time basis. This informal post-work recreation typically involved hair-studio employees dropping into 'Champers' at the end of the working day. 'Champers' is an upmarket wine bar situated within the same fashionable area of the City Centre as the hair-studio. The routine of sociability included first and second year trainees being bought a bar meal and a drink (usually one of the more extravagant 'cocktails' that were fashionable at the time) by more senior employees, and the group as a whole would spend the early part of the evening together 'talking shop' and generally 'unwinding'. These were occasions when news or gossip obtained from 'celebrity clients' about other celebrity clients would be exchanged, which TV personality was having an affair with whom, and so on. It was also a time when 'specials' were assigned to hair-studio employees by the receptionists and(or) regional manageress.

The 'specials' were special contracts or prestige assignments undertaken by the hair-studio. Sometimes these were contracts with fashion agencies or television film companies. During the third and fourth years of her apprenticeship, as part of her training, Deirdre was called upon to accompany and assist hair-designers with a 'special'. This involved, for example, accompanying and assisting hair-designers allocated to attend the hair of fashion models involved in a fashion show or photographic session. Occasionally, she would assist hair-designers contracted to fashion the hair of members of the acting profession involved in the production of a television film. This particular 'special' would involve a trip to the television studios of the film's location set. The 'specials' took her out of the hair-studio for an average of one day in every working month and, apart from offering "glamour, excitement and experience" in her work, also afforded

the opportunity to earn extra 'overtime'. Moreover, three or four times a year, Deirdre would be provided with another 'special' and the opportunity to travel to London to accompany and assist senior employees, including her sister Carole, who were participating in hair-styling competitions and exhibitions. These latter trips away from the daily routine of the hair-studio involved overnight stays in prestigious hotels and were "all expenses paid". Such examples of glamour, excitement and variety in her work were emphasised by Deirdre as being instrumental in providing her with a "taste of the good life".

After a couple of hours spent socialising in 'Champers', gossiping about media celebrities and television personalities, and allocating the following days 'special' assignments, the larger group of hair-studio employees would generally disperse to other places of entertainment, restaurants, clubs, and upmarket disco's, or simply travel home. A smaller group, including Denise and the other trainees, often stayed in the City Centre to visit one of the many bars or commercial disco's before returning home late in the evening, Deirdre usually sharing a taxi with one or more of her colleagues. This became an informal routine for Deirdre and her co-trainees, particularly towards the weekend, although, as Deirdre maintained, "the weekend sometimes began on Wednesdays".

This pattern of workplace-inspired recreation and leisure experience further augmented her 'getting out' trajectory, reinforced the sense of cultural estrangement she encountered in the local neighbourhood, and provided, in her own words, "a taste of the good life". Her workplace contacts and influences were to provide further impetus towards her literally 'getting out', by 'going out', of the local community. Workplace contacts precipitated a life-course which, like Denise Weldon's, which is examined later in this Chapter, would result in courtship, marriage, residential mobility, and home (and business) ownership, a pattern that had its origins in the experiences and opportunities provided by her employment.

6.5.4 John Conleigh

In contrast to Deirdre, John Conleigh's post-school transition to youthful sociability and independence was more complex and ambiguous. During his final school years, as a result of his father's death, his older siblings' full-time employment, and his mother's partial immobility, John was increasingly required to attend to domestic duties in the home. In particular, he was expected to offer domestic care to his mother which restricted his after school hours sociability. As a result, in his early 'teens, John struggled to find acceptance in the 'lads culture' which was dominant both within his school and also on the streets of Hartingleigh. Moreover, his atypical post-school transition to employment further inhibited his teenage friendships and served to marginalise him from the majority of his peers who were unemployed.

Thus, by the time John had started work, he had secured only fringe membership of a large group of predominantly unemployed males drawn mostly from the housing estates of Hartingleigh, with the Chicken Lane 'lads', the self-proclaimed 'Northside Jungle Crew', forming the nucleus. Working full-time prevented John from sustaining any day-to-day involvement in the lads' informal social networks. Moreover, the fact that he had to travel to work with his older brother early every morning ensured that he was rarely on the streets during the late evening. In contrast, many of his unemployed peers would, especially in the summer months, congregate in the Indoor Street Corner or adventure playground, often into the early hours.

After school leaving, John's interactions with the lads in Hartingleigh were characterised by his frequently desperate attempts to allay their hostilities and gain a place within the group by downgrading his employment, domestic responsibilities, and residential location. He did however have some sympathisers within the dominant group based on their compassionate understanding of his domestic circumstances and this at least ensured that the hostility generally directed towards the 'snobs and shirtlifters', or employed non-estate dwellers, was, in his case, muted. Nevertheless, the reality of his

post-school transition to work, and his consequent minimal participation in the day-to-day activities of the dominant group ensured him only a peripheral place within their social network.

With the encouragement of Tony Boyle, one of my co-youthworkers, John occasionally attended youth nights at the Centre, but usually he held only a marginal role in the activities that took place. Also he developed several workplace friendships during this period, but they were friendships that could not be readily pursued after work. Most of his workmates were from areas surrounding the footwear manufacturers, in the extreme south of the Greater Manchester conurbation, districts that were relatively inaccessible by public transportation. Thus, for two years after starting work in 1980, John was a solitary and socially isolated figure, and during this period spent much of his freetime, especially at weekends, travelling alone to the City Centre to play the video games in the amusement arcades.

However, when John was eighteen, several events combined to inadvertently alter the course of his domestic career transition by expanding his social horizons. The marriage of his older siblings during the summer months of 1982 precipitated several domestic changes. Firstly, his older brother, Martin, left the natal home to move into a house in Timperley, a quiet suburb within easier travelling distance of the footwear manufacturers in the south of the Greater Manchester conurbation. This was a terraced house which Martin had bought several years before and had been slowly modernising in his spare time in preparation for his marriage. Following the marriage, Martin set up home there with his new partner, and shortly afterwards John's sister, Sue, was also married. Immediately after the honeymoon, Sue's new husband moved in with her into the family home in Hartingleigh. John's new brother-in-law was a moderately successful self-employed electrician and, as such, agreed to undertake the main financial responsibility for the family home. As a consequence, Sue gave up her job in order to look after the house and provide full-time domestic care for their disabled mother. Simultaneously, John passed his

driving test and purchased an 'old Cortina', mainly in order to travel to work. His older brother, who had previously supplied a lift, was no longer living in the family home or immediate area and was therefore unable to provide John with transportation to their employment in the footwear manufacturers.

Relieved of some of the domestic responsibility towards the care of his disabled mother, and with his own independent means of transport, John began to pursue some of his workplace friendships. In particular, he utilised his new mobility to travel to districts in the south of the Greater Manchester conurbation to the homes and favoured leisure sites, pubs, pool-halls and disco's of two of his workmates. John had a particularly strong friendship with one of his workmates as they had originally met on the day of their respective interviews at the footwear manufacturers and had started their training apprenticeships at the same time. John's friend, Alex, had a flat in the same area as their workplace and John developed a pattern of "staying over at Alex's place" after their nights out together, sleeping on the sofa before going into work together the next day. John would also stay at his brother's house in Timperley rather than risk driving the twenty or so miles back to Hartingleigh after a night out. Through these workplace friendships and his developing social life, John gradually evolved a network of social contacts outside Hartingleigh, contacts which through 'going out' would eventually draw him permanently away from his local neighbourhood. Like Deirdre and Denise, this pattern of youthful sociability and recreation eventually resulted in a 'steady relationship' and a traditional domestic career transition of courtship, engagement, leaving home, marriage, and parenthood.

6.5.5 Growing Up and Leaving Home

In the years immediately following school-leaving, the three study participants who had achieved the post-school transition into the adult world of work consolidated parallel and complementary transitions to adult roles and status. By the age of eighteen, the three participants had not only become adults in the eyes of the law but had also taken

significant steps in the establishment of an adult identity. Denise Weldon, for example, by the time of her eighteenth birthday, had already made her first career advance and had left the natal home to live independently in a privately rented flat.

All three study participants stressed their experiences of mixing with, and being accepted by, adults in their workplaces as being important in the development of a notion of themselves as adults. Of particular note in this process was being treated in a manner that was imbued with expectations of adult behaviour within the workplace. As Denise observed:

> "It's part of growing up going out to work, being in school makes you immature 'cause you're only with kids and you act like a kid. At work there's all ages and you can't act like a kid 'cause you've got a job to do ... you're not a kid anymore and people expect you to act like they do."

The emphasis on taking adult-like responsibility within the workplace was sometimes ensured by the practical requirements of the type of work being carried out. In John Conleigh's case, irresponsibility on the production line of the footwear manufacturers could have had dangerous consequences: "You can't afford to piss around ... there's molten plastic an' all sorts. If you act like a wanker someone's going to get hurt."

Leaving school and mixing with adults in the workplace, being exposed to new environments and experiences, and cultivating an autonomous social life by 'going out' to places of adult recreation and leisure, were factors judged by participants to be significant in the formation of an adult self-concept. In Denise's case, for example, starting work produced a significant shift in parental attitudes over the issue of 'going out':

> "When I left school, started work and going out, they stopped trying to tell me what to do and what time to come in. There was no more 'aggro' about where I was going or who I was going with."

In Deirdre's case, her parents' shift in attitude was perhaps more significantly reciprocated by a shift in her own attitude towards them. Deirdre's growing independence was reflected in her ability to increasingly assert herself with her parents: "Instead of mum and

dad telling me, they started asking me, and that's when I started telling them what I'd be doing."

The foregoing trends towards the acquisition of adult identity were grounded in workplace experiences and the financial independence provided by employment. Financial independence was, in turn, reflected in moves towards residential independence when participants left the natal home. Denise moved out of her parents home to a flat in Prestwich when she was seventeen; Deirdre moved into a privately rented furnished flat in Didsbury when she was twenty and nearing the end of her training in the hair-studio; and John moved to a flat in a sub-divided house in Stretford, much closer to his workplace and friendship networks, when he was twenty one and had completed his training apprenticeship. For John and Deirdre, residential mobility was precipitated by their deepening commitment towards partners in their steady relationships. Both had moved out of the natal home in order to cohabit with their steady partners. Denise's boyfriend similarly moved into her flat when she was nineteen.

For Deirdre and Denise, leaving Hartingleigh and moving to, in Denise's words, "a much nicer area" was a tangible culmination of their 'getting out' frame of reference. Not only were they 'getting out' of their working class neighbourhood into residential suburban areas of the Greater Manchester conurbation, Didsbury and Prestwich, but they were also 'getting out' of childhood dependency within the natal home. John's move was a feature of his 'getting on' frame of reference in that he was able to travel to and from work more readily, enabling him to undertake regular overtime and begin the process of saving up for owner-occupation. Residential independence was for each of the study participants a confirmation of adult status. Physically leaving the natal home was a sign of having secured the transition to adult autonomy.

6.5.6 Courtship, Cohabitation and Engagement

In the domestic career trajectories of each of the three study participants, the development of steady relationships was the result of traditional courtship patterns initiated by 'going out' with their chosen partners (Farrell 1976). Of note is the significance of the participants' employment in the original meetings with their respective partners. Denise, for example, met her future husband, Tim, in 1983 when he attended for treatment at the dental practice where she was employed; Deirdre's prospective husband, Anthony, was employed as a 'hair designer' in the same hair-studio where she also worked; and John met his future wife, Angela, at the annual Christmas party (1984) organised by employees of the footwear manufacturers where he was employed.

A traditional extended courtship pattern followed these initial encounters (*cf* Leonard 1980) and in each of the three participants' domestic career trajectories, engagement and cohabitation was the result. In this process, the participants' employment was significant in providing the financial basis for 'going out' to pursue and cultivate their opposite sex relationships. Stable and regular income also facilitated residential independence and cohabitation prior to marriage. Researchers writing about family formation in the decades before mass youth unemployment have emphasised the role of marriage in the transition of young people from the natal home (Dunnell 1976; Leonard 1980; Schofield 1973; Willmott 1966). According to Leonard (1980) for example:

> "Enormous value is placed on attaining the adult status of being married, having a home of one's own, and the weight of socialisation which is directed towards the goal of marriage and getting a home of one's own affects the attitude towards the whole period in between leaving school and getting married" (1980 : 61).

Research has indicated that among young people in similar socio-economic groups to my study participants there was a general pattern of leaving home in order to get married. Dunnell (1976), for example, found that 41% of those in his sample from social classes 4 and 5 left home and married in their 'teens as against 10% in social classes 1 and 2. In contrast, the three study participants who had taken the traditional domestic career

trajectory into marriage and parenthood had done so after a significant period of cohabitation following departure from the natal home. Thus, although there was a strong desire for residential independence among the three study participants, cohabitation and engagement, rather than marriage, were typically their routes to sustaining residential independence.

Denise Weldon had in fact been living independently for over a year prior to her first meeting with Tim in March 1983. However, in April 1984, just over a year after their initial encounter in the dental surgery, he had moved into her flat in Prestwich. They lived together for five months prior to their engagement in October 1984, and cohabited for a total of four years before their marriage in June 1988 when Deirdre was 24.

John Conleigh and his girlfriend, Angela, decided to live together when they were engaged in December 1985 - exactly twelve months from the date of their first meeting at the footwear manufacturers' Christmas party. They shared a flat in Stretford for almost two years prior to their marriage in August 1987, when John was 23. During this time, they undertook the process of saving up in anticipation of marriage and home ownership.

In November 1984, following an extended two year period of courtship, Deirdre Sharp and her partner, Anthony, decided to share a flat in Didsbury. They were engaged almost two years later in September 1986, and having lived together for approximately two and a half years were married in May the following year when Deirdre was 23.

6.5.7 Owner-Occupation, Marriage and Parenthood

The three participants' extended periods of cohabitation and planned engagements enabled them and their partners to, in Denise Weldon's words, "save for the future". There was a pattern of long-term planning in preparation for marriage, parenthood, and owner-occupation. Joint incomes allowed for the accumulation of household goods, appliances, furnishings, and for the saving of essential deposits towards home-ownership, well in

advance of a proposed wedding day. Once again, these are features of the traditional domestic career transition which are crucially dependent upon the regular income derived from stable occupations (Allen and Hamnett 1991). It is a domestic career transition which has been extensively documented in previous decades (see, for example, Leonard 1980 : 223-255), and one I have sought to examine in close detail in Denise Weldon's case study (Section 6.6).

The pattern of lengthy cohabitation and engagement was partly a factor of the three participants' extended training which resulted in the adult wage necessary to undertake owner-occupation being delayed until their early twenties. Researchers have noted a similar pattern of delayed marriage and parenthood associated with owner-occupation (Dunnel 1976; Schofield 1973). This is a trend generally associated with the employment and domestic career transitions of middle class couples (Dunnell 1976; Fogelman 1983) who defer marriage and family formation because professional and managerial occupations require a period in higher education and training. Marriage and family formation are therefore deferred in anticipation of rising salaries in the future. However, extended engagements and patterns of long-term planning are similar factors discernible within the career transitions of the three study participants and provide further indications of their 'getting on, getting out' frames of reference.

Extended periods of engagement and cohabitation allowed study participants to defer formal marriage and family formation until training was completed, adult incomes secured, and savings accumulated. Each of the three participants deferred marriage and parenthood until their resources enabled them to successfully undertake owner-occupation. Deirdre moved into a newly built home on a small private estate in Didsbury with her husband, Anthony, shortly after their marriage; Denise and Tim were married in June 1988 after having moved into their semi-detached house in Norwich in February 1987; and John and Angela were married in August 1987 and moved into a small terraced house in Stretford in December 1987 shortly before the birth of their first child in January 1988.

Although patterns of long-term financial planning had contributed to owner-occupation, in each of the three cases savings were significantly augmented by the financial support of the families of participants and their partners. In Denise Weldon's case, both her mother and the parents of her future husband provided £10,000 each towards the purchase of their home in Norwich; in Deirdre's case, her partner's parents contributed "almost £5,000" towards the deposit on their first home in suburban Didsbury; and John's family, together with the parents of his partner, Angela, raised £3,000 between them towards the deposit on their terraced house in Stretford. Angela's father and John's brother also contributed towards essential repair and modernisation work undertaken on their home before they moved in. Material support from the wider family was also forthcoming as a result of getting married which resulted in the contribution of numerous essential household items in the way of 'wedding presents', thus enabling the participants to furnish and equip their homes without undue expense. Such examples of 'kin-aid' conformed to patterns identified by Bell (1968) and Edgell (1981) in middle class families.

Having secured the transition to marriage and owner-occupation, the participants completed the trajectory to adult roles by starting families of their own. Again a pattern of pre-planning was clearly evident. In all three cases, contraception was abandoned when savings had been accumulated. Pregnancy resulted in spare rooms being decorated in advance and essential nursery equipment being purchased or supplied from extended family networks. In each of the three cases, marriage, owner-occupation and parenthood initially solidified traditional gender divisions with regard to 'breadwinning' and domestic child-care routines.

According to the analysis by Watson and Austerberry (1986), the way that housing needs are defined and provided for affirms the traditional nuclear family and particularly women's role within it. Two themes underlie their analysis. The first is that British housing policy and the housing market operate in favour of the traditional nuclear family household. Moreover, this dominant family model assumes a domestic role for women,

so that the housing system acts to positively reinforce women's subordinate economic and social position:

> "Houses, then, do not simply represent a form of shelter; in addition they embody the dominant ideology of a society and reflect the way in which that society is organised. In Britain the dominant social relations are both patriarchal and capitalist: men have greater economic and social power than women and workers are exploited for profits to be made. Consequently the form in which housing is produced, the means by which it is financed and the way in which it is allocated, reflect the division of labour both within the labour process and between the sexes." (1986 : 3)

The reproduction of patterns of traditional gender roles are evident in the domestic career trajectories of all three study participants, particularly in the period following owner-occupation and parenthood.

John Conleigh's employment career had taken a significant upturn following the completion of his training apprenticeship. He sought and secured an internal transfer away from the mass production line to the orthopaedic shoe section within the footwear manufacturers. This was specialist work supplying orthopaedic shoes to National Health Service agencies throughout the North West region. These were shoes that had to be individually designed and made to order and, as such, involved a high degree of specialist craft skills. Moreover, the work was at a slightly higher rate of pay, provided the scope for regular overtime, and included occasional weekend work at highly favourable "double time" pay rates. Thus John was able to undertake the traditional role of 'breadwinner' for the family after the birth of his first child. His wife relinquished her job in the sixth month of her pregnancy and has not since returned to work. The birth of their second child in August 1990 ensured that the division of labour continued to follow a traditional pattern.

Denise Weldon had already given up paid employment in 1986 prior to 'getting out' of Manchester, to accompany Tim to Norwich where he undertook his first fully-tenured teaching position. After the birth of their first child in November 1988, she devoted herself to a traditional domestic role of caring full-time for the baby and the home.

Although she had anticipated a return to part-time employment when her child was old enough to attend nursery school, this did not materialise. She became pregnant again in 1990 and gave birth to their second child in March 1991. At the time of my last contact with Denise in October 1992, she was resigned to a traditional domestic and child-care role, but had established a network of social contacts by setting up a 'mums and toddlers' group, with two other mothers with young children, in a room at her local library. This child-centred social contact at least allowed some temporary respite from domestic routine and facilitated 'getting out' of the home.

Deirdre Sharp gave up her employment in the hair-studio in May 1989, during the early months of her pregnancy. After the birth of her daughter in December 1989, she explored the possibility of sharing child-care responsibility and 'job-sharing' Anthony's employment within the hair-studio. Apparently this was a realistic option under the flexible employment conditions at the hair-studio. However, when their daughter was three months old, a tentative attempt at such an arrangement was quickly abandoned when Anthony was unable to 'cope' alone with the child. Thus the job-sharing option did not materialise and Deirdre assumed a traditional domestic role within the home. She settled into a child-care routine which involved frequent trips to nearby Withington to visit her sister Carole, who by this time had also left the hair-studio and had two pre-school children of her own.

However, the ambition and aspirations shared by both sisters which I outlined as formative influences in Deirdre's career transition (Sections 6.2; 6.3; 6.4) eventually produced a new scheme for 'getting out' of rigid domestic routine through a shared business venture. The scheme occupied much of their time together in the two year period following the birth of Deirdre's daughter in 1989. During this time, they carefully formulated a plan for opening a hair-salon of their own, to be run in concert with Deirdre's husband, Anthony. With the guidance of Carole's businessman husband, the plan came to fruition when leasehold premises were secured and equipped in Withington.

In October 1991, they opened the salon which is managed as a partnership by the two sisters. Anthony left his employment in the Manchester hair-studio when the business opened and recruited another of the hair-studio employees in the process. Anthony and his ex-hair-studio colleague work in the salon full-time along with two junior trainees. The two sisters operate a routine of collective responsibility for the three children which allows each of them to work in the Withington salon on alternate days. In my last contact with Deirdre, she was keen to emphasise the success of the venture and was enthusiastic about plans for expanding the business by utilising unused second storey rooms to create a "beauty treatment resource". She also discussed the possibility of opening a second salon and, towards this end, the two sisters had already begun the process of seeking out suitable premises.

Amongst the three study participants, the traditional post-school transitions to employment were complemented by a parallel domestic career transition into adulthood, into traditional adult roles and status. A secure transition to work supplied stable foundations upon which were constructed traditional adult identities - mother, father, housewife, breadwinner. In the following section (6.6) through a detailed examination of the employment and domestic career transitions of Denise Weldon, I draw out the interrelationships between these factors.

6.5.8 Conclusions

Both Deirdre and Denise had succeeded in their ambitions and aspirations. They had succeeded in 'getting out' of their working class neighbourhoods and their working class cultural backgrounds. They had both married moderately successful professional young men and had successfully undertaken home and, in Deirdre's case, business ownership. They both anticipated settled, privatised and upwardly mobile lives. This was in stark contrast to many of their contemporaries in Hartingleigh whose protracted, cyclical, and long term unemployment transitions will be examined in later chapters.

John Conleigh's career transition had initially been more complex and ambiguous, but nevertheless he had eventually succeeded in 'getting on' in working class cultural terms. Through training, he had advanced within his chosen occupation and had achieved a position of relative security and financial reward. Employment stability and financial security had also enabled him to embark on owner occupation within the more modest sectors of the housing market. In my last contact, John informed me that he was contemplating a move to a larger terraced house in the same area. He had 'got on' in working class cultural terms, was a "successful breadwinner", and an enthusiastic parent.

6.6 Denise Weldon : Traditional Transitions - A Case Study

6.6.1 Introduction

I originally met Denise in Spring 1980 during the 'first phase' of my study (1979-82) when I was living in Hartingleigh and working for the Youth and Community Project. She was initially contacted by Gail Hindle, one of my co-youth workers, as Denise was one of Gail's ten interviewees in the Project's school leavers survey conducted between January and May 1980 (Chapter Two, Section 2.5). Encouraged by Gail, Denise attended many of the early meetings of the developing youth project. During these early youthwork contacts, it was difficult to get to know her as she often appeared shy and uncommunicative and occasionally intimidated by the more boisterous and vociferous members of the 'youth group'. Her height, well-groomed appearance, and taciturn demeanour set her apart from the other young participants in the Project's 'youth group'. Seemingly awkward and uncertain, she contributed very little that I can remember to the discussions that took place in this formative stage of the Youth and Community Project.

Denise was a tall girl for her age, taller than the other fifteen and sixteen year old girls who were contacted by the Project in this period. She had a trim figure and naturally blond hair which was cut fashionably short around her face. This style emphasised her striking brown eyes, which she sought to further augment by the full eye and face make-up she wore whenever she 'went out'. Denise considered her eyes to be her most attractive

physical feature and took a great deal of care over the application of her eye make-up when attending meetings of the youth group. She was always extremely tidily dressed, preferring skirts and tights combined with a neat jacket or sweater to the more casual jeans, sportswear and trainers then the dominant fashion mode for the young of both sexes in Hartingleigh. Denise was also particularly fond of collecting 'real gold' jewellery and often she wore numerous items simultaneously including a wide variety of gold chains, rings, and ear-rings. At an early youth group meeting her appearance prompted one of several critics she had among the group to loudly and perhaps enviously proclaim, "she looks like a bleedin' Christmas tree".

Denise enjoyed shopping for clothes and jewellery which she often did with her mother and Cheryl, her older sister, both of whom were remarkably similar in style and appearance to Denise. In fact, it was a source of great amusement to them when, during their frequent shopping trips into the City Centre, her mother was sometimes mistaken for the elder sister of the group. Denise and her mother and sister had a seemingly close relationship, often sharing private jokes as well as diets and items of jewellery, clothing and make-up.

6.6.2 'Snobs' and 'Shirtlifters' : The Social Divide

At the time of my early youthwork practice in Hartingleigh, Denise lived with her parents and older sister in a 'corner terrace' in the Kings Road district of Hartingleigh. Due to its location as an end house at the right-angled junction of two terraced streets, their home was much larger than the average size of houses in the area. It contained four, instead of the more usual two, bedrooms as well as three downstairs living rooms and a small 'scullery' or kitchen. The Kings Road district, close to the newly constructed District Centre, was one of three small concentrations of mainly privately owned terraced houses in the Ward. These pre-1919 houses in the terraced streets of the old traditional centre of Hartingleigh were structurally sound enough to have avoided demolition during the City Council's extensive programme of clearance and redevelopment, which occurred over a

fifteen year period after 1964. In 1976, the King Road district was designated a 'General Improvement Area' by the City Council, and generous 'home improvement grants' were made available to provide residents with the opportunity to renovate and modernise their homes. Generally this involved the provision of bathrooms and inside toilets, as the majority of houses eligible for grants under the terms of the scheme were without either. Denise's parents took the opportunity to completely renovate and refurbish their house and also extended the property by adding a two storey kitchen/bathroom extension in the space provided by their expansive backyard.

City Council 'home improvement grants' covered almost 90% of the repair and renovation expenditure and the extra money required to pay for the cost of the new extension was met by the family's savings. Denise's parents were able to afford the financial outlay involved in modernising their home as they had both been in full-time employment for a considerable amount of time. Denise's mother worked as a senior clerk in a large City Centre firm of chartered accountants, a job she had held for over ten years after initially starting with the firm in the early 1970s as an office junior. Denise's father had begun his employment life as a postman, but, as the result of a succession of internal promotions, had advanced into, "personnel management" - as Denise's mother was quick to point out - in the large central sorting office in the City Centre. He had been with the GPO for over twenty years and felt himself to be 'comfortably settled' within his job. Cheryl, who is four years older than Denise, was at that time still living in the parental home and was also in full-time employment as a secretary in a City Centre travel agency.

Following the 'gentrification' of the terraced houses in the Kings Road district, the area quickly developed the reputation of being the most 'respectable' district within Hartingleigh. As well as the large scale programme of house renovations facilitated by City Council grants, this reputation was also established as a result of the more general environmental improvements to the district. These included landscaping of derelict land, tree planting, and traffic management schemes undertaken by the Direct Works department

of the City Council as part of its 'General Improvement Area' provision. For those young people who lived in the surrounding estates, most notably those from the deck-access flats in the 'Jungle', as local inhabitants called the Chicken Lane estate, the privately owned, recently refurbished, terraced houses of the Kings Road area were considered to be occupied by 'snobs'. In terms of my early youthwork practice, such local perceptions led to increasing social divisions and the formation of distinct sub-groups within the developing Youth and Community Project. The user-ran and supervised Indoor Street Corner, for example, converted from the old single-storey, one-roomed Percy Street police station, became the main meeting ground for the young unemployed from Hartingleigh's council estates. The 'snobs', or 'shirtlifters', as the boys from the Kings Road area were homophobically referred, would not use the Indoor Street Corner, preferring instead the relative safety of the more strictly supervised youth clubs held at the Project's original resource centre, located in rooms at the rear of the old Hartingleigh Swimming Baths.

In some respects, the social divisions within the young working class of Hartingleigh at this time represented a contemporary manifestation of the traditional divide between the 'rough' and 'respectable' working class (Frankenberg 1966). According to Mann (1992 : 47-55), this divide has extensive historical antecedents. A snapshot of the respectable working class has been provided by White (1984), the main features of which apply directly to the lives of Denise and her parents:

> "They began in a council house and saved up for their own home ... They live comfortably ... go on holiday most years ... enjoy weekend outings in the car ... Things have worked out well for them. They have moved up the benign spiral of the securely employed" (1985 : 9).

According to Mann's analysis of the Social Division of Welfare (1992), some sections of the 'respectable' working class have enjoyed unprecedented improvements in living standards since the 1940s. A buoyant labour market and the benefits accrued from strong trade unions facilitated this income mobility, the result being increased owner-occupation,

changes in consumption patterns, and occupational welfare and pensions combining to place some workers in a more privileged place in the Social Division of Welfare:

> "By exerting a measure of control over the labour market and the labour process, many have been able to escape the clutches of public welfare or to exploit its less stigmatising elements, the NHS and education for example" (Mann 1992 : 104).

By contrast, the 'rough' are those who have been excluded from the labour market, who have found it difficult to resist new working practices or negotiate new ones, who live in "battered and poverty stricken surroundings" (Marsden 1985 : 32), in areas of high unemployment and industrial decline. Sections of the working class who are -

> "forced to rely on public welfare and have little chance of escaping from it, who have not been able or allowed to gain skills, or who are trapped in the trench of dependency, are effectively excluded from the benefits of the so-called 'post modern' society. They are in terms of their day-to-day experience in the same social position as the paupers of the 1840s, the 'residuum' of the 1880s and the 'unemployables' of the 1930s" (Mann 1992 : 104).

These are the sections of the 'rough' working class unsympathetically caricatured and demonised by Marsden's description of "people whose physical appearance, shape, complexion, and self-presentation are quite unlike anything seen elsewhere" (Marsden 1985 : 32).

Denise was affiliated to a small group of young people drawn mostly from the terraced streets in the Kings Road area. During the course of my youthwork, this group, the 'snobs' and 'shirtlifters', became increasingly subjected to a process of marginalisation by the majority of users of youth facilities within the Project. A second, much larger group, was drawn into the evolving Youth and Community Project from the surrounding council estates with the Chicken Lane group forming an aggressive and frequently combative nucleus. On numerous occasions, voluntary staff and youthworkers were called upon to resolve heated disputes between the two groups. Competitive rivalries spontaneously sprang up over such issues as boyfriends and girlfriends, clothes, music, hair styles and use of the Project's facilities. The situation eventually led to the institution of a separate 'girls

only' group at the newly built Youth and Community Centre, from which the more vociferous and intimidating 'lads' were excluded.

Despite efforts by Marie Hulton and Gail Hindle, my co-youthworkers who organised and ran the 'girls only' nights at the Centre, the divisions within the girls group remained. Unresolved tensions between the girls concerning boyfriend rivalries fuelled disputes that arose over relatively trivial issues, such as use of the pool tables, and eventually these escalated into a series of physical confrontations. On one occasion, noted in the activities diary kept at one time by Marie and Gail, Denise and her friends were physically attacked outside the Centre by several girls from the estates. Urged on by an ugly crowd of lads which, forewarned by the girls from the estates, had spilled out of the nearby pub to watch, a general mêlée ensued in the street with Centre volunteers and Gail and Marie desperately struggling to intervene and restore order. Denise suffered a badly cut eyebrow in the assault and several of her gold chains were 'lost'. Eventually an uneasy peace was restored when Denise was ferried to a nearby hospital for seven stitches to the cut. Meanwhile, Gail and Marie recovered the stolen jewellery in time to calm the situation and prevent the police being called by Denise's parents.

The escalating level of violence and intimidation could no longer be effectively defused or contained by volunteer staff or youthworkers. Despite the proscription or 'banning' of certain of the Chicken Lane young people, decided at a Management Committee Meeting, the rivalries between groups of young users within the Youth and Community Centre were only resolved when the 'snobs' and 'shirtlifters', including Denise and the group from the Kings Road area, stopped attending the Centre. Gail Hindle in particular unsuccessfully sought to resolve the conflicts by bringing the two groups together in a series of informal meetings. However the mutual antagonisms could not be assuaged. The final meeting organised by Gail typically ended in chaos, with the two groups trading kicks, blows and insults across a neutral divide established by severely harassed youthworkers forcing themselves between the combatants. To this day, aggressive graffiti in and around the

Centre testify to the territorial dominance of sub-cultural groups of young Centre users drawn from Hartingleigh's council housing estates. On the main external wall of the Youth and Community Centre, for example, proclaimed in three foot high letters, is the slogan to be found on many of the walls and walkways of the estates: NORTHSIDE JUNGLE NO GO AREA!

The growing social divide between Hartingleigh's 'rough' and 'respectable' young working class is in some respects a division between those from families in work and those from families without work. In the opinion of Centre staff and youthworkers, it was this fundamental social divide which fuelled the antagonisms between those like Denise from the King Road terraces and the young people from Hartingleigh's self-proclaimed 'Northside Jungle'. The divide between the rough and respectable working class is according to Marsden, "one of the great shifting boundaries in English life. It governs who acts in a neighbourly way to whom" (1985 : 32)

6.6.3 Into Work

During the undergraduate years (1982-85) of the 'second phase' of my evolving project, I had no contact with Denise, and it was not until the 'third phase' (1985-86) of preliminary sampling and fieldwork that I was able to re-contact her. By that time, through her mother's considerable influence and support, Denise had moved out of the parental home into a privately rented flat in Prestwich. This was a two-bedroomed, second floor flat in a large sub-divided Georgian house overlooking a local municipal park. She shared the flat with her 'fiancée', Tim, who had graduated in Physics at Manchester Polytechnic and, at the time of my initial contacts, had recently completed post-graduate teacher training.

At our first meeting, recalling the incidents at the Centre several years earlier provided a means of initially 'breaking the ice' and, though the small scar above her eyebrow remained, I was somewhat relieved to discover that Denise's reticence and shyness had dissipated itself with the intervening years. When I mentioned this, she attributed the

change to her relationship with Tim, which, she believed, had given her, "a lot more confidence in myself". She also emphasised the requirements of her work as a dental nurse assistant as being instrumental in breaking down what she described as her, "barriers of shyness". We subsequently met several times at her flat, and once at her mother's new home in Gatley, one of the more 'respectable' residential areas of the Greater Manchester conurbation. After some initial hesitation, I was able to conduct unforced interviews in a relatively informal atmosphere and slowly built up a picture of the significant events and circumstances in her life since she had, "got out of that rat-hole", which is how she described her departure from Hartingleigh.

Denise had started work as a trainee dental nurse assistant and receptionist immediately upon school leaving. In fact, she had officially applied for her job in the Spring of 1980 prior to actually leaving school. Even though she had no formal qualifications, she had replied to an advertisement in the regional newspaper with, as she recalled, some assistance from Gail Hindle at the Project. Gail had constructed and typed Denise's letter of application as a result of the contacts Gail had maintained following Denise's initial interview with her during the Project's 1980 youth survey. Although the advertisement for the job of trainee dental nurse assistant and receptionist had been placed in the regional newspaper, Denise had already been forewarned about the vacancy by her mother. Denise went on to explain that, in her professional capacity as an accounts clerk, her mother over the years had established relatively informal contacts with Jeremy Taylor, the senior dental practitioner at the dental practice for which the trainee vacancy was to be advertised. As part of her work load, Denise's mother had some responsibility for the accounts of the dental practice. Moreover, Denise's mother had even greater influence with Alan Foxton, the second senior partner in the dental practice, as a result of developing what Denise described as an "intimate relationship" with him. Consequently, Denise's mother was able to exert a great deal of influence on her daughter's behalf when the trainee vacancy arose. As Denise confided:

> "It was like some mad 'soap' you see on tele ... the job had to be advertised ... but it was set up ... My mum had it sorted with Jeremy [the senior dental practitioner] 'cos she was doing his books and she was 'bonking' Alan [the second senior partner] ... so I had it 'sewn up' actually."

Denise was employed in the "medium size practice" for almost two years between school leaving in July 1980 and late Spring 1982. During this period, she elected to receive additional training 'outside the job' by undertaking a two year dental nurse assistant's course at night school. Her employers did not insists upon this as part of her terms of employment but Denise chose the option to enhance her skills and experience. Her course included aspects of Biology, Nursing and First Aid as well as basic office and receptionist skills such as ,"manual filing and telephone manner". Denise did not however complete her course, retaining an aversion displayed at school for formal examinations: "I didn't fancy the exams ... it was the same at school ... I get all 'panicky' and stupid." However, the 'normative instrumental orientation' to formalised educational processes, identified by Brown's (1987) research into working class educational attitudes, is evident in Denise's claim that: "I learned all the things I really needed to know ... especially the First Aid ... the exams didn't matter to me."

The period between school leaving and starting work in July 1980 and eventually changing jobs in May 1982 was a time of considerable change and stress for Denise, the facts of which cast new light upon her awkward and uncommunicative demeanour during our initial encounters in Hartingleigh. Not only was she making the difficult transition from school into the adult world of paid employment but her parents, who had been married for over twenty years, were at that time in the process of a frequently stormy and painful separation. Her problems with the youth group at the Project exacerbated her sense of isolation, and it is a credit to her emotional resilience that neither Gail nor any of the Project's youthworkers, including myself, had any inkling of the internal turmoil she was enduring. Denise's father eventually moved out of the family home during the Christmas period 1981, a date which coincides with the worst of the conflicts Denise was involved in at the Centre. Her "infatuation" at that time with Togger, one of the 'lads'

from the Jungle, provided the spark which ignited several of her confrontations with the girls from the estates:

> "I was obsessed with him ... I thought he was strong you know, but it was only because I was so messed up with Mum and Dad ... with the rowing and everything ... I suppose they [the girls from the estates] hated me for going out with him ... I think they were jealous ... I was working and we used to go out ... God, they wanted to kill me!".

6.6.4 Leaving Home

In January 1982, shortly after her father's departure, Denise's mother put the family home, "up for sale". By this time, Denise's older sister, following her marriage, had also left the parental home. At this time, confident in her income and job security and with her mother's help and influence, Denise also left, moving into her flat in Prestwich, "a much nicer area" according to Denise. Denise's mother was again instrumental in securing suitable accommodation for her daughter through her "contacts with clients", professional connections secured through her accountancy work. After the sale of the family's former house in Hartingleigh, Denise's mother eventually moved into a new house in Gatley with Alan Foxton, the second senior partner from the dental practice where Denise was employed with whom she had been having what Denise described as "an affair".

By now, Denise had developed strong reservations about her mother's relationship, manifested in the fact that she, "wasn't getting on with Alan at work". Consequently, partly for the sake of change, and partly out of a belated sense of loyalty towards her father, she decided to seek employment elsewhere. Once more, Denise's mother exerted her influence on her daughter's behalf and, in May 1982, shortly after redecorating and moving into her flat, Alan Foxton, after some "quiet persuasion" from Denise's mother, assisted her transfer to a "much bigger and better-equipped dental practice". A move that improved both her monthly salary and conditions of work: "It was nearer the flat, more money, better conditions and less hours ... only a four and a half day week".

Thus by the time of her eighteenth birthday in October 1982, Denise had secured a relatively uncomplicated transition into the adult world of full time employment. Secure in her tastefully decorated and desirably located flat, she was also living independently of her parents and sometimes earning with overtime up to three times the weekly training allowance (£23.50 in 1982) of many of her contemporaries in Hartingleigh, whose post-school transitions had typically placed them into compulsory employment training schemes. Moreover, it was in her capacity as a dental nurse that, in March 1983, Denise first met her future husband, Tim, when he attended an appointment for treatment at the dental surgery where Denise was employed. So began the complementary 'career trajectory' of her entry into adult domestic life and the traditional transition into courtship, engagement, marriage and parenthood.

6.6.5 Courtship

Tim is a tall, slim, dark-haired and, according to Denise, "gorgeously attractive" young man from a solid middle class family in Essex. Tim's father is the managing director of an engineering company employing a workforce of thirty. At the time of his initial meeting with Denise, Tim was twenty-two years old and in the second year of graduate study at Manchester Polytechnic. Denise was instantly attracted to him. As she confided: "As soon as he walked into reception I fancied him ... Tim was different ... I knew straight away ... it was something about him." Denise unfavourably compared the 'lads' she had "been out with before" - at school, in Hartingleigh and more recently since leaving home - with Tim. From the beginning she claimed to have almost intuitively sensed, "something different" about him, a difference I asked her to define:

> **Denise**: "I'd had boyfriends before, at school and the Centre ... you remember Togger ... Christ, what a 'dork' ... I can't believe I went out with him ... and the trouble I had, you remember ... But Tim was different, I knew right away."
> **S.C.**: "How was he different from the lads at the Centre?
> **Denise**: "God, they were terrible, always fighting and showing off, they thought they were really it ... Tim doesn't have that, he's quite calm, mature ... Oh, I don't know ... it's hard to say ... <u>the way he looks, something about his voice ... and his clothes ... I just KNEW he was different" (my emphasis).</u>

When Denise and Tim started "regularly going out together" following their initial encounter at the dental surgery, Denise's mother became anxious to meet her daughter's new boyfriend. Her approval was secured however after their initial meeting in a "quality restaurant" in the City Centre. As a result of this meeting, she was able to ascertain that Tim, being from a "decent family" and a "degree student with prospects", was a "respectable young man" and "something of a catch for our Denise". Tim's memory of the first meeting with Denise's mother was that, "she gave me the old 'Third Degree', in the nicest possible way of course".

Tim and Denise 'went out' together regularly over the next two years, sharing a wide circle of friends and activities. Denise would share Tim's social life in and around the Polytechnic and often joined Tim and his friends for trips to City Centre discos, cinemas and restaurants. Occasionally, they would go windsurfing together, a sport of which Tim was particularly fond and into which he initiated Denise at the water sports complex situated in the south of the Greater Manchester conurbation. Tim similarly shared Denise's circle of friends in Prestwich, and approximately once a month, at weekends, a group of them would go to Bredbury Hall for a meal and the somewhat exclusive 'members only' discos held there.

During the academic holidays in this period, Denise, her mother and Alan Foxton twice travelled with Tim to meet, and on the second visit to stay, with his parents in Essex. Similarly, on one occasion, Tim's parents visited Manchester for a 'long weekend', staying in the house Denise's mother shared with Alan Foxton in Gatley. Through these meetings, family approval was sought and secured for their deepening relationship and, following his graduation in Summer 1984, Tim felt able to "officially move in" with Denise. Although, as Denise later explained, this was simply a case of "going public", in acknowledging to both families, Tim's parents in particular, that they were now "living together": "Tim had been living here for ages on and off, we just decided to make if official".

6.6.6 Engagement

Cohabitation met with a certain amount of disapproval on the part of Tim's parents, particularly his father, but they were eventually placated when, in October 1984 on the day of Denise's twentieth birthday, Denise and Tim were formally engaged. A dinner and disco at one of the City Centre's more prestigious hotels was organised by Denise's mother, paid for by Alan Foxton. Apart from Denise's mother, sister Cheryl, and Alan Foxton, this "rather grand do", as Denise's mother described it, was attended by Tim's parents and younger sister as well as twenty of Denise and Tim's friends with more attending the disco later in the evening. After the meal, Tim presented Denise with the £470 "sapphire and diamond cluster" engagement ring they had bought together several weeks before. A little later, Denise's mother presented her daughter with her birthday present, the keys to a "Silver A-reg Mini, second hand but in marvellous condition". A car was the birthday present Denise's mother had intended for Denise's 'twenty-first' to complement the driving lessons she had paid for on Denise's eighteenth birthday. However, she decided to bring the idea forward a year as she considered Denise's engagement, coinciding with her twentieth birthday, "a once in a life-time special occasion" that "deserved to be celebrated with a special present."

Prior to her engagement, and shortly after Tim had graduated and they were officially living together, Denise had changed her employers for the second time since starting work in 1980. This move in August 1984 took her to a dental practice in the City Centre, with a larger proportion of private patients, in fact "almost 70% of the case load". The dental practice was one of numerous surgeries located in Manchester's dental equivalent of Harley Street; the original practices had been established by leading dental surgeons and consultants from Manchester's nationally famous University Dental Hospital for their private practice. The move improved her status to that of senior dental nurse assistant, provided her with greater responsibility, a better and more varied workload and, most importantly in terms of her future plans with Tim, increased her gross monthly salary from £290 to £335.

6.6.7 Saving-Up

Denise's change of employers was part of a wider strategy she had extensively discussed and formulated with Tim, a wider strategy that involved prudent financial management and meticulous forward planning which would culminate in their eventual marriage during Summer 1988 and the birth of their first child in November of the same year.

In between, Denise starting her new job in August 1984 and their engagement the following October, Tim had begun postgraduate teacher training with the intention of pursuing a career in teaching. Aside from the financial gain, Denise's move into City Centre employment enabled them to travel to and from the City together, thus allowing for the sale of Tim's car, one facet of their planned strategy for the future. Denise and Tim had extensively discussed their future prospects together and had decided to "move out of Manchester in a couple of years time" when Tim had finished his teacher training and probationary teaching period. Their intention was to marry, "and perhaps start a family" as soon as he was able to gain a fully tenured teaching post. Towards this end, they had begun "saving for the future" with Denise's improved monthly salary, the sale of Tim's car, and Tim's newly secured "private home-tuition" of prospective GCE 'O' and 'A' level students providing the increased potential for saving. The home tuition, arranged through a private agency was, at £5 per hour (undeclared and therefore untaxed), highly paid employment which augmented his grant, contributed to their growing savings, and moreover provided experience and credentials to include in his 'C.V.' Tim gained his postgraduate teaching certificate in Summer 1985 and was immediately offered a temporary teaching contract in the same East Manchester Comprehensive where he had completed the teaching practice that was part of his postgraduate course. This was for a year beginning in September 1985. In the meantime, Tim increased the numbers of students and amount of home tuition and also found summer work in a "whole food café" near to the Polytechnic.

According to Denise, the period between August 1984, when she changed employers for the second time, and Summer 1986, when Tim completed his probationary teaching, was an extremely significant time in their relationship. Through restricting their social activities in order to "live on one income and bank the other", they were compelled to spend their free-time together at home in Denise's flat. At this time, through sharing a common sense of purpose, she believes their relationship matured: "We grew up both as individuals and as a couple ... the hard work, all the hassles actually deepened our commitment ... our sense of commitment towards each other."

They deliberately "stopped going out" in order to accumulate money for their collective savings which grew rapidly as a result of Denise "working as much overtime as I could", Tim's twelve month teaching salary, and the sale of various items they now considered to be superfluous to their needs, including, for example, most of Denise's collection of gold jewellery, Tim's car, mentioned earlier, as well as his colour television and stereo, and their windsurfing 'gear'. By the end of Tim's probationary teaching period in July 1986, through a combination of prudent financial management and austerity in their social lives, they had, according to Denise, "managed to save almost £9,000".

6.6.8 Home Ownership

In the latter stages of his probationary teaching period, Tim was offered a full-time contract but by that time he had already applied for teaching jobs elsewhere, as both he and Denise were intent upon leaving Greater Manchester. Denise in particular was anxious to "get away" as she believed the City was "no place to bring up kids". Tim unsuccessfully applied for several teaching posts before eventually securing a fully tenured job in a comprehensive school in Norwich. During the summer period 1986, he and Denise travelled to Norwich several times before securing suitable temporary accommodation for them both.

Shortly after Tim had begun teaching, they went house-hunting and, after consultation with both sets of parents, eventually decided to buy a three bedroomed 1930s-built semi-detached house, with large rear and front gardens, situated within twenty minutes drive of the school where Tim was teaching. The decision to buy their own home was made after Denise's mother and Tim's father agreed to contribute £10,000 each towards its purchase, Denise's mother's contribution being the result of money she had invested on Denise's behalf in 1982 following the sale of the original family home in Hartingleigh. Family support thus enabled Denise and Tim to undertake home ownership without being unnecessarily overburdened by mortgage repayments.

During the fourth phase of my research (1986-1990), I was able to visit Denise and Tim three times 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. In Spring 1988, I also visited them once when they were staying in Manchester at Denise's mother's home shortly before their marriage. Though increasingly infrequent, these contacts were relatively informal, and through them I was able to continue to chart Denise's employment and domestic 'career trajectories' (Roberts 1987); a traditional transition which had thus far taken her from school into primary employment, from courtship into engagement, and from childhood dependence into adult independence and home ownership.

After moving into their home in February 1987, Denise and Tim utilised their savings to carry out some essential repairs and modernisation. Although the property was structurally "in an excellent condition", they decided to replace several windows, repair parts of the roof, repoint the chimneys, and replace the existing bathroom suite with a more modern one, including the installation of a separate shower. They also paid for the house to be completely redecorated, with one of the bedrooms being designated for a nursery. The carpets in the bedrooms had been included in the purchase price and new fitted carpets for the downstairs rooms were paid for by Tim's parents. The fitted kitchen

units were also in good condition, but Denise and Tim decided to renew the doors of the units with pine replacement doors. Tim was teaching full-time whilst much of this work was being carried out, so Denise supervised the internal redecoration, and Tim's father stayed with them for three weeks to oversee the work to the roof and windows. The plumbing work in the bathroom was carried out by Tim's uncle, with Tim helping out at weekends.

6.6.9 Marriage and Parenthood

In June 1988, when most of the work to the house was completed, Denise and Tim were married. They decided not to have a formal "church wedding", much to the consternation of "both sides of the family"; nevertheless they all attended the civil ceremony including Denise's father who by this time had remarried. Immediately after the ceremony, Denise and Tim flew to the Seychelles for what Denise described as "the honeymoon of a lifetime". Despite substantial opposition to their plans from both their families, according to Tim (and Denise appeared to be in full agreement with him) "it made more sense to spend money on the honeymoon rather than the pomp and nonsense of a wedding reception".

An early indication of their future plans for parenthood was given to me in May 1988 when I visited them at Denise's mother's home in Gatley where they were staying shortly before their wedding. Denise told me that she had sold her car, the Mini her mother had presented to her on the evening of her engagement to Tim, a date which coincided with her twentieth birthday. The Mini had been replaced by a "Volvo Estate" purchased at a "cut price rate" from Tim's father. Denise confided that this was a practical investment for the future as she believed they would soon require "a more family size car". In the period between this meeting in Spring 1988 and June 1988, when they were married, Denise did indeed "fall pregnant" with their daughter born in the early hours of November 30th 1988. This event was the culmination of a carefully formulated life-plan Denise and Tim had discussed in the months prior to their engagement in October 1984. It saw the final stages

of her 'domestic career transition', a traditional route into adult roles and status that involved home ownership, marriage and finally "starting a family".

Denise had not sought employment since leaving Manchester in August 1986 and, after their first child had arrived, she willingly resigned herself to a domestic career of taking care of her daughter and "looking after the house". She did speak of a planned return to employment at some unspecified time in the future although she was contemplating "only part-time" employment when her daughter was old enough to attend nursery school. However, when I made my final contact with Denise, her attempts to find part-time employment in a dental surgery had been unsuccessful and she had since given birth to another daughter in March 1991. They had decided to have another child because "Tim wanted a boy". As a result, Denise had, for the immediate future, resigned herself to a traditional role of domestic routine and child-care.

6.7 Conclusions

What is evident in Denise, Deirdre and John's post-school transitions is an interrelated pattern of progression to employment being complemented by progression through traditional domestic careers. Denise's transition to work, for example, was facilitated by the significant advantages bestowed by her respectable working class background. Her mother and sister provided role models for work-commitment as a means of self-advancement and, moreover, her mother's prolonged employment in the primary labour market provided the ability to confer both labour market and residential mobility advantages on her daughter through workplace contacts. Success in her chosen occupation ensured Denise a 'getting out' frame of reference.

In all three cases, 'getting on' or 'getting out' frames of reference were reinforced by residential mobility and workplace social contacts, which subsequently resulted in steady relationships and courtship. The traditional transition to employment was in all three cases paralleled by a traditional domestic career transition characterised by extended

courtship, long-term planning, owner-occupation, marriage and parenthood. In this process, the traditional transition to employment provided the parameters for the realisation of adult identites and traditional adult roles and status. The middle class patterns of 'kin-aid' (Bell 1968) were also discernible in the domestic careers of the traditional transitionaries, and for the women there was also evidence of what Goldthorpe and Erikson (1992) have identified as "marital mobility". The experiences of the two women in the "marriage market" conformed to the notion of "marrying up" as identified by Goldthorpe and Erikson (1992 : 254).

Here the traditional transition to adulthood can be viewed as part of a process of social and cultural reproduction which takes place on three different levels (Wallace 1987): through the labour market (the transition from school to work); through the housing market (the transition to residential independence); and through the family (the transition from home of origin to that of destination). In the detail of the case studies in this Chapter, I have sought to draw out and examine the interdependence of these levels of social and cultural reproduction, and the ways in which these three young people from my study group came to be socially reproduced as gendered and classed adult members of society both as domestic workers and within the labour force.

However, it is important to stress the atypicality of these three working class study participants. These young adults were the exception rather than the rule. By securing the right kind of employment in their post-school transitions, they had discovered abilities within themselves they had never thought they possessed and gained considerable satisfaction both from their employment and their lives as a result. What is most striking when comparing the post-school transitions of these participants with others in my study group is how differently they negotiated and perceived their lives and futures. Their adult identities, social skills, self-presentation and self-confidence serve to provide the backcloth against which can be highlighted the alienation or helplessness expressed by other study participants whose post-scool transitions are examined in the following Chapters. The

traditional post-school employment, housing, and domestic career transitions of these three study participants, their hopes, plans, and expectations for the future, provide stark contrast to the more forlorn and tenuous hopes, careful fatalism or attitudes of embittered alienation held by others in my study.

CHAPTER SEVEN

PROTRACTED TRANSITIONS

"I have always felt that to leave school at 16 and to be expected at that age to know how to cope with your life - if you haven't got an obvious talent which can be exploited ... is not entirely sensible. I know I couldn't have done it!"

H.R.H. THE PRINCE OF WALES
(ESRC Newsletter 61, November 1987 : 7)

"Oh if only I'd known / I could have been a qualified plumber by now / With me own little van"

KING OF THE SLUMS
(from *Bombs away on Hartingleigh*, quoted in NME 4.2.89)

7.1 Protracted Transitions : Introduction

Until the mid-1970s, the traditional transition to employment, discussed in Chapter Six, was largely the norm for most minimum age school leavers (Wallace and Cross 1991 : 4). In many parts of Britain in the 1960s and 1970s, young people tended to move directly from school into work, occasionally interrupted by short spells of unemployment. This was certainly the case for the majority of young people who, like the participants in my study, were from working class backgrounds and possessed no educational qualifications (Ashton and Field 1976; Willis 1977). In the period immediately following school leaving in 1980, the traditional route into unskilled or semi-skilled employment (the typical post-school employment destinations for the unqualified) had all but disappeared for the majority of study participants in Hartingleigh.

Despite regional variations in the levels of youth unemployment, fundamental divisions were engendered during the Thatcher decade between the 'haves' and the 'have nots' and between the 'rich South' and the 'poor North' (Coles 1988 : 2). In national terms, "the vanishing youth labour market" (Ashton and Maguire 1983), in particular the loss of youth jobs in the unskilled and semi-skilled sectors, had disproportionately affected the unqualified, minimum age, school leaver (Ashton *et al* 1982; Banks *et al* 1992; Furlong

and Raffe 1989; Furlong 1992). Most acutely affected by these changes were young job seekers in areas like Hartingleigh, areas that were historically dependent upon declining traditional industries, such as manufacturing, to employ their indigenous labour force. According to Rees and Atkinson (1982), changes in the industrial structure of employment over the last decade have exacerbated the problem of youth unemployment, rendering the employment prospects of the unqualified job seeker particularly bleak:

> "Those sectors which unqualified young people traditionally enter when starting work for the first time, such as manufacturing ... are exactly those industries which have experienced the greatest number of net job losses in the past decade" (1982 : 3).

Thus, by the time of the first Thatcher-led Conservative government in 1979, the earlier sociological explorations of the traditional post-school transition to employment (e.g. Carter 1966; Maizels 1970) had become redundant.

Contemporary research indicates that young people are tending to accumulate a much greater range of experiences between the end of compulsory schooling and starting work (Banks *et al* 1992; Furlong 1992). Sociologists who have attempted to chart and describe the new and increasingly "uneasy" (Corbett 1990), "ragged" (Wallace 1987), "extended" (Furlong 1992), or "protracted" (Roberts 1987) transitions have identified a large number of overlapping trajectories which young people are following both into the labour market and into adulthood (Banks *et al* 1992; Chisholm *et al* 1990; Clough *et al* 1986; Hollands 1990; Kerckhoff 1991; Wallace and Cross 1991). Research in the 1980s and 1990s suggests that the traditional post-sixteen progression route to jobs is no longer the smooth and rapid transition it had appeared to be in earlier, more prosperous, decades. The recent ESRC 16 to 19 Initiative, for example, has identified no less than ten main "career trajectories" which involve various combinations of post-school experiences. These include youth unemployment, government inspired, training schemes and special programmes, and increased levels of participation in post-compulsory education and training (Banks *et al* 1992: 35-36).

However, during the Thatcher decade, despite the increase in the number of routes young people were able to follow after the age of 16, those, like my study participants, who were socially or educationally disadvantaged remained particularly vulnerable to unemployment. Young people with above average qualifications, from more affluent backgrounds, followed protracted routes into the newly expanded skilled sectors of the labour market, usually following participation in post-compulsory education or high quality, employer led, youth training. According to Roberts: "For middle-class youth, the expansion of professional and management jobs meant that their positions were less vulnerable than before. Their typical problem was to choose between the widening range of occupations at, and routes towards, this level" (1993 : 24-5).

In contrast, for the minimum age, lowly or unqualified school leavers, such as the participants in my study, there was a continuation of the traditional early post-school entry into the labour market (Banks *et al* 1992; Furlong and Raffe 1989; Furlong 1992). As a consequence, disproportionate numbers of unqualified early leavers were increasingly prone to post-school unemployment. Throughout the Thatcher decade and into the 1990s, these young potential workers were, in increasing numbers, recruited onto a variety of inferior, largely community-based, vocational and (un)employment training schemes (see Chapter Four : Sections 4.5.1 and 4.5.2). The early Job Creation Schemes and Youth Opportunities Programme mainly recruited young people without qualifications (Rees and Atkinson 1982; Markall 1982 : 86-90). In a survey of 3,000 young people who joined YOP in 1980, for example, 71% were found to have no qualifications (Bedeman and Harvey 1981).

In earlier Chapters, I have argued that these state policy interventions were based on a pedagogical model of rectifying deficiency, remedying skill shortages and instilling work discipline (Chapter Four, Section 4.5); they have amounted to an implicit "national youth policy" concerned with the containment, control and socialisation of the young working class (Chapter Two, Section 2.6). Recent research has similarly suggested that, as an

influence on employment status, the community-based Youth Training Schemes have provided the least protection against unemployment. Operative since the mid-1980s, and responsible for "warehousing" the unqualified minimum age school leaver, these schemes have simply perpetuated into the 1990s the earlier emphasis on containment and control:

> "The community based YTS schemes had not compensated for ... poor school performance by getting trainees work, but seemed to have performed more of a 'holding' or 'warehousing' function to be followed by unemployment later on" (Banks *et al* 1992 : 37).

Thus, despite the greater variety of pathways young people may now follow from school into employment, contemporary research indicates that, for those who are socially or educationally disadvantaged, the new transitions are no more open than in previous decades (Banks *et al* 1992). In spite of the New Right's proclamations of opportunity, meritocracy, and classlessness, epitomised in the "classless society" discourse of Prime Minister John Major, social class continues to play a powerful role in determining labour market processes and destinations. Social class affects educational outcomes and qualifications remain a crucial influence on labour market experiences, transitions, and destinations (Furlong 1992; Kerckhoff 1990; Bates and Riseborough 1993). These were the overarching factors which formed the background to the labour market experiences of the unqualified minimum age school leavers who were my study participants; participants who sought to negotiate the new and complex post-school transitions to economic independence, and adult roles and status.

7.2 Protracted Transitions Amongst Study Participants

Leaving school in 1980 was not a traumatic experience for the majority of my study participants. In effect, almost half had prematurely left school before their minimum leaving dates through persistent school refusal (Chapter Two, Section 2.7). Many had rejected or failed at academic routes and were determined to gain self-respect, financial independence and adult autonomy through waged employment. They were not afraid of the world of work as this was the culturally perceived route to demonstrating adult status, but they were apprehensive about the prospect of unemployment. They had realistic job

aspirations based on their understanding of local labour market conditions. Russell Robinson, for example, offered the following comments about his future prospects on the final page of his 1980 Youth and Community Project questionnaire:

> "When I leave school, I want to work in the Parks department but I have asked and there is no chance, so I think I'll be on a Community Programme or the dole which worries me a lot."

Russell's general apprehension was justified, for it was not until six years after school leaving, and following a succession of periods of unemployment, part-time and casual work in secondary labour markets, and three training schemes under the Youth Opportunities Programme that he eventually secured a "proper job" landscape gardening with a private contractor.

Russell and another five participants in my study were the fortunate ones who by the time of the Third Phase (1985-86) of preliminary fieldwork had made a similar protracted transition into primary employment. In contrast, at that time, twenty-five of the thirty-nine participants in my study were unemployed, and the majority of them had been without employment for at least a year. The protracted unemployment was in spite of the persistence of many participants in seeking out and applying for jobs. As noted in Chapter Four (Section 4.4.2), of the nine employed study participants contacted during the Third Phase, six, one female (Amanda Gardiner) and five males (Charlie Dougan, Berksy, Russell Robinson, Mick Kent, and Georgie B) had made protracted transitions into employment. However, this was not a static category and during the Fourth Phase of research (1986-1990) there was some movement among study participants both into and out of employment.

Of the original six protracted transitionaries, five had maintained their employment status throughout the Fourth Phase. The exception was Mick Kent, whose complex and elongated career transition I outlined earlier in Chapter Four (Section 4.4.2). Mick was the unfortunate participant who, following a protracted five year post school transition to work, was eventually made redundant. After exactly three years of "proper" employment,

following this protracted transition, he was once more returned to the dole queue, to undertake his sixth bout of unemployment since school leaving in 1980. Mick had gained his "proper job" as a clerical assistant in a local authority housing department in February 1985. At that time, he had been provided with basic training in computing and was hopeful of "getting on" within the career structure of the housing department. However, in February 1988, as a consequence of the financial 'squeeze' by central government on local authority budgets, he was made redundant. Mick's redundancy occurred as part of a series of 'last in, first out' job shedding within local government departments as a whole. Mick did not find "proper" employment again before 1990 when my research was terminated.

Angry and embittered by his experiences, he abandoned the formal labour market and instead sought out an 'alternative career' with the 'Hoisting Crew' (Chapter Four, Section 4.8.6) within the anti-employment sub-culture of Hartingleigh (see also Chapter Nine). This career development enabled him to reconstruct his identity in terms of oppositionality and combativity towards the conventional world of the ordinary citizen. Despite his best efforts to join this world through conventional work, he perceived it as having fundamentally excluded and betrayed him: "D'ya wanna know what my motto is now, fuck 'em all, fuck 'em all!! ...." His affiliation to the Hoisting Crew provided an alternative route to income, *via* their organised shoplifting expeditions, which supplemented his basic entitlement from state welfare benefits. Moreover, this career development allowed Mick to salvage some vestige of autonomy and self-esteem through the alternative status systems of the local subcultural milieu (Chapter Eight, Sections 8.4.4 and 8.4.5).

The remaining five protracted transitionaries were, during the Fourth Phase (1986-1990) joined by three other study participants who had moved into primary employment. There were two young women, Tracy Smith and Cathy Tittle, and one young man, Jimmy Bee. In Table 12, I have outlined the main components involved in the post-school transition to primary employment for each of the eight participants who had followed this

elongated progression to "proper jobs". Of course, the actual biographical details of each participant's movement tnrough the life course is much more complex than can be displayed in tabulated form. Nevertheless the summaries contained in the Table do capture something of the complexity of participants' post-sixteen progression and the implications for participants' movement towards adult autonomy.

TABLE 12: Protracted Transitions to Full-Time Employment in the Formal Sector by Study Participants (Minimum Age School Leavers with no Qualifications)

Study Participants	Main Components of Transitions	Duration of Components	Duration of Transition	Date of Starting Work	Job Description
Amanda Gardiner	Unemployment Unemployment (with vol.wk) Underemployment Government Schemes Informal Work	1yr 4mths 8 mths 1yr 6mths 6 mths 1yr 6mths	5yrs 6 mths	Oct. 1985	Playgroup and Childminder's Assistant (Council Playgroup)
Tracy Smith	Unemployment Government Schemes Informal Work Incarceration	2yrs 2mths 2 yrs 8 mths 1yr 4mths	6 yrs 2 mths	Aug. 1986	Cook (Community Centre)
Cathy Tittle	Unemployment Underemployment Government Schemes	3yrs 7mths 2yrs 8mths 1 yr	7 yrs 3 mths	Sept. 1987	Florist Assistant
Charlie Dougan	Unemployment Government Schemes Incarceration	2yrs 9mths 3 mths 1yr 1mth	4 yrs 1 mth	May 1984	Van Driver (Haulage Company)
Berksy	Unemployment Other (Armed Forces)	2 yrs 4 yrs	6 yrs	May 1986	Yardsman (Builders Merchants
Russell Robinson	Unemployment Underemployment Government Schemes	3yrs 4mths 1yr 2mths 1yr 6mths	6 yrs	April 1986	Landscape Gardener
Georgie B.	Unemployment Government Schemes Full-time Education	1 yr 1 yr 2 yrs	4 yrs	June 1984	Computer Operator
Jimmy Bee	Unemployment Underemployment Government Schemes Informal Work	3yrs 5mths 1yr 9mths 1 yr 1yr 7mths	7 yrs 9 mths	Mar. 1988	Butcher's Assistant

The main components of each participant's protracted transition contains a mixture of elements including periods of unemployment, punctuated by unemployment with voluntary work; underemployment including part-time, casual and contract work; government schemes including YOP, WEEP and Community Programmes; work within the informal

economy; periods in post-sixteen education; periods of incarceration in borstal or prison; and, for one participant, a period in the armed forces.

The different elements within the protracted transitions of study participants are examined in the following section, although here it is worth briefly emphasising that these elements constitute part of an elongated transition to "proper jobs". My analysis is primarily concerned with an examination of the implications of this protracted transition for participants' movement into adulthood, into adult roles and status. Thus this chapter is not an analysis of first work experience. As Table 12 reveals, for most participants, first work experience was achieved through work experience schemes, special measures placements under the Youth Opportunities Programme, Community Programmes, or casual, part-time, or 'fiddle work'. My concern is with these elements only inasmuch as they constitute facets of the protracted transition to what participants have rightly identified as "proper jobs" (that is, adult employment within the primary sectors of the labour market). Often first work experience in part-time or 'fiddle' jobs was only undertaken in the absence of any real possibility for attaining first work experience in proper jobs. "Beggars can't be choosers", as Jimmy Bee put it when discussing his movement from unemployment into part-time work as an office cleaner: "I'd been on the dole for ages, then the part-time came up. What with the unemployment, and the dole hassling me an' all I thought well, beggars can't be choosers".

7.3 Beggars Can't be Choosers : The Main Components of Transitions

7.3.1 Introduction

For each of the eight protracted transitionaries, their initial post-school transitions were unambiguous. They were not the traditional progressions from school to work, but from school into unemployment. The prolonged periods of unemployment which followed their school leaving were, in most cases, punctuated by semi-compulsory participation in training schemes or special programmes, often under the direct, or implied, threat of

benefit withdrawal or suspension. Participants' experiences on schemes generally did not lead into employment and served only to extend their post-school transition to "proper jobs". In only one case (Georgie B) did participation in a specialist computing scheme lead eventually into primary employment (see Section 7.4.1). For two other participants, Amanda Gardiner and Cathy Tittle, work experience schemes enabled them to secure part-time employment which provided them with further work experience; this eventually resulted in the acquisition of full-time jobs. The details of both Amanda and Cathy's post-school transitions are examined in he case studies in Section 7.6.

Two other participants, Jimmy Bee and Russell Robinson, were also able to secure part-time employment during the course of their protracted transitions to proper jobs. In both cases, the recourse to part-time work was a response to protracted periods of unemployment - "beggars can't be choosers" - and also a strategy undertaken to maintain a connection to the adult world of paid employment. As Russell explained:

> "Apart from the schemes, I'd been signin' on for nearly three years [since school leaving]. I was desperate. I don't mind admittin' it. I thought fuck's sake I'm never gonna get a job ... so even though it was only short time I was fuckin' buzzin' ... By then I would've done anythin' for wages."

At the same time (as the earlier quotation from Jimmy Bee revealed), part-time work was also undertaken to allow the two participants some respite from semi-compulsory scheme participation enforced under the threat of benefit withdrawal. In Russell's case, following periods of unemployment punctuated by two schemes, neither of which led into, or provided training for, his desired work in gardening, his benefit was actually stopped. This occurred in 1984 after Russell had refused two further offers of training placements, one on a community-based training scheme and the second within a training workshop. It was as a consequence of this loss of income that a friend of his uncle's enabled Russell to secure temporary part-time work in a large commercial bakery. The job lasted for almost ten months and involved early morning shifts from 5.00 a.m. until 10.00 a.m., four mornings a week. Russell had to leave home at 4.00 a.m. in order to get to work in time by public transport, but the twenty hours work provided him with a gross weekly income

of £80, a weekly amount which, though not excessive, was considerably more than his withdrawn supplementary benefit entitlement of £22.45 (in 1984).

During the period of ten months he was working in the bakery, Russell managed to save enough money to travel abroad in the company of a friend and his girlfriend. It was during the time spent travelling and camping in France that the trio were able to secure casual (agricultural) employment for almost four months, grape and apple picking. This enabled Russell and his companions to considerably extend their holiday and served also to expose him to a range of new situations and experiences. After his return to England in 1985, Russell's protracted transition contained a further period of unemployment and a third 'divvy scheme' before he was able through informal local connections to secure a proper job, labouring for a landscape gardening contractor. In total, it had taken Russell six years, from school leaving in Spring 1980 to effect his protracted transition to primary employment.

7.3.2 Jimmy Bee : Underemployment and Benefit Hassles

Jimmy Bee's post-school transition was similar to Russell's. Since leaving school in 1980, Jimmy had undergone a total of over three years unemployment punctuated by two schemes which did not lead into permanent employment. As a result of pressure to attend a further placement in a Training Workshop, Jimmy decided to take the opportunity of part-time employment as an office cleaner. This was a job his mother enabled him to secure. Jimmy's mother had been similarly employed for over eight years on a part-time basis by the central contractor of a City Centre based industrial cleaning company; and it was her workplace contacts and influence which provided this limited opportunity for her son. Jimmy was employed part-time for almost two years during which he worked for three hours, between 7.00 p.m. and 10.00 p.m., six evenings per week. The eighteen hours work generated an income of £3.50 per hour or £63 per week gross. His wages were paid fortnightly and he collected these from the City Centre office of the cleaning company.

However, in 1986, Jimmy was "laid off" as part of a rationalisation of the work force when the cleaning company lost one of its larger office cleaning contracts. Jimmy once again 'signed on' and sought to claim the higher rate of (contributory) benefit (i.e. unemployment benefit) on the basis of having paid National Insurance contributions for the period he had been employed part-time. Unfortunately, the Unemployment Benefit Office (UBO) who dealt with his claim could trace no record of his National Insurance contributions and his claim for benefit was refused. When Jimmy remonstrated with the UBO staff and protested that he had been in part-time employment and paying National Insurance contributions, the UBO made enquiries with the cleaning company. The UBO was subsequently informed by Jimmy's former employers that they had "no record" of his employment with them; as a result, the UBO rejected his claim for unemployment benefit on the grounds that there were no records of his National Insurance contributions.

In effect, the cleaning contractors had acted illegally by fraudulently deducting National Insurance contributions from Jimmy's wages without having credited those contributions with the relevant Civil Service department. Aside from its cost-effectiveness, from the employer's point of view such fraudulent deception had the added advantage of nullifying the liability employers have of contributing towards PAYE and National Insurance for employees. The cleaning company cynically sought to deny their culpability by subsequently denying that Jimmy had even been employed by them.

As a consequence, Jimmy found himself in a similar position to many young people in the new harsher economic climate; young people who are uninformed about employment practices and who are so desperate for work that they are vulnerable to deception and exploitation by unscrupulous employers. Jimmy's employers failed to supply him with any record of his part-time employment, or National Insurance contributions, even though under employment legislation employers are legally required to provide employees with written documentation of pay and deductions from pay. As a part-time employee, with no previous employment experience, Jimmy had not considered it unusual that there were no

pay slips with his wages, or that there were no other records of his employment or deductions from his pay. Apart from his mother's verbal testimony, Jimmy had no evidence to support the claim he had been employed and that, in fact, National Insurance contributions had been deducted from his pay prior to him claiming unemployment benefit. Moreover, as he had not been credited with National Insurance contributions during the period of his part-time employment, and as he had not registered as unemployed during this period, he was absent from all official records. As a consequence, he was unable to substantiate his status, either as an employed or unemployed person, in the period immediately prior to claiming benefit, and thus he was treated with a great deal of suspicion by the Department of Health and Social Security (DHSS) to whom he next turned for financial assistance.

When applying to the DHSS for supplementary benefit (the means-tested, non-contributory benefit administered to the unemployed by the DHSS), Jimmy was provided with the claim form 'B1PC', the notorious B1. Claimants are required to complete the form in order to register a claim for supplementary benefit. The B1's notoriety amongst claimants stems from its highly complex format and the fact that the benefit claim form contains questions which require detailed information about all aspects of the claimant's life and circumstances. Unemployed claimants are, for example, required to supply information about last employment, take home pay, when final payments were made prior to unemployment, whether payment for employment remains outstanding, and so on. Such information is required by the DHSS as it has obvious implications for the administration of a means-tested benefit. Thus, for example, if a claimant has received a month's wages as final payment prior to claiming supplementary benefit, such income would be taken into account when assessing benefit entitlement. Effectively supplementary benefit is not paid for any period covered by final pay from employment, even if an employee worked several weeks 'in hand' at the beginning of employment, or if final wages include payments for holiday pay entitlement.

To substantiate a claim for supplementary benefit, the onus is on the unemployed claimant to supply evidence of final payments from employment; as such, the claimant is generally required to provide evidence of last wages in the form of wage slips. Further evidence is also required by the DHSS to substantiate that employment was not terminated 'voluntarily', or on the basis of 'misconduct', as both routes into unemployment constitute grounds for 'benefit suspension'. Jimmy was unable to provide the DHSS with any evidence of his employment with the cleaning company, such as an employment contract; nor was he able to supply wage-slips showing his final payment, or evidence of the terms of his involuntary job termination, as the cleaning company has supplied him with none of these things. Moreover, when the DHSS made their own enquiries with the cleaning company, Jimmy's former employers once again denied that he had actually been employed by them. Their denial cast a shadow of doubt over the very authenticity of his claim. As a consequence, through no fault of his own, Jimmy was caught between the rules and regulations governing eligibility to both contributory and non-contributory benefits.

Neither the UBO nor the DHSS, the two benefit agencies who dealt with his claim for financial assistance as an unemployed person, would accord Jimmy benefit entitlements. The UBO had rejected his claim on the basis that there was no record of his National Insurance contribution, and the DHSS suspended benefit entitlement for six weeks because Jimmy was unable to produce the necessary evidence to substantiate his claim. Neither agency sought to further investigate the employment practices of the cleaning company. Denied income in the period immediately following his part-time work, Jimmy was compelled to seek casual employment within the informal sector of the local labour market.

7.2.3 Fiddle Jobs and Acquisitive Crime

In all, three of the eight participants in my study who made protracted transitions to primary employment, had recourse to the option of 'fiddle work' within the legal, but undeclared 'cash-in-hand' local informal economy. Amanda Gardiner, for example, was

employed within the Hartingleigh Youth and Community Project during the course of her post-school transition. Amanda worked as an assistant with the Community Playgroup and also the 'Mums and Toddlers' group within the Project, and for almost eighteen months was paid cash-in-hand from the Project's petty cash expenses. This enabled her to continue benefit claims and entitlement whilst she simultaneously maintained her standard of living and pursued her work for the Project (see Section 7.6.2). Similarly, Tracy Smith and Jimmy Bee were both, at different times, employed on a cash-in-hand basis by the Donaghue family (see Chapter Four, Section 4.8.2) for working on the market stalls they owned and administered.

In Jimmy Bee's case, the unscrupulous deception perpetrated by the cleaning company which had formerly employed him, together with his experiences of unsympathetic and unfair treatment by the two benefit agencies discussed earlier, introduced a hardened cynical edge to his approach to economic life. After Jimmy had secured work with the Donaghues on one of their market stalls, he continued to sign on as unemployed and was eventually allowed to register a claim for supplementary benefit with the DHSS. At the same time, he gradually evolved various techniques for short-changing customers at the market stall in order to further supplement his income. As he put it, "the name of the game" had become "lookin' after number one".

Some participants had followed this line of reasoning to its logical conclusion and, during the course of their transitions to primary employment, had opted for fully illegal, anti-employment modes of income acquisition, such as shoplifting and handling stolen goods (Tracy Smith), robbery and theft (Charlie Dougan), or burglary (Berksy); activities which in all three participants' post-school transitions had resulted in the attention of the police and the courts. For Tracy Smith (sixteen months imprisonment) and Charlie Dougan (thirteen months 'borstal training'), their eventual incarceration interposed a further time gap in their protracted transitions to 'proper jobs' However, amongst the protracted transitionaries, the recourse to acquisitive criminality was a fairly limited option,

one which was pursued intermittently and without much 'success'. The most common post-school experience was generally that of protracted bouts of unemployment punctuated by government schemes.

7.4 Schemes as Transitional Routes

Over the last decade, schemes have become important routes between school and work for an increasing number of young people. Of the eight study participants who had effected protracted post-school transitions to primary occupations, seven had undertaken one or more varieties of employment training scheme. In the main, scheme participation did not lead into employment and generally served only to delay participants' transitions to 'proper jobs'.

Although schemes provide a route which most young people will follow at some point in their post-school transitions, few of the better qualified school leavers experience them (Furlong 1992; Banks *et al* 1992). Schemes tend to be stratified so that unqualified school leavers and those with some leaving qualifications are unlikely to enter the same types of scheme (Banks *et al* 1992; Bates and Riseborough 1993). In the best kind of schemes, described by Raffe (1987) as "sponsorship", something akin to a traditional apprenticeship was on offer, with the added advantage for girls that they were not excluded. Although such schemes were known about in the local grapevine, only one study participant (Georgie B.) secured this type of training placement. Employers who were responsible for the administration of schemes in the "sponsorship" sector could afford to be selective in their recruitment of trainees and generally some level of school, or post-school, qualification was required. Once placed on such a scheme, the young trainee was almost certain to continue into full-time employment (Banks *et al* 1992; Bates and Riseborough 1993; Raffe 1987). This was the outcome for Georgie B. whose specialist computing Data Processing Threshold Scheme followed on from two years post-school education and led directly into full-time employment as a computer operator (Section 7.4.1).

Most schemes undertaken by study participants were "contest" or "sink" schemes (Roberts and Parsell 1989). Writers, such as Lee *et al* (1990) and Jarvis and Prais (1988), have illustrated how schemes in the "contest" sector have been abused by employers as a means of subsidising recruitment procedures. In such cases, far more trainees were taken on than the employer actually needed for the workforce and then, on the basis of "job performance", a few would be retained. In Hartingleigh, for example, several participants had encountered such exploitative treatment at the hands of one particularly notorious regional department store (see, for example, the experiences of Wendy Fisher, highlighted in the case study - Chapter Four, Section 4.5.2).

In the early 1980s, the department store developed a local reputation for abusing the schemes by over-recruiting trainees for training placements. Anecdotal evidence collected by community activists in North Manchester suggested that the work experience schemes administered by the department store provided no real training in the terms trainees were recruited for (usually retail selling), nor were trainees offered permanent employment at the end of the scheme. The store's management policy of recruiting large numbers of MSC subsidised trainees for a range of menial, unskilled tasks (such as cleaning, dishwashing, packing, etc.), under the guise of training for retail sales, was subsequently the focus for lobbying and picketing organised by an *ad hoc* federation of local community activists and ex-trainees (*Hartingleigh Wurlitzer* 13.2.83). As a result of this local pressure, the department store was eventually subjected to investigation by the MSC and subsequently forfeited its role as a work experience sponsor and administrator.

Charlie Dougan was one of four study participants who had undertaken work experience scheme placements at the store. Charlie had been recruited after a post-school period of unemployment which had lasted for twelve months; his training was to have been in the retail sales section of the 'gents' outfitters'. However, after three months, he abandoned the scheme without having been provided with any work experience in retail selling. As Charlie recalled:

> "I sussed it right off, it was bollocks. Do this, do that ... mop floors, clean fuckin' windows ... I was supposed to be learnin' gents' outfittin' - that's why I did it in the first place. I thought I'd be able to 'ave a few bits an' pieces away ... It was bollocks, I never got nowhere near the fuckin' clothes ... just moppin' an' carryin' ... I thought fuck it ... 'ad it away after a bit ... I couldn't stand it ... It's like them schemes ... they just rip you off an' fuck you about, an' some dick 'ead tellin' you what to do ... No danger, I was off ... no sense in carryin' on when you've sussed it, you're just a mug if you do."

Further evidence suggests that even the more 'honourably' administered schemes in the contest sector imparted only very basic skill levels and, if employer-led, were often so job specific that they had little currency in terms of experience or credentials for the external labour market (Jarvis and Prais 1988; Lee *et al* 1990; Roberts and Parsell 1989).

The most common form of schemes available to the protracted transitionaries were the community-based "sink" schemes (Roberts and Parsell 1989). The sink schemes were common in the transitions of most participants in my study. In the main, these community-based schemes were detached from, and provided little access to, the processes of recruitment and selection within the labour market and have been described by Raffe (1987) as the "detached sector". According to Banks *et al*, on the sink schemes, "trainees were basically in a waiting room ... to join an extended job queue. They could lose their place in the queue through poor attendance, work records or references, but it was more difficult for them to enhance their past prospects through extra effort on the scheme" (Banks *et al* 1992 : 42).

Tracy Smith's experiences of a twelve month placement on a Community Programme (CP) illustrates the holding, or warehousing, function of such schemes. Tracy's CP was one of three sink schemes she had undertaken since school leaving. Her first two placements were six month schemes organised through the Youth Opportunities Programme, one was a community placement in a local day-care centre for the elderly, and the second a work experience scheme in an office of the social services department (a placement that was also undertaken by Cathy Tittle). Neither of these six month schemes resulted in full-time employment for Tracy.

Tracy's third scheme, the twelve month Community Programme, was a placement secured through her probation officer. This followed Tracy's early release from prison on parole. Her CP was one of several schemes administered locally by the National Association for the Care and Resettlement of Offenders (NACRO):

> "NACRO's CP schemes aim to provide up to twelve months employment for ex-offenders and others who are the most disadvantaged ... The schemes offer a service for those who have been in prison or before the courts, those who have poor, if any, work records, and those who find it particularly difficult to find work" (NACRO 1985a : 2).

In 1985, through grants provided by the Home Office and the MSC, NACRO was administering: 45 Youth Training Schemes (under the community-based Mode B1 option of YTS); 84 Community Programme schemes; and 13 Voluntary Project Programme schemes. In total NACRO provided 13,500 placements for trainees throughout England and Wales (Crow *et al* 1985 : 2). However, NACRO scheme administrators explicitly acknowledged that the purpose of the schemes was not to provide full-time employment: "The number of full-time jobs obtained by participants was seen only as a crude measure of success ... it was recognised that what the schemes could do to ensure this happened was limited " (Crow *et al* 1985 : 18). Instead the containment function of the NACRO-administered schemes was overtly stated:

> "The schemes would limit, reduce, contain and diminish offending in one way or another. At the most basic level, the balance of common sense suggests that whilst someone is engaged in one activity they're probably not engaged in another" (Crow *et al* 1985 : 18).

As far as young people were concerned, it was the hope of NACRO scheme administrators that "the best thing the schemes could aim to do was stretch out the period between offences in a constructive was" (*ibid* : 19).

Tracy Smith's potential for re-offending was "constructively contained" on an 'urban improvement scheme' under the NACRO Community Programme. This included clearing gardens for the elderly, reclaiming derelict land, refurbishing second-hand furniture, and internally painting and decorating a Local Authority building. Tracy Smith's experiences reproduced that of other study participants on community-based sink schemes. She

similarly testified to the weak and inadequate training structures: "The supervisor kept goin' missin' ... an' when we was left to paint ... offices there were no brushes ... fourteen tins of undercoat an' no brushes ... it was like a bloody circus except we were the clowns". Inadequate training and the low level of skills imparted serve to confirm the containment function of the NACRO schemes and belie the claim that "the schemes should enable workers to learn and practice new work skills which ... will increase their chance of securing permanent employment" (NACRO 1985a : 3).

After a protracted post-school transition which lasted for over six years, Tracy eventually obtained permanent, full-time employment as a cook within the Youth and Community Centre of the Hartingleigh Project. This was employment secured through informal contacts with women workers at the Centre, and was totally unconnected to the two years of "employment training" schemes she had endured since school leaving. Tracy was still employed by the Project when I last contacted her in 1992.

Out of the eight protracted transitionaries, two study participants had secured their full-time employment - proper jobs - as an indirect consequence of their training schemes. In Amanda Gardiner's case, her first proper job in a Local Authority funded playgroup reproduced the kind of work she had been involved in on her community-based scheme within the Hartingleigh Project. Her scheme within the Project's Community Playgroup and 'Mums and Toddlers' group supplied training and experience for her subsequent employment.

Although Cathy Tittle's second six-month work experience scheme in a florists shop did not result in permanent employment, the scheme, like Amanda Gardiner's, similarly provided her with employment credentials. The experience and training in retail floristry subsequently enabled her to obtain part-time work in a second City Centre florists. After over two and a half years of part-time employment within this florists, Cathy's status was

upgraded to that of full-time employee. Both Amanda and Cathy's post-school transitions are examined in detail in Section 7.6

In only one case, that of Georgie B, did post-school education, followed by participation in a specialist Data Processing Threshold computing scheme, lead directly to primary employment.

7.4.1 Georgie B. : "A Decent Scheme and a Decent Career"

Georgie B. was originally contacted by the Project in 1979, some two years after his family had moved to Hartingleigh from Sheffield where his father had formerly been employed in the steel industry. Following his father's redundancy and a subsequent three year period of unemployment, Georgie's parents had left Sheffield and bought and moved into a terraced house in the King's Road area of the ward. The family had made this move after Georgie's father had, through extended family contacts, managed to secure a semi-skilled job in a local paintworks.

Georgie was originally drawn into the Project's developing Youth Group by Jim Donovan, the Project's neighbourhood worker, as a result of being 'rescued' by Jim from the midst of a melee of taunting, intimidatory youths in the superstore car park. Georgie was eventually included in Jim's ten interviewees during the Project's 1980 Youth Survey, and was subsequently encouraged by Jim to attend early Youth Group meetings and youth clubs organised by the evolving Project. A frail, quiet, shy and sensitive boy, Georgie had not fared well in this introduction to the Project's developing Youth Group. Drawn into the group from the Kings Road area, Georgie suffered from the same processes of exclusion and stigmatisation outlined in Denise Weldon's case study in Chapter Six (Section 6.6.2). Characterised as a "snob", "shirtlifter" and "mong" (which is a disablist, pejorative diminution of mongol, that is Down's Syndrome) by the dominant group within the Youth Club, Georgie was subjected to a continuous process of verbal and (when youthworkers were unable to intervene) occasionally physical bullying. Often when

attending early Youth Group meetings, these incidents would leave him shaken and in tears.

In part, Georgie's physical and emotional frailty was the result of a combination of childhood ailments including eczema, diabetes and asthma, which, though he was a bright and intelligent boy, had impeded his development both socially and educationally. As an only child, protective parenting and the tendency of his illnesses to produce repeated school absences had affected his acquisition of educational qualifications and interactive social skills. Lack of the latter left him helplessly unable to engage in, or cope with, the continuous barrage of banter and horseplay within the Youth Group. The constant explosive combativity of the group within the confined spaces of Youth Group meetings seemed to overwhelm Georgie, who, when not engaged in enlisting adult support, retreated into a defensive reaction of bewildered insularity. This tendency was retrospectively explained by him as a consequence of his illnesses ("I felt rough most of the time"); school absenteeism ("I was never there to make friends"); overprotective parents ("They never wanted me to go out - my mother thought I was always on the point of going into a coma"); and his parents' move, when he was thirteen, from the area in Sheffield where he had "lived and grown up":

> "I never really got over it [moving from Sheffield to Hartingleigh] ... it seemed like a different world, full of lunatics who hated me and strange, distorted people ... Of course I never understood that's exactly how they were seeing ME ... But they were so cruel, it seemed impossible to fit in."

His increasingly withdrawn and disjointed mien, together with a pronounced Yorkshire accent ("They kept saying I was a Leeds [United Football Club] fan, I've never been to Leeds and I don't even like football") ensured that he remained isolated. Georgie was encouraged to attend early youth clubs held by the Project in the company of a small group of young people from the Kings Road area. The Kings Road group were collectively labelled "snobs and shirtlifters" by the majority of Youth Group members drawn from

Hartingleigh's council housing estates. However, even within the Kings Road group of young Project affiliates, Georgie occupied an insular, marginalised position.

Georgie's saving grace, main interest and hobby, was one of the earliest commercially available home computers, bought for him by his parents when he was fifteen. Georgie's isolationist hobby enabled him to retreat from the harsh 'cut and thrust' of youthful street life in Hartingleigh into a private world of fantasy, role-play, space-invader, and puzzle-solving, computer games, a hobby that took him off the streets, away from the cruel taunts, and into the private domain of his attic bedroom. Here instructions contained in the specialist home computer games magazines to which he subscribed enabled him to extend his keyboard skills, initially through the simple programming of computer games. Utilising early programming codes such as BASIC (Beginners Allpurpose Symbolic Instruction Code), Georgie began to lay the foundations for this future career.

As a result of his childhood ailments and repeated school absences, Georgie had failed to gain qualifications upon school leaving. However, despite this early setback, he left school with the firm intention of seeking "a job involving computers"; an employment aspiration recorded in his 1980 Youth Project questionnaire and one that was reflective of his all consuming interest and hobby. In his early post-school period, and with the guidance of Jim Donovan at the Project, Georgie wrote to every computer company in the Greater Manchester area. However, despite his persistence in seeking first work experience in computing, for almost a year Georgie was unemployed. He did not register as unemployed because his parents did not wish him to, thus for this period he was entirely financially dependent upon them.

In the summer months of 1981, Georgie's father found a better paid job in a small engineering works in Oldham, a small ex-cotton town some twelve or so miles from Hartingleigh. Shortly afterwards, the family sold their home and moved to Lees, a suburb on the outskirts of Oldham, much closer to his father's new place of work. Shortly after

this move, he attended an interview, arranged by his parents, with the local careers officer. During the interview, it was suggested to Georgie that, in view of his interest in computers, he should undertake a specialist course that was run at his local Technical and Further Education College. The course, organised through the National Computer College, offered basic training in computing and computer operating and included "data bases, spreadsheets and desk top publishing". Although primarily College-based, during the two years training, Georgie was also able to undertake two three month 'industrial placements' and he described these as being "a very useful means of acquiring relevant skills". At the end of the two year course, trainees were offered secondment with computer companies under a specialist twelve month training scheme, also sponsored by the National Computer College, called the Data Processing Threshold Scheme. Georgie's twelve month placement was with DEC (Digital Equipment Corporation), a large multi-national computer organisation which took several trainees from the College-based course Georgie attended. Here Georgie's skills were exercised in an industrial context and he acquired all the basic elements of commercial computer operating including "loading discs and tapes onto computers and running programmes". This was a "decent scheme" which would lead to a "decent career" in the computer industry.

At the end of the twelve month placement, Georgie was quickly able to find employment with a personalised printing company who utilised CAD (Computer Aided Design) and CAM (Computer Aided Manufacture) for their printing processes. The firm produced items like "business cards, letter heads, concert tickets and so on", as well as "personalised and business stationery of all kinds". In 1986, as a result of this employment, Georgie was the most highly paid of all the employed participants in my study; he earned a net monthly salary of £840 for a thirty-seven hour week. Occasional overtime and weekend work could boost this monthly income to over £1,000 (net).

Georgie maintained continuous employment with the printing company up until my last contacts with him in 1992. However, during our last conversation, he expressed the

desire for career advancement from computer operating into programming. Towards this end, he had been seeking out and applying for jobs throughout Great Britain and was hopeful of a career move in the near future as a result of two interviews he was awaiting; one with an international company based in London and another with a UK-based company in St. Albans. Georgie anticipated securing one of these jobs which would increase his salary, provide more varied and challenging work, and enable him to contemplate an employer-assisted move to the South of England.

7.4.2 Protracted Transitions and Government Schemes : A Concluding Discussion

Clearly, Georgie's experiences of scheme participation were the exception rather than the rule. Generally, participation in what were derogatively described as "poxy", "manky", "divvy", or "Mickey Mouse" employment training schemes did not produce full-time employment, and served mainly to 'warehouse' participants' employment aspirations. The significance of youth training for early post-school transitions is the potential value they hold for the progression to proper jobs. As the MSC rhetoric proclaims, scheme participation -

> "provides training for people who want to brighten up their job prospects by adding to skills they've already got or by learning new skills employers are calling for ... A job after training? We can't guarantee you one. But with your new or improved skill and the MSC's own job finding service, you've got a better chance" (cited in Coffield *et al* 1986 : 103)

The difficulties most participants had in getting jobs after schemes created a local folk lore about their exploitative, containment, or 'slave labour', qualities. Participants had a short-term instrumental orientation to schemes, often viewing them as an inferior substitute for work. Often scheme participation was enforced under the threat of benefit suspension or withdrawal, and two participants (Russell Robinson and Jimmy Bee) undertook unskilled part-time and casual work rather than the schemes that were offered. When placed on schemes, participants usually encountered a degree of employer exploitation, insufficient pay, and no guarantee of employment at the end of training. Thus, despite all the efforts of Tory governments to establish a universal "training culture"

(Banks *et al* 1992) on Continental lines, there was little indication amongst study participants that they had taken it on board. The protracted transitionaries were characterised by an overwhelming desire for "proper jobs".

7.5 Protracted Transitions and Work Commitment

The protracted transitions of each of the eight study participants were characterised by extended bouts of post-school unemployment. Protracted periods of unemployment did not, however, lead to labour market withdrawal or an erosion of work commitment. The introduction of government-inspired training schemes and special programmes were partially influenced by a concern that young people who spent part of their formative post-school years without employment would not develop a commitment to work. According to some commentators, for example:

> "Young people who remain unemployed for a long time tend to turn away from values and standards that are considered important in our society, as a result of which they are no longer found suitable to take part in the process of labour - not even when there are plenty of jobs" (Jehoel-Gijsbers and Groot 1989 : 492).

Although labour market withdrawal was a significant factor in the post-school transitions of study participants who had retreated into 'alternative careers' within Hartingleigh's sub- and anti-employment subcultures (a strategy which brought positive psychological benefits), for the protracted transitionaries work commitment was generally maintained during their bouts of unemployment. In Amanda Gardiner's case, for example, despite a protracted transition to full-time employment which lasted for over five years, part-time, voluntary, contract, and informal work for the Youth and Community Project, enabled her to maintain an almost continuous association with the routines and disciplines of employment. Similarly, the periods of casual, informal, or part-time work undertaken by Cathy Tittle, Russell Robinson, Tracy Smith and Jimmy Bee ensured them a tentative connection to the world of paid employment and to employment commitment.

Although Georgie B. effected a four years post-school transition to his first full-time job, without recourse to casual or part-time work, Georgie's work commitment was

sustained through training in education and on the specialist computing scheme he undertook in pursuit of his desired occupation. Similarly Berksy's period of army enlistment provided him with a framework of work discipline and commitment which subsequently enabled him to secure employment after his army discharge.

The eight protracted transitionaries were characterised by a general commitment to work, in part due to the example of the employment of family income providers. In six out of eight cases, the families of the protracted transitionaries included main income providers (usually fathers) who were in full-time employment. Georgie B.'s father was, for example, during the course of my study, employed in semi-skilled work in a paint manufacturers and later in an engineering works; Charlie Dougan's step-father was employed as a bus driver; Amanda Gardiner's father was employed as a health and safety officer within the local authority; Cathy Tittle's father worked as a builders labourer, and her mother was also employed part-time in a bakers shop; Berksy's parents were both employed, his father as a council labourer and his mother as a part-time cleaner in a primary school; and Jimmy Bee's mother was employed part-time as an office cleaner. In contrast, the long-term unemployed participants in my study were characterised by families within which there was generally a prolonged history of parental and sibling unemployment. The long-term unemployed participants had typically replaced commitment to the orthodox formal labour market in favour of 'alternative careers' within the informal sector, or fully illegal modes of income acquisition within the anti-employment subculture.

According to Hayes (1970), family influences are highly significant in the development of occupational aspirations, although other research has also emphasised the significance of social class (Banks *et al* 1992; Furlong 1992), gender (Griffin 1985; Wallace 1987), and opportunities within the local labour market (Banks *et al* 1992; Ashton *et al* 1988). Other research has directed attention to the ways in which work attitudes are generated within a particular community or work environment (Goldthorpe *et al* 1968; 1969). The

combination of such factors produces a set of local experiences and these experiences ultimately give form to employment attitudes and commitment (see Chapter Eight, Section 8.4.4).

The families of the protracted transitionaries could generally be situated at the mid-point of the rough-respectable continuum. Apart from Georgie B., whose parents lived in the Kings Road district of 'respectable' owner occupied terraced houses (at least during the early period of his post-school transition) and Berksy and Charlie Dougan (who were from families who lived on the 'rough' Chicken Lane estate), the remaining five protracted transitionaries were drawn from families who lived in Hartingleigh's Canton and Marton council housing estates. In terms of local attitudes and perceptions, the Canton and Marton council estates were considered not as 'respectable' as the Kings Road district, but not as 'rough' as the 'Jungle' (Chicken Lane estate); for a detailed explanation of these social divisions, see Chapter Four (Section 4.2.1).

In Chapter Six (Sections 6.3 and 6.4), I sought to highlight the significant advantages 'respectable' working class families can bestow on family members seeking work in a restricted labour market. The factors that were significant included 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, 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 directly to employment from the vast majority who had not. In contrast, the income providers within 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 supply the same social or labour market advantages as the family members of the traditional transitionaries. Moreover, in terms of the employment commitment conferred by working class respectability (Chapter Six, Section 6.3), the income providers within the

families of the protracted transitionaries tended to view work as a means to an end, not as a method for social advancement or as a source of intrinsic satisfaction (Ashton and Field 1976). As a consequence, the main income providers within the families of the protracted transitionaries generally viewed employment status as forming a more peripheral part of their overall self image than did the income providers within the families of the traditional transitionaries discussed in Chapter Six. Within the families of the protracted transitionaries, few inherent satisfactions were expected from employment. As Furlong has similarly argued:

> "Many jobs are alienating and produce few rewards. In these circumstances, satisfactions are not gained through work but through material rewards or participation in shop floor cultures ... Commitment at this level is not necessarily linked to any of the inherent satisfactions which may be gained from work as an activity. Commitment to work may be simply due to the importance of the material rewards to be gained from employment, in which case lack of satisfaction from life without a job can often be tied to the importance of money" (Furlong 1988 : 122).

Research has indicated that many of those young people from the lower working class, destined for low skilled and unskilled jobs, leave school with a peripheral interest in work as a domain of potential personal achievement or source of social advancement (Ashton and Field 1976; Willis 1977). Contemporary research undertaken since the onset of mass youth unemployment has similarly illustrated how work-centred attitudes are developed in "alienated" or "alienated instrumental" terms by many young people seeking low skilled jobs (Brown 1987; Jenkins 1983). In Jenkins's research, for example, even the less alienated 'ordinary kids' of his study were "most interested in wages, followed by the kinds of work they would be asked to do" (1983 : 75).

The distinction between modes of work commitment is significant. Apart from Georgie B. who had more in common with the "getting on, getting out" frames of reference of the traditional transitionaries (who were similarly distinguished from their contemporaries by a background of parental working class 'respectability' - Chapter Six, Sections 6.3 and 6.4), the protracted transitionaries were generally characterised by the alienated orientation to employment. The alienated orientation gives rise to a "getting in" frame of reference.

According to Brown (1987), the overwhelming desire is to get "in" to the adult working class culture through employment and the income derived from employment: "Here there is a concern to 'get into' the ... world of working class adults and employment at the earliest possible opportunity" (1987 : 31). The overwhelming desire of the protracted transitionaries to "get into" employment was not informed by a concomitant desire to enter work for its intrinsic satisfactions, or as a means of social advancement, but rather to attain adult autonomy by earning a wage; to get into the adult working class world through work.

Ashton (1986) has suggested that employment commitment is often defined in terms which are imbued with middle class attitudes and values. Thus, for example, the middle class commitment to work shares the assumption contained within Weber's definition of the 'Protestant Work Ethic', namely that work is regarded as a moral duty and people are seen as gaining self-fulfilment and self-expression through employment participation. In reality, work holds little intrinsic value for a significant proportion of the labour force save only instrumentally in terms of its provision of income. Thus, the protracted transitionaries generally did not regard work as an important feature of their lives in terms of the satisfactions to be gained from work achievements. Employment was not crucially central to their self-concept. Instead work commitment was sustained because of the realisation that work provides the key to material satisfactions and the enjoyment of non-work time. As Russell Robinson put it:

> "It's not like I wanted summat posh in an office ... just a job's all was askin' ... just a job an' a wage. I didn't care what it was ... I wasn't fussed ... I'd do anythin' as long as it pays."

Or, as Tracy Smith proclaimed:

> "I never expected to be drivin' a Porsche ... all I was after was a decent wage."

And, as Jimmy Bee argued:

> "No work means no money, no money means no goin' out, no goin' out means you're stuck in the 'ouse all the time, stuck in the 'ouse all the time means you go off your bloody 'ead."

7.5.1 Job Seeking

Evidence for the non-erosion of work commitment of the protracted transitionaries could be gleaned from the amount of dedicated effort they devoted to job hunting. Even in the face of months and sometimes years of fruitless job searching, rejection by potential employers, exploitation and inadequate training on schemes, the failure of such schemes to subsequently produce employment, and despite the significant periods of time participants spent in casual, contract, informal and part-time work, the protracted transitionaries, nevertheless, maintained their commitment to finding "proper" jobs.

There were three main approaches undertaken by participants in the search for jobs: through formal agencies including the Job Centre and Careers Service; through contacting employers directly either by letter, telephone or in person; and through informal agencies such as relatives, friends or local connections.

Sometimes the frustrations of fruitless job seeking were exacerbated by the insistence of the formal job finding agencies, the Job Centre or Careers Service, that participants should frequently attend interviews to substantiate they were "actively seeking work". The direct or implied threat of benefit withdrawal or suspension ensured a reluctant compliance with such bureaucratist demands. Inappropriate and "Mickey Mouse" schemes were also recruited for by Careers Officers using the same financial threat. Participants also complained of job cards, the system used to advertise vacancies in Job Centres, actually disguising schemes as jobs. Unwittingly, participants would make enquiries about what they took to be a proper job - on the basis of information supplied on a job card - only to be told by the Job Centre staff that the job was in fact a scheme. The unwitting participant would then be invited to register for the scheme. As Charlie Dougan exclaimed after one such encounter at the Job Centre: "For fuck's sake, talk about the 'ard sell ... you'd think the bastards were on a percentage or somethin'".

The careers officers were also criticised by participants for emphasising the importance of further education and formal training in the search for employment; hence their values were directly at odds with those of most study participants who were generally antipathetic to school and post-school educational goals. As Brown has emphasised, for those seeking to "get into" the adult working class:

> "Their future reference is the world of working class adults rather than the world of 'school kids', and they will leave school and find employment at the first opportunity in order to have money in their pockets and claim adult independence (Brown 1987 : 105).

As Russell Robinson proclaimed: "I didn't want to go to college, they [the Careers Office] kept sayin' why don't you go to college. I couldn't get through to them ... the only reason I was there was 'cause I wanted a job".

Such experiences ensured that, among study participants, there developed an attitude of suspicion and hostility towards these formal mediating agencies. The popular view was that the Job Centre and Careers Service, like the Department of Health and Social Security, functioned not to help, but rather to harass and humiliate them. In only one case, that of Georgie B. examined earlier (Section 7.4.1) did guidance by the Careers Service result in post-school education. Georgie's two year college course in basic computing led into a "sponsored sector" scheme (Roberts and Parsell 1989) and was eventually followed by full-time employment.

Other formal mediating agencies were the local and regional newspapers. Cathy Tittle, for example, secured her first part-time employment in a City Centre florists by responding immediately, in person, to a job she saw advertised in the regional newspaper. The part-time work enabled Cathy to gain a tentative foothold in the labour market and eventually her job was upgraded to permanent full-time employment (see Section 7.6.3)

Participants also undertook the strategy of travelling to the City Centre printers of the regional evening newspaper in order to secure its earliest editions, which were available

from mid-day onwards. After such an edition had been obtained and ready armed with a pocketful of ten pence pieces, participants would race to the nearest public telephone box to pore over the 'situations vacant' columns. Here they would be poised to make that all important early call to prospective employers. By the mid-1980s, the competition for jobs had become so fierce that queues would begin to form several hours before the early edition of the newspaper was to be printed. By the time the first edition was available, there would be queue of four or five hundred young job hunters. There were also reports of the strategy being developed to the extent of job seekers enlisting confederates to 'mind' public telephone boxes until the newspaper purchaser had arrived. This strategy had enabled Jimmy Bee to secure his first proper job in a butchers shop; a job he obtained in March 1988 almost eight years after school leaving (Section 7.8.3).

The second strategy of job seeking was that of contacting potential employers directly. Georgie B., for example, in his post-school period of unemployment, drafted a 'C.V.' and covering letter with the help of Jim Donovan at the Youth and Community Centre. After being typed by Centre staff, the speculative job enquiries were photocopied and dispatched to all the computer companies in Greater Manchester that were listed in the Yellow Pages. Similarly, Cathy Tittle, in her early period of job seeking, had a standard letter of application typed and photocopied by Centre staff. These were sent to retail shops and stores throughout a wide area. She followed up this initial enquiry by contacting numerous shops by telephone and in person, whilst seeking her first 'proper' job. Despite their efforts, both Georgie and Cathy were unsuccessful in these approaches.

After his four year spell in the armed forces, Berksy's first job in a York builders merchants was the product of systematically "pounding the beat" within a demarcated area. In this he undertook the task of walking round a particular area, on a day-by-day basis, in order to present himself personally to potential employers. As a result of this strategy, he eventually secured permanent full-time employment. His period in the army

was also significant in providing a general reference for his employment suitability (Section 7.6.4).

A third mode of job search strategy involved the mediation of informal networks of friends and relatives. The practice of securing jobs through 'whom you know and not what you know' has been explored by other researchers (see for example Coffield *et al* 1986 : 123; Wallace 1987 : 58). Certainly for the three study participants who had secured a traditional post-school transition directly to employment, the influence of family members was highly significant. Among the families of the three traditional transitionaries, there were family histories of prolonged employment and the consequent ability of family members to confer labour market advantages through informal workplace contacts (Chapter Six, Section 6.2). Among the protracted transitionaries, however, such advantages were constrained by the unemployment of family members, or their employment in vulnerable low-skilled or unskilled jobs - forms of employment which did not generally provide access to work for job-seeking siblings. However, both Russell Robinson and Jimmy Bee, during the course of their protracted post-school transitions to proper jobs, were able to secure casual, part-time employment as a result of family contacts. In Russell's case, a friend of his uncle's enabled him to gain temporary part-time employment in a bakery, and Jimmy Bee's mother, through her work as a part-time office cleaner, was able to notify him of a similar vacancy as soon as it arose (Section 7.3.2) Charlie Dougan also secured his first proper job with a haulage company in London as a result of the workplace contacts and influence of his cousin who was employed by the same company.

In the case of three of the eight protracted transitionaries, first proper jobs were secured not through family contacts and influence but, rather, through local informal connections who notified them in advance about possible vacancies. Amanda Gardiner's work in a local authority funded playgroup was secured as a result of the intervention of Project youthworker, Marie Hulton. Marie's informal contacts in the Marton Brook

playgroup ensured her an advance notification that the vacancy was forthcoming and, as a result of her direct intercession, Amanda was able to successfully secure the job. Similarly, Tracy Smith, after several years of unsuccessful job searching, was notified by another Project youthworker, Gail Hindle, that a vacancy in the kitchen at the Youth and Community Centre would be available if she was interested. Tracy eventually secured the job as a cook and was subsequently employed by the Project until my research was completed. Russell Robinson's employment by a landscape gardening contractor came as a result of a "tip off" by a friend of his girlfriend's father. Russell had been unsuccessfully seeking such work since school leaving in 1980 and therefore responded immediately by contacting the contractor in person. He was subsequently taken on and has been employed continuously since April 1986.

Most individuals, during the course of their protracted transitions to proper jobs, tended to use a combination of the three job seeking strategies simultaneously. Friends or relatives would hear of potential job vacancies because someone was leaving and ensured that local networks were informed even before the vacancy officially arose. For this reason, participants complained of the futility of applying for work through the official mediating agencies when most of the vacancies had been informally filled even before they had reached the display boards in the Job Centre. New employers, such as the local superstore which opened in the first phase of my study, used the Job Centre for recruitment, but more established employers with extensive pre-existing communications networks seldom had need of recourse to the official agencies.

7.5.2 Conclusions

One of the main observations of my research is that the unemployed participants were not a discrete group. I found no simple correlation between duration of unemployment and participants' reactions. There were a variety of reactions among individuals and, over time, within any one participant. Such observations bring into question the findings of psychological studies of the unemployed which claim that people move through discrete

psychological stages when enduring protracted periods of unemployment (see, Chapter Four, Section 4.6.3 and, for example, Breakwell 1985; Harrison 1976; Hill 1978). It is claimed that shock, optimism, despair, and finally resignation, are the common stages in the psychological responses to unemployment. While some participants did resign themselves to their labour market position, this was not in terms of a fatalistic acceptance, but rather in terms of dismissing the opportunities (or lack of them) available in the formal labour market in favour of those within the local informal labour market. Through such a personal strategy, the discipline and routines of employment and labour market commitment were sustained throughout prolonged bouts of unemployment. When formal labour market opportunities became available, participants were quickly able to change their responses in line with the new requirements.

Evidence suggests that there is a need to move away from individualistic, psychological explanations which espouse a deterministic "deprivation" hypothesis for the consequences of unemployment (see Chapter Four, Section 4.6.3). The danger of individualistic explanations for mass phenomena like youth unemployment is that they may lead into assumptions that such mass phenomena can be best understood by reference to the personal characteristics of individuals. In this respect, the point made by Kelvin (1984) is relevant, in that the very language used in connection with unemployment is imbued with notions which implicitly stigmatise people; for example, the unemployed receive 'welfare', 'allowances' or 'benefits' rather than payments which can be considered as rights. These and other terms such as 'assistance' or 'relief' are "all redolent with images of charity to the inadequate" (Kelvin 1984 : 419). Local unemployment statistics make nonsense of any attempt to explain unemployment in terms of the personal characteristics of the unemployed (see Chapter One, Section 1.7). In this respect, it is difficult to distinguish between the participants in my study who had made a protracted transition to proper jobs and those who had not. Neither educational qualifications, nor physical attributes, nor enthusiasm for work, nor any other personal quality, explained the difference. Having relatives, friends or local connections who sought to inform the participant about potential

vacancies explained more of the variation than any other single factor, a point similarly made by both Coffield *et al* (1986) and Wallace (1987).

7.6 Protracted Transitions : Four Portraits

7.6.1 Introduction

In this section, I examine in detail the protracted transitions to proper jobs of four study participants. Each of the transitions highlights the mixture of elements to be found in the post-school transitions of those eight study participants who eventually secured primary employment. For Amanda Gardiner, her five and a half years post-school transition to full-time employment in a local authority funded playgroup included: a protracted period of unemployment which lasted for over a year; a period of eight months unemployment, with voluntary work in Hartingleigh's Youth and Community Centre; one six month scheme; a period of one and a half years underemployment in part-time and contract work; and a period of informal work for the Project which also lasted for a year and a half.

Similarly Cathy Tittle's post-school transition lasted for over seven years before she managed to secure her first full-time job in a florist shop. Cathy's post-school transition included a staggering total of over three and a half years registered unemployment despite her dogged persistence in pursuing, and applying for, employment in retail shops. Aside from a protracted period of unemployment, Cathy's transition to her first proper job included two government schemes (six months on each scheme), and over two and a half years of underemployment in part-time work.

Charlie Dougan's and Berksy's transitions occurred *via* unsuccessful attempts at post-school alternative careers within Hartingleigh's anti-employment subculture. Incarceration for Charlie and a period in the army for Berksy paradoxically resulted in geographical mobility which facilitated full-time employment in London (for Charlie) and York (for Berksy). This followed protracted post-school periods of unemployment which, in

Charlie's case, included one aborted WEEP scheme under the Youth Opportunities Programme. Berksy did not consider the army as a "proper job", but believed the travel and discipline involved in his army service had widened his horizons, curbed his volatile temper, and enabled him to "settle down to ordinary life".

Each of the four protracted transitionaries had taken between four and seven years to secure their first "proper job".

7.6.2 Amanda Gardiner

Amanda left school in Summer 1980 and for almost two years was continuously registered as unemployed. During this period, she attempted to gain entrance to a course in nursery nursing at the local College of Further Education, but was rejected on the basis of having no qualifications. The minimum entry qualification was three GCE O-level passes, although, as Amanda asserted: "No qualifications! ... what do you need to take care of kids? I've been looking after our two [younger sisters] since I was nine ... but that doesn't count as qualifications". Instead, while signing on as unemployed, she began working voluntarily within the Youth and Community Project, 'helping out' with the 'Mums and Toddlers' group. In this, she was guided and assisted by Marie Hulton, at that time one of the Project's youthworkers. In June 1982, Marie eventually enabled Amanda to gain a place on one of the Project's MSC sponsored community schemes.

Many of the my study participants had experienced the community-based components of the Youth Opportunities Programme. As previously discussed, such schemes generally operated to "mop up" (Wallace 1987 : 23) or "warehouse" unqualified minimum age school leavers before returning them again to the dole queues. However, within the Project, MSC trainees were at least guaranteed the minimum offer of part-time employment at the end of their training placement. For trainees who wished to remain employed within the Project, wages for part-time employment could generally be provided through Project funding. It was also policy for application to be made to the Local

Education Authority on behalf of trainees for funding towards full-time employment under the LEA control of local Youth Service budgets.

At the end of her scheme, Amanda was employed by the Project on a part-time basis for six months, after which she gained an LEA funded full-time contract, to be reviewed after twelve months. For a year she settled into a role which was simply an extension of her voluntary work, community scheme and part-time employment, namely assisting with the Community playgroup and 'Mums and Toddlers' group.

In Summer 1984, at the end of the twelve month period, Amanda's LEA contract was reviewed and funding was withdrawn. In part, this was a consequence of the pressure the Youth Service budget was subjected to as a result of the much wider financial squeeze by central government on local authority finances. Amanda was again reluctantly compelled to 'sign on' as Project funds could no longer sustain her employment in the absence of LEA sponsorship. However, unofficial payments, cash-in-hand, were provided through the Project's petty cash expenses to supplement Amanda's income from state welfare benefit. These payments enabled her to continue her work within the Project, at the same time she maintained a weekly income which was just a few pounds less than the wage she had received from the LEA. In October 1985, with help and a glowing recommendation and reference from Marie, Amanda secured full-time employment as a playgroup and childminder's assistant in a Council funded playgroup in nearby Marton Brook. Though lowly-paid (£63.17 net in 1987), she worked a flexible 30 hour week and enjoyed the informality afforded by her position. This was a job Amanda held continuously until the end of my final phase of research in 1990.

7.6.3 Cathy Tittle

Cathy left school in Summer 1980 with the firm intention of getting "a job in a shop". This modest employment aspiration was recorded in her 1980 Community Project questionnaire. However, despite repeated written job applications and personal enquiries

to various retailers throughout a wide area, she was unable to find permanent employment. What followed Cathy's initial attempted entry into shop-work was a protracted two year period of unemployment. This lasted until June 1982 when she was compelled under threat of benefit withdrawal to undertake an employment training scheme. Under the terms of her allotted scheme, Cathy was to be provided with training in "basic office skills" despite her modest, and repeatedly expressed, desire for shop work. Cathy was eventually allocated a training placement within an office of the social services department in nearby Marton, and provided with basic training in "photocopying, use of the 'phone, filing, that sort of thing". Her training placement did not, however, lead into permanent employment and , after completing the six month scheme, she once more re-registered as unemployed at the Job Centre.

Cathy was unemployed for a further ten months before she was eventually offered a work experience scheme in a florist. As this was the shop work she had been seeking since school leaving, Cathy eagerly accepted the placement. Cathy was delighted with the work experience scheme during which, among other things, she "learned how to make up displays, wreaths and bouquets". Cathy also enjoyed "dealing with customers and taking big orders for weddings and funerals". Unfortunately, when her work placement was completed, she was not offered permanent employment and was once again compelled to 'sign on'.

Cathy was unemployed for a further period of almost nine months before answering an advertisement in the regional newspaper for part-time work in a City Centre florists. Rather than applying for the job by letter, as requested in the advertisement, Cathy instead "caught a bus into Town straight away" and personally presented her job application to the shop manageress. Aside from her obvious desire for the job, Cathy's previous work experience scheme was also instrumental in convincing the manageress of her suitability and the following week she started work.

From January 1985 until September 1987, Cathy was employed on a part-time basis six mornings a week. In 1986, her basic take home pay was just £47 per week, but Cathy was frequently provided with extra work at weekends or to cover for the absences and holidays of full-time employees. Overtime was also available during seasonal busy periods in the shop such as Christmas, Valentine's Day and Mothers Day, or when floral displays had to be assembled for "big occasions, like weddings and funerals". Nevertheless, despite the fact that there were occasions when she was working within the florists virtually full-time, her status remained that of a part-time employee and, as such, she was denied sickness and holiday pay entitlements. For Cathy though, these were minor considerations. After two work schemes and over three years on the dole, she was quite simply relieved at having found even part-time work.

Eventually her diligence and enthusiasm for the job were recognised and acknowledged, and, when one of the full-time employees left in September 1987, Cathy was allowed to fill the vacancy. This was full-time employment, a proper job, which she maintained continuously until my research terminated.

7.6.4 Charlie Dougan and Berksy

In an earlier Chapter (Chapter Four, Section 4.1.1), I briefly outlined the early career progressions of both Charlie and Berksy. They shared similar biographical characteristics. Both had been members of my group of ten interviewees during the Project's 1980 School Leavers Survey; both were participants originally drawn from Hartingleigh's Chicken Lane estate and had been prominent 'faces' within the informal 'lads' culture on the streets of Hartingleigh during my detached youthwork for the Project. Following extended periods of post-school unemployment, like many others from the Chicken Lane estate, 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 Training for Charlie; Berksy on the other hand had narrowly avoided incarceration, partially as a consequence of army enlistment.

After his release from Borstal, Charlie had moved to Wandsworth, London, to live with his cousin who, as a result of workplace contacts, had enabled him to secure employment in a road haulage company. Charlie's job was working in the cold storage section, loading and unloading refrigerated units attached to articulated lorries, and involved mainly working night-shifts from midnight until 8.00 a.m. This work provided an initial take home pay of £100 a week but, with bonuses and overtime, Charlie could earn up to twice that amount, though on average his fortnightly take home pay was "about £280" (in 1987). Charlie was eventually provided with a job of "van driving for the firm, delivering and picking up 'returns' [returned goods]". This was day-time work and, as such, was an improvement on his original shift work. Day-time van driving allowed Charlie a certain amount of flexibility and mobility in his working day. In my last contacts with Charlie, he was training to take his Heavy Goods Vehicle (HGV) Class 1 test in order to work as a lorry driver for the haulage company. In this, he was provided time off to "go to the Department of Environment training place two mornings a week". Charlie hoped eventually to gain employment with the company "inter-Continental lorry driving".

Berksy had originally enlisted for army service as a strategy for avoiding incarceration, the result of several court appearances for a series of burglary charges. The strategy was successful and he undertook a year's training as a Junior Guardsman at the Guards Depot in Surrey; this involved "six weeks basic familiarisation and then six months basic training". There were originally one hundred trainees within Berksy's platoon and, at the end of the six month period, trainees were provided with the option of withdrawing their enlistments. Thirty or so members of his platoon did so, but Berksy had enjoyed the travel, challenge and discipline and decided to "see it through". During the final six months of training, "they allocate you to a particular battalion". Berksy's allocation suited him as it was a battalion with a reputation for having a good swimming team and Berksy was a keenly competitive swimmer. At the age of eighteen, he was given his first opportunity for foreign travel when the platoon was sent to Berlin to "clear up" the battalion headquarters there. After a few months in Germany, his platoon was sent to a

barracks in Hounslow where he was posted to "public duties" which included formal ceremonial duties at Windsor Palace. By 1985, Berksy was earning £360 per month (gross) which was paid directly into a bank account. As his day-to-day expenses were provided for, such as accommodation, food, and clothing, he was able to save most of this income.

Between January and April 1983, his battalion was posted to Kenya for a United Nations training exercise. During this period, Berksy was afforded the opportunity to travel within a broad area on manoeuvres and, during his free time, he was able to visit Mombassa, Nairobi, Mount Kilimanjaro and Mount Kenya. After returning to England, his battalion was again posted to "public duties" which included "trooping the colour on the 11th of June 1983". In October of that year, Berksy's battalion was given the much feared posting to Northern Ireland and he spend an anxious five month tour of duty in the Province, based in barracks at Besbrook outside Newry. Although he did not personally encounter "live action" on his tour of duty, members of his platoon were fired on on two separate occasions, which made the experience "a bit of a nightmare". As he ironically exclaimed; "I didn't join the fuckin' army to get shot at!". Berksy had some understanding of the political and historical background to "the troubles", and, as a lapsed Catholic had some sympathy for the Republican view: "It'll never be sorted 'til they're allowed to unite with the South". In terms of his and his platoon's involvement in the Province, he adopted a pragmatic view and saw it in terms of "a sort of stand off": "They [the IRA] do their job and we do ours, hatred doesn't come into it".

In February 1984, following he battalion's tour of duty in Northern Ireland, Berksy was returned to mainland duties and his platoon was eventually stationed in barracks in York. By December 1985, Berksy had uneventfully completed his three year enlistment, which was actually almost four years with training. After this, he was unemployed for several months before securing semi-skilled work as a yardsman in a York builders merchants. As he ironically commented: "from guardsman to yardsman". Berksy had made the

decision to live and work in York partially as a consequence of his courtship and marriage to a young woman he had met whilst stationed there, and also because he believed "there's nothing for me in Hartingleigh 'cept bother and the dole". Berksy was still employed in the same job when I last contacted him in 1992.

7.7 Domestic Careers - Protracted Transition

7.7.1 Introduction

For the generation of young working class who, like the participants in my study, left school during the 1980s, post-school transitions took place under the overarching threat of unemployment and under an unsympathetic political regime which removed many of the economic safety nets that had existed for those growing up in more prosperous decades (Kirk *et al* 1991; Maclagan 1992). As they moved towards adulthood, study participants sought to remove the bonds of dependence which tied them to their families of origin. They embarked on a journey towards adult independence wherein they sought to be responsible for their own material circumstances. In this process, they typically attempted to develop relationships and eventually families of their own. However, under the political economic circumstances of the past decade, these attempts to "get into" working class adulthood were often complex and protracted, and not, as was the case for many working class young people in the recent past, a process which happened almost "naturally" or "inevitably" upon reaching the age of majority (Willmott 1966 : 52).

Up until the mid-1970s, the majority of young people from working class backgrounds entered the labour market and found jobs at the end of compulsory schooling. Through financial independence, they traditionally undertook the process of 'going out' which often led to courtship, marriage and then parenthood. Marriage was the traditional route to residential independence. As Leonard (1980) has noted: "For most people, especially in the working class, the only road to independence in housing is through marriage" (1980 : 51). Among young people from working class backgrounds, the processes of marriage and family formation were traditionally undertaken at an earlier age than was the case for

young people from middle class families. Throughout the last century, those young people from middle class backgrounds have often been economically dependent upon their families of origin until their early twenties. The extended periods of post-compulsory education undertaken by many young people from middle class families often served to delay their entry into the labour market, and consequently delayed the processes of marriage and family formation. Changing social patterns in the 1980s and 1990s indicate that the delayed economic independence of young people has become a mass phenomenon. Youth unemployment, government training schemes, and increased levels of participation in post-compulsory education and training, have resulted in a protracted transition both to economic independence and to adult domestic roles and careers.

In a sense, the protracted transition from school to work, and from childhood into adulthood, is not an educational, psychological or social gap, but a time gap (Sawdon *et al* 1981) It is the number of years a young person's work aspirations remain unfulfilled before entry into a first proper job. The length and complexity of transition for the working class young represents what may be viewed as a new institutionalised social and economic insecurity. Although the problem of protracted transitions to adulthood is essentially economic, deriving from "changes in the economy [which] have made many young people literally surplus to economic requirements" (Roberts *et al* 1988 : 35), it does have psychological and social consequences for those affected. It interposes a new stage in the life cycle which has no social status and one that frustrates the desire of participants to move away from childhood status and economic dependence into adulthood and economic independence.

Among the eight protracted transitionaries, progressions in the labour market involved a succession of complex and qualitatively distinct forms of experience (outlined in Section 7.3). In the main, protracted transitions were comprised of different elements including post-school unemployment, underemployment, government schemes and so on. Similarly, personal and domestic lives moved through changes that involved qualitatively distinct

forms of experience; living with parents within the family household, then living alone, sharing accommodation with other non-family members, or living with a partner in the natal home or in an independent household. Post-school same sex friendships changed to include increased heterosexual contact and then dating, followed by a move out of the family home, or setting up a household with a partner, and in some cases marriage, and then parenthood.

For the three study participants who had made relatively uncomplicated, traditional, post-school transitions directly into employment, their domestic careers followed a complementary, traditional, stage-like progression into courtship, engagement, marriage, owner occupation, and parenthood (Chapter Six). The three traditional transitionaries' domestic careers were constructed on foundations established by secure, well-paid employment; this allowed for forward planning and saving. In contrast, the domestic career transitions of the protracted transitionaries showed little in the way of clear cut, stage-like, progression towards adult roles and status. The various forms of personal and domestic experience of the protracted transitionaries were developed within the context of institutionalised social and economic insecurity, referred to throughout my study, and this was reflected in the instability of their often complex and protracted domestic career transitions.

7.7.2 Going Out

What each of the eight study participants had in common in their initial post-school transitions were protracted bouts of unemployment, generally punctuated by government schemes. The economic insecurity of their labour market positions mitigated against early domestic career movements towards residential independence and also served to restrict their leisure and patterns of sociability. For the three traditional transitionaries, early post-school domestic careers were characterised by patterns of extensive leisure mobility which reflected their "getting on" and "getting out" frames of reference (Brown 1987). In effect, the traditional transitionaries were 'getting on and getting out' by 'going out' of the local

community to pursue leisure and entertainment throughout the conurbation (see Chapter Six, Sections 6.5.2; 6.5.3; 6.5.4). In contrast, constrained by lack of income or the sociability of workplace contacts, the protracted transitionaries generally developed leisure patterns that were restricted to local places of entertainment.

'Going out' generally consisted of leisure and entertainment that could be cheaply derived from 'getting into' the resources of the local community; though on rare occasions, weekly benefits would be spent on one extravagant night out. Participants generally had recourse to a variety of formal and informal self-defined locations for youthful sociability. Formal sites included the local pubs and the various facilities sponsored by the Youth and Community Project (Chapter One, Section 1.8.3). Informal locations included the three market sites in Hartingleigh, the 'Wreck', and the superstore car park (Chapter One, Section 1.3; Chapter Two, Section 2.4), or simply 'hangin' out' on the streets and walkways of the estates.

Georgie B. was the exception. Leisure time during his twelve month period of post-school unemployment generally involved a retreat to his attic bedroom to pursue his solitary interest in home computing (Section 7.4.1). Amanda Gardiner, during her post-school unemployment, developed a pattern of sociability organised around her affiliation to the Youth and Community Project and eventually she began working voluntarily within the Project (Section 7.6). Charlie Dougan and Berksy were part of the 'Northside Jungle Crew' of unemployed young males drawn mainly from Hartingleigh's Chicken Lane council estate (see Chapter Four, Sections 4.2.1 and 4.2.3; Chapter Six, Section 6.6.2). Their leisure mobility was less restricted than other unemployed participants, in part due to the income derived from social and acquisitional crime. Football supporters' subcultural affiliations also ensured geographical mobility when travelling to 'away' games, to the towns and cities of other football teams, to watch local favourites, Manchester United (see Chapter Four, Section 4.2.3). Often this mobility would be made possible by members of the Crew stealing a vehicle to facilitate transportation. These expeditions could occupy a

long weekend and ensured Crew members a collective focus for their subcultural affiliations.

Russell Robinson and Jimmy Bee were also peripheral affiliates of the extensive adolescent male network of unemployed youths in Hartingleigh. However, lack of involvement in the core activities of the Crew ensured that their early post-school periods of unemployment were largely occupied by "hangin' out" and "doing nothing" (Corrigan 1979). Doing nothing would consist of a variety of local activities such as: making a pint last all night in 'the Vic', and playing endless games of pool; impromptu football matches at the various informal self-defined leisure sites in Hartingleigh, including the Wreck and superstore car park; and meeting friends and associates at the 'Indoor Street Corner', or for 'dinner', the subsidised lunch-time meal available to the unemployed at the Youth and Community Centre.

For the three women, protracted transitionaries, aside from the financial constraints of wagelessness, leisure and entertainment mobility were further restricted by the sexual division of labour and power within the home. In 1957, Young and Willmott argued that: "Less than a quarter of our husbands ... had the same occupation as their fathers. But all our wives had the same work as their mothers" (1957 : 103). Thus, within their study group, change had occurred for the men, but not for the women. In my study, three decades later, there had again been discontinuity for the males - far fewer had jobs - and continuity for the females who fundamentally still had little choice about women's work in the home, particularly in their teenage years. Daughters were expected to undertake some degree of domestic responsibility, sons were not. However, there was some contestation over this traditional domestic role assignation, and the young women sought to challenge the restrictions placed upon them by their gender. As Connell *et al* have similarly argued:

> "Increasing numbers of working class women, in their own ways, are contesting male control and insisting on independence or equality. This rarely takes the form of conscious feminism ... but there is a real and conscious shift from conventional modes of womanhood" (1982 : 176).

Amanda Gardiner, for example, sought to challenge her father's assumption that she was constantly available to 'baby sit' her two younger sisters when her parents went out in the evening or at weekends. Until school leaving, this was a domestic task she had shared with her older sister. However, when her sister married and left the family home during Amanda's early post-school period of unemployment, the baby sitting duties became her sole responsibility. She grew to resent the restrictions placed upon her evening and weekend sociability and, as a consequence of a series of "flaming rows", eventually persuaded her father to employ a "proper baby sitter".

Tracy Smith was from a family which included two older brothers who were both unemployed and living in the family home. Although she "battled for ages" to change the domestic division of labour in favour of greater equality in terms of the responsibilities undertaken by her brothers and herself, she found herself constantly "outvoted":

> "My old da' an' the 'dossers' [her older brothers] shouted me down ... ma' couldn't hack it, so it was them against me ... I 'ad to back off ... I just made me mind up to get out as soon as I could; I wasn't gonna end up like ma' runnin' round after that lot all day ..."

Cathy Tittle had more success in this type of struggle. Within the family home, the domestic duties were "more or less" equally divided between her two brothers, her younger sister and herself. However, even after such an equitable arrangement had been struggled for and achieved, the fact that her brothers attended their tasks without the same degree of care or concern ensured that: "It was a waste of time. You'd end up goin' round after they'd done something, putting it right."

It was clear that the young women in my study group were generally more frequently involved in domestic chores than their male counterparts. Even during the course of their protracted transitions, when participants were involved in schemes, part-time, or informal work, females would be required to undertake some degree of domestic labour and responsibility whereas males would not. The young women were almost exclusively involved in the tasks of washing and laundry work, cooking meals, cleaning the house,

looking after younger siblings, and so on. Even within tasks which were shared, sexual divisions existed. Thus, for example, while males would look after younger siblings in terms of 'keeping an eye on them', particularly when they were past the toddler stage, females were more commonly expected to feed and clean them, change nappies, and so on. According to recent research, even though these gender differences cut across social class, background and educational attainment, they are "accentuated in working class families" (Banks *et al* 1992 : 178). According to Bates *et al* (1984), for working class women:

> "The amount of time taken up by their domestic duties is one of the most significant constraints on their daily lives, both structuring the form of relationship they have to the labour process, and their pattern of subordination within the family" (1984 : 50-51).

Moreover, although working class men are becoming increasingly involved in some domestic tasks, these tend not to be a direct substitute for women's routine domestic work (Land 1981 : 251). It was generally the case for the unemployed women in my study group that routine domestic and childcare tasks constrained sociability and leisure mobility, and reflected the entrenched patriarchy of the working class domestic division of labour (Edgell 1981).

For the women, protracted transitionaries, especially during their earlier periods of post-school wagelessness, subordination to parental (usually paternal) authority was significantly conditioned by the lack of status associated with 'not earning a living'. The three women protracted transitionaries' incomes were derived from supplementary benefit (in 1982 this was £16.85 per week). Relative poverty ensured that they were constrained to accept paternal directives with regard to domestic duties. As Tracy Smith's father put it: "As long as you're under my roof, you can earn your keep by helping your mother". Unlike the two women who had secured employment immediately upon school leaving (Chapter Six), and whose wage conferred a degree of adult status, autonomy and bargaining power in the negotiation of domestic responsibilities, the non-wage earning women could not claim the same status. Absence of the wage as a symbolic marker of adult independence ensured that, when it came to, often acrimonious, domestic task

negotiations, their status was that of a dependent. In essence, the unemployed women were unable to resist parental directives, or negotiate domestic arrangements from a position of adult equality, as they were in the same status position they occupied as schoolchildren; essentially they were financially dependent upon their parents (usually fathers). As a consequence, and despite the obvious inequalities of the domestic division of labour, parental directives were usually accepted and tasks (grudgingly) undertaken in order to sustain a measure of parental goodwill and domestic harmony.

7.7.3 Leaving Home

The three study participants who secured a sound financial platform for their lives as a result of entering employment directly upon school leaving had all left the natal home to establish independent households by their late 'teens, early twenties (Chapter Six, Section 6.5.5. In contrast, the early careers of the protracted transitionaries were characterised by financial instability and they continued to live in the family home usually until their mid, and sometimes even late, twenties. The desire for residential independence resulted in various attempts to leave home, but such attempts were usually unsuccessful and frequently frustrated by lack of financial resources. In some cases, money necessary to provide the deposits or 'key money' for securing privately rented accommodation could not be provided from state benefits or low incomes. Moreover, as marriage and parenthood were also (generally) delayed for similar financial reasons, council rented accommodation could not be undertaken, as such property is usually unavailable to single young people. As Leonard (1980) has similarly noted: "Most local housing authorities will not accept applications from any single person under thirty" (1980 : 68). Essentially, the protracted transitionaries were undertaking post-school progressions to working class adulthood without proper jobs and whilst often still living at home with their parents. This was part of a general trend, partially spawned by government policy, which resulted in young people becoming more, rather than less, dependent upon their families (Kirk *et al* 1991).

Participants came under varying degrees of pressure from parents who were themselves 'struggling to make ends meet' on the incomes derived from benefits or semi-skilled and low-skilled employment. Arguments within families often centred around financial issues, with some participants coming into conflict for failing to contribute their 'keep' or borrowing more frequently from family members. In the longer term, the impoverishment of unemployment, in both economic and personal terms, appeared to lead to a protracted dependence on the family's resources. In such working class family contexts, it was difficult to see how full adult status could be obtained when participants had never or rarely earned a wage. According to Willis:

> The wage is not simply an amount of money ... it operates as the crucial pivot for ... social and cultural transitions... the wage is still the golden key (mortgage, rent, household bills) to a personal household separate from parents ... No wage is no keys to the future" (1984d : 19).

Russell Robinson vividly described the effort required to set up an independent home whilst unemployed:

> "The Social's supposed to sort the deposit an' the rent ... but first you 'ave to find it [the deposit] an' then claim it back. Even if you can find the money, you still 'ave to sort a 'gaff' that takes unemployed - a lot don't ... You see the adverts - 'no DHSS'. Then even if you've sorted a 'gaff' an' the money, off you go to the Social an' they won't pay up. First off, they 'ave to do their checks, right? [To] see if you're really stayin' where you say you are; see if you're really not workin'; see that you've got no one livin' with you who is workin'. By that time there's another months rent due ... then what?

In their early post-school periods of unemployment, few participants could raise the money necessary to secure privately rented accommodation; nor were they willing or able to withstand the pressures involved in negotiating such sums from an unsympathetic clerk in the social security office. Effectively, therefore, they were subject to whatever level of support their families were prepared to offer.

Moves towards residential independence in the private sector were sometimes undertaken before the acquisition of first proper jobs, but, generally, if such a move was to be sustained, the financial regularity of waged income was required. Amanda Gardiner, Cathy Tittle and Tracy Smith, all unsuccessfully attempted to leave home for the first time

when they were in their late 'teens, early twenties, before they had made a transition into proper jobs. Amanda and Cathy sought residential independence when they had secured part-time employment, but both were unable to manage the financial requirements of privately rented accommodation, and both subsequently returned to the natal home.

Amanda left home for the second time when she was twenty, unemployed but working on an informal cash-in-hand basis for the Project. She left home after heated family rows over her relationship with a young man her parents disapproved of, and also her share of the family finances. On this occasion, Amanda undertook privately rented accommodation together with her boyfriend and an old school friend. For almost a year, through the shared management of the financial upkeep of the flat, the trio were able to sustain residential independence. However, when she discovered that her boyfriend had developed a sexual relationship with the woman friend who was sharing the flat, Amanda hurriedly left and returned, once again, to the family home.

Even after securing full-time employment in October 1985, Amanda was unable to contemplate moving into a flat on her own. Her wage was not sufficient to allow for the accumulation of the deposit and key money required for "a decent place". It was not until Summer 1989, when she was almost twenty-six years old, that she found suitable rented accommodation, again sharing a flat, this time with another woman friend who was a part-time worker for the Project.

Cathy Tittle's return home after her initial attempt at residential autonomy was greeted with derision by her two brothers. It was, in her own words "humiliating ... they said I couldn't cope on my own, couldn't handle life without Mam and Dad". Cathy did not attempt to leave home again until a year or so after she had been upgraded from part-time to full-time employee status in her work at a City Centre florists (Section 7.6.3). After the increase in her pay, she slowly began to save money towards a deposit on a rented flat.

In February 1989, at the age of twenty-five, she was able to secure a room in a house shared by a work colleague and a group of students.

Like Amanda and Cathy, Tracy Smith also attempted to leave home (several times) before securing her first full-time employment. She 'ran away from home' numerous times as a teenager and, on one occasion, unsuccessfully sought work and accommodation in the northern coastal resort of Blackpool. In her late 'teens, she again attempted to live away from the family home, but a combination of relationship problems, difficulties over finances, and eventually trouble with the police and courts, resulted in her attempts at residential independence being curtailed by imprisonment. In all, Tracy served almost sixteen months, *including "nine months on remand", awaiting trial. Early release under* parole conditions entailed a return to the parental home, but Tracy was desperately unhappy there and sought residential independence by undertaking the tenancy of a privately rented flat in Newmarch Heath. However, when her father reported the move to a probation officer supervising her parole, Tracy was reluctantly forced to give up the flat and return to the family home. In August 1986, following the twelve month NACRO sponsored Community Programme outlined earlier (in Section 7.4), Tracy was provided with full-time employment within the Hartingleigh Youth and Community Project. Regular income provided by her job enabled Tracy to save up and she eventually secured another flat in Newmarch Heath, this time sharing with her boyfriend. Despite profound unhappiness within the family home and repeated attempts since she was sixteen to leave, Tracy's protracted transition to sustained residential independence had taken eight years until 1988 when she was twenty-four years of age.

For three out of five of the male protracted transitionaries, movement towards residential independence was desultory. Russell Robinson, Jimmy Bee, and Georgie B. showed little enthusiasm for, or inclination towards, residential independence. Their early domestic careers were characterised by extended periods of dependency within the natal home. Russell's one attempt at living in a privately rented flat with his girlfriend lasted

only five months and ended in financial disaster. He and his girlfriend were "forced to do a moonlight", owing three months rent and a large unpaid electricity bill. After this unsuccessful attempt at residential independence, Russell moved back to the "comforts of home". He did not move out again until after his marriage and the subsequent acquisition of a council flat. In Jimmy Bee's case, his periods of part-time and 'fiddle' work were important sources of family income. At that time, his father was also enduring a protracted period of unemployment and, apart from benefits, the main source of family income was his mother's part-time employment as an office cleaner. In such a situation, Jimmy's excessive residential dependence was tolerated on the basis of his contribution to the family resources, and he avoided much of the domestic conflict which provided the impetus for other participants' unsuccessful attempts at accelerated residential mobility.

Both Russell and Jimmy had their own 'front door keys' - a significant symbol of youthful autonomy. As unattached males, they were "allowed to come and go" as they pleased. Meals and laundry services were also provided and, unlike Jimmy's two sisters, they did not have to share a bedroom. Having their 'own space', a measure of independent movement, and the domestic servicing provided by their mothers, were factors which, together with the ongoing financial constraints imposed by under or un-employment, mitigated against any serious undertaking of the potential hazards and hardships of residential autonomy.

Georgie B.'s movement towards residential independence shared something of the stage-like progression discernible within the domestic careers of the traditional transitionaries who had all undertaken owner-occupation after successfully effecting traditional, post-school transitions to employment. Georgie's movement towards home ownership coincided with progression into, and the income derived from, primary employment. Moreover, like the traditional transitionaries, the impetus towards, and forward planning necessary for, owner-occupation was similarly provided by the development of a serious relationship.

The development of a relationship with a young woman he met whilst at College provided the focus for saving up following his engagement in 1988. After starting work in 1984, Georgie initially showed little enthusiasm for residential independence and continued to live within the parental home. After his engagement, however, his overwhelming preoccupation became one of saving money towards his future marriage and owner-occupation. In July 1991, he undertook a joint mortgage, with his future partner, on a three bedroomed terraced house. In November of the same year, after furnishing, decorating, and equipping their home, Georgie was married. He finally departed from the parental home at the age of twenty-eight (Section 7.8.4).

For Charlie Dougan and Berksy, residential independence and geographical mobility were by-products of incarceration or army service, the details of which I outlined earlier (Section 7.6.4). Berksy's four year period of army service enabled him to accumulate enough money to provide for a deposit towards home-ownership. This movement towards stable residential independence followed from his marriage, employment in York, and his partner's early pregnancy (see Section 7.8.2; and Chapter Four, Section 4.1.1).

Charlie, on the other hand, after his release from Borstal, moved to London to share a house in Wandsworth owned by his cousin, Mo. Mo lived alone following the breakdown of his former marriage and, as a consequence, was able to provide Charlie with two rooms at a nominal rent. Even after Charlie had embarked on a traditional domestic career of courtship, engagement and marriage, he showed little inclination to undertake the process of establishing an independent household with his partner. Following his marriage in 1985, and with his cousin's approval, Charlie and his new partner, instead, set up home in Mo's house. In part, this was a strategy undertaken to begin saving for their own home, as the nominal rent charged by his cousin allowed scope for the 'putting by' of income from employment. Nevertheless, the prospect of home ownership seemed daunting to Charlie, who was intimidated by the cost of even the most basic forms of accommodation in the Wandsworth area. As a reserve strategy, the couple applied to be included on the council

accommodation waiting list but were warned that, because they were childless, and already living in reasonable accommodation, there could be no guarantee of an offer in the "foreseeable future" (Section 7.8.2)

Similar problems faced Russell Robinson and Jimmy Bee in Hartingleigh. Although their motivation for residential independence had gained impetus as a result of domestic careers of courtship and marriage, they still faced problems extricating themselves from their respective natal homes. After they were married, both sought and eventually secured council accommodation, but it was not until after three years in Russell's case, and eighteen months in Jimmy Bee's. In the meantime, both lived with their new partners either in the parental home (Jimmy Bee) or in the parental home after a period of living in the family home of his in-laws (Russell Robinson).

In July 1987, Jimmy finally left his parents' home for a council flat in Marton. By that time, he was almost twenty-four and the father of a baby daughter. He was acutely embarrassed at the fact that poverty and living with his parents had provided his partner and their child with such a poor start to married life:

> "It's not a good way to 'kick off' is it, livin' with your Mam and Dad? Julie hated it, 'avin to fit the baby into our, well me Mam's, way of doin' things. An' as fer 'avin a bedroom next to theirs, what can I say? ... It's just no way to 'kick off' ... We was on at each other all the time, an' me Dad out of work, an' all ... it was mad sometimes. But there was nowt' I could do, we never 'ad enough money ... We 'ad to stick it ... if we'd 'ave moved out, into a flat or summat, we'd 'ave lost our place on the [council housing waiting] list."

The final point made by Jimmy reflects the dilemma faced by many couples seeking first accommodation in the restricted, public sector, housing market. In order to prioritise a claim for council accommodation, couples need to secure 'points' on scales of need developed by local housing authorities. A move from an overcrowded natal home into the private sector reduces eligibility and results in an increased wait before the offer of council accommodation can be secured.

Childlessness also reduces priority points; as a consequence, Jimmy and Julie had decided to accelerate their plans for having a baby as a strategy for increasing entitlement to council accommodation. Other researchers have noted this strategy, both for unattached women (Simms and Smith 1985) and among couples (Busfield and Paddon 1977; Ineichen 1981). According to Ineichen: "Access to council housing can be something of a game of snakes and ladders where some ploys (moving to an overcrowded house, having a baby) are rewarded, while others (moving to adequate housing, changing district) may be penalised" (1981 : 256).

Russell Robinson's situation was very similar to that of Jimmy and his partner, Julie. Russell moved into the family home of his in-laws on the Marton estate in 1988, following his marriage to their daughter, Cheryl. However, overcrowding and protracted family rows forced the couple to move to the home of Russell's parents, on the Canton estate. They lived there for almost three years before securing a council flat in Longleigh. Russell provided the following account of the sense of the atmosphere, both in the home of his in-laws and in his parents' house, capturing something of the desperation experienced by young couples who, because of a restricted job and housing market, have embarked on married life in the overcrowded homes of their parents:

> "There was eight of us, right [in a three bedroomed house] ... OK it was a big 'ouse but there was me an' Cheryl, her [brother] Tony, an' Pat [Tony's wife], an' [their] baby, as well as Cheryl's Mam an' Dad an' the twins (Cheryl's younger twin sisters] ... Me an' Cheryl used to sleep on t'setee ... in the front room ... but yer never got no peace ... Cheryl's dad up at 7 [a.m.] for work, an' the bloody baby 'skrikin' all t'time an' Tony 'n' Pat fightin' ... yer couldn't think straight ... that's when all the rows started with me 'an Cheryl ... We kept splittin' [up] an' then we'd get it together, comin' an' goin', it was doin' me in ... that's when we moved to Mam's ... we 'ad more room, but it didn't stop the rows ... Then Cheryl 'ad a miscarriage, she lost the baby, 'an I didn't even know she was 'avin' a kid ... I'm not kiddin' ... every day there was 'assle about summat ... Sometimes I thought I was goin' loopy."

Russell and his partner, Cheryl, eventually secured a one-bedroomed council flat in a low rise block on an estate in Longleigh, some seven miles north of Hartingleigh. These were flats that had originally been designed and built for retired couples in the mid-1960s. However, problems with the internal lift systems and protracted vandalism had forced

most of the original occupants to leave. The flats had since developed a reputation of roughness and undesirability and were consequently hard to let. The council therefore evolved a policy of offering them to childless couples, young homeless single people, and lone parents. Russell and Cheryl decided to accept the council's offer in spite of the undesirability of the accommodation and the location of the estate which created difficulties for Russell in terms of travel to work. After over three years of married life in the physically cramped, as well as emotionally overcrowded, conditions of their parental homes, the couple felt as though they had little choice. In October 1991, at the age of twenty-eight, Russell finally departed the natal home.

7.8 Courtship, Partnerships and Family Formation

7.8.1 Introduction

The recent ESRC 16 to 19 Initiative research has suggested a "normative pattern" of post-school social careers. This pattern involved: "Living with parents and associating with same-sex peers, the latter then changing to include increased heterosexual contact and then dating, followed by a move out of the parental home, setting up a household with a partner, and parenthood" (Banks *et al* 1993 : 177). Although this pattern of post-school domestic career progression is clearly distinguishable among the three participants in my study who had effected labour market transitions into employment, among the protracted transitionaries, the pattern was more complex.

Among the protracted transitionaries, there were five major types of friendship group. At any one time, study participants were likely to belong to more than one. There were, for example, the traditional, post-school, same-sex groups, and, in their early careers, the unemployed 'lads' extended network provided the focus for male leisure and entertainment patterns. Similarly, the 'girls night out', discussed in Chapter Four (Section 4.2.2), provided the focus for an autonomous and supportive female subculture, which also found a 'home' within the 'girls only' youth nights at the Hartingleigh Youth and Community Centre. Third, and less common, were the mixed sex groups. Again, the mixed youth

clubs and youth nights organised within Hartingleigh's Youth and Community Project provided the focus for mixed-sex groups, as did the local pubs, which were also inexpensive sources of leisure and entertainment for the protracted transitionaries, when 'going out' in groups that combined couples and unattached individuals. Finally, there were relationships with partners, when 'going out' courtship patterns had reached the stage of being 'serious'. In a typical week, some of the protracted transitionaries could 'go out' with 'the girls' or 'the lads'; they could also spend time in a mixed sex group, together with someone they were 'going out with'; they could also meet their 'best friend'; and could spend time alone with their steady partner.

7.8.2 The Men

For Charlie, Berksy, Russell Robinson and Jimmy, early post-school domestic careers were characterised by 'hangin' out' and 'doing nothing' within the extended network of unemployed lads drawn from Hartingleigh's three council estates. As discussed in Section 7.7.2, Charlie and Berksy were at the nucleus of this network, being core members of the self-defined 'Northside Jungle Crew'. Russell and Jimmy were peripheral affiliates of this peer group network but all four shared similar early patterns of sociability which involved drinking, smoking, 'draw' (cannabis), playing pool and football and 'hangin' out' on the streets and other self-defined, informal, leisure sites within the ward. Although spontaneous sexual liaisons and relationships were cultivated by all four males in their early post-school periods of unemployment, none were described as being 'serious'. In part the lack of income associated with protracted unemployment accounted for both Russell's and Jimmy's reluctance to 'get involved'. Lack of income ensured that they were unable to sustain the expense associated with 'going out' with a 'steady' partner. For Charlie and Berksy, although income was periodically acquired from the proceeds of social and acquisitive crime, this was usually conspicuously consumed in extravagant consumer purchases (stereos, colour televisions, fashion and sportswear, etc.) and travelling to football matches, or would be dissipated through drink and drug purchases for themselves, their friends and associates. Money easily and illicitly gained was thus quickly parted

with. This was a general pattern amongst the anti-employment subculture and was part of the status-enhancing behaviour that was expected amongst their peers.

As previously outlined (Section 7.6), both Charlie's and Berksy's early 'careers' were interrupted by army service and incarceration, which, for both participants, facilitated geographical and residential mobility. In Berksy's case, leisure time, during his period of army service, was a continuation of his previous leisure pattern of association with a same-sex peer group, though now his network of associates were drawn from his army platoon rather than Hartingleigh's anti-employment subculture. It was during his free time whilst stationed in York, as a result of drinking with his 'mates' from the platoon, that he met his future partner, Maria. Maria, at that time, had recently begun part-time employment as a barmaid in the York pub favoured by Berksy and his army friends. What started out as a 'dare', "£10 if I could chat her up and get a date", quickly developed into a 'serious' relationship. After their first meeting in the pub and a 'date' the following weekend, Berksy and Maria became "inseparable": "I couldn't wait to get married ... I just wanted to be with her all the time ... don't sound like me does it? ... But that's how it is when it happens, I suppose". What then followed was an accelerated domestic career transition which involved a heady courtship, marriage, Berksy's army discharge, a brief spell in rented accommodation, Berksy's employment in a builders merchants, home ownership, and, in October 1986, parenthood; all of which occurred within two years of the '£10 dare' and the initial meeting of the couple. According to Berksy, "I was makin' up for a lot of wasted time".

Charlie's domestic career followed a remarkably similar accelerated progression. Following his release from 'Borstal Training', in April 1984, Charlie found a home and employment in London as a result of his cousin's intervention and workplace contacts. Like the initial meetings of the traditional transitionaries with their prospective partners (discussed in Chapter Six, Section 6.5.6), Charlie's original meeting with his future partner, Barbara, was similarly secured through his place of employment. Barbara was employed

in a clerical capacity in the offices of the haulage company for whom both Charlie and his cousin worked. It was as a result of a dispute about overtime pay that Charlie first encountered Barbara in the offices of his employers. Part of Barbara's workload involved dealing with the employment time-sheets which, as records of employees daily hours of employment, were at the heart of Charlie's dispute. The dispute was resolved in Charlie's favour and, as a by-product of the negotiations, a 'date' with Barbara was procured. From this, followed a series of meetings, dates and liaisons which increased in frequency until eventually Barbara and Charlie were engaged. Their brief engagement was followed, in July 1985, by marriage. After the marriage and a brief honeymoon in Brighton, Barbara 'moved in' with Charlie, into the rooms he occupied in his cousin's house. Unlike Berksy and his partner, Charlie and Barbara decided to defer parenthood "until such time as we can afford a place of our own" (Barbara).

For Jimmy Bee and Russell Robinson, protracted spells of post-school under and un-employment, punctuated by government schemes, ensured that the peer group affiliations developed during their 'teens remained central to their lives. As a consequence, same-sex friendships formed the predominant focus for their domestic career transitions until their early twenties. The economic insecurity engendered by marginal labour market positions, their general commitment to the friendship networks of Hartingleigh's unemployed males, and the restrictions on courtship rituals imposed by living within the parental home combined to ensure that their contacts with the opposite sex ranged from 'one night stands' to a series of dates "which soon fizzled out" (Jimmy Bee).

Russell's one 'serious' relationship during this period coincided with a ten month period of part-time employment in a bakery, which provided some income for 'going out' and also allowed him to save up for a camping holiday in France, which he undertook with his girlfriend of the time and another friend. After his return to England in 1985, Russell attempted to set up an independent household with his girlfriend in a privately rented flat. However, his subsequent inability to secure employment and the financial hardship

produced by the attempt to sustain residential independence on the income derived from supplementary benefits ensured that the move ended in disaster. What followed was a 'moonlight flit' from debt and unpaid bills. Soon afterwards, Russell's relationship 'broke up'.

It was not until both Russell and Jimmy were in their twenties that 'steady' relationships featured in their lives. In Jimmy Bee's case, a steady relationship was the consequence of a chance meeting with a young woman he had formerly known at school. This occurred in 1985 when he was working part-time as a cleaner (See Section 7.3.2). As a result of the income generated by his part-time work, he was able to undertake a traditional courtship pattern of 'going out' to places of entertainment outside of the local community. When his part-time employment with the cleaning company was terminated, Jimmy sought to sustain his relationship on the income generated from a 'fiddle' job on the market stalls owned and supervised by the Donaghue family. Despite the income derived from working whilst claiming benefits, Jimmy did not pursue moves towards residential independence nor did he attempt to establish an independent household with his girlfriend. Instead, he continued to live within the parental home. At the same time, he maintained his commitment to leisure pursuits within the informal 'lads' network. As he proclaimed at the time: "Goin' out with a bird's just what you do, but your mates are more important". Despite this basic attitude, shared by most members of the unemployed male friendship network, in January 1986 he was married. After his marriage, Jimmy and his new partner shared the bedroom he occupied within his parents home. In October of the same year, Julie, his partner, gave birth to their first child.

Russell Robinson's protracted domestic career of courtship and marriage followed from his employment in April 1986. In fact, it was as a result of an early 'tip off' from a friend of his girlfriend's father that Russell was able to secure the job. Regular income enabled him to loosen his ties to the unemployed male informal group and, as a consequence, he initially spent more time in the company of his girlfriend, Cheryl. A traditional courtship

followed, during which the couple went out together regularly, occasionally venturing out of the local community to pubs and discos in the City Centre. In August 1988, they were married and at first moved into the home of Cheryl's parents. Domestic arguments followed, due to the pressure of overcrowding, which resulted in the couple moving to the home of Russell's parents, where, though there was more physical space for Russell, the overwhelming feelings of emotional overcrowding persisted. Following an early labour and miscarriage, Cheryl became withdrawn and depressed. Unable to cope emotionally, Russell resorted to staying out late, visiting old haunts and picking up his former associations with the male informal network. This pattern persisted until 1989 when the couple were offered a council flat in Longleigh some seven miles north of Hartingleigh.

Some research has suggested that men drift away from their male friends once they have established a steady relationship with a woman, and this gradual dissolution of male groups has been posited as an explanation for the reduction in delinquency in late adolescence (Downes 1966; Willmott 1966). According to Willmott, for example:

> "When they do acquire [a girlfriend] and move towards a family of their own, they become ... more subject to the social controls of the local community and the national society" (1966 : 167).

Courtship and marriage appeared to be factors which enabled both Charlie and Berksy to relinquish their propensity towards adolescent criminality. This conforms to research findings which have illustrated how marriage lessens "reconviction risk" (Osborn and West 1979 : 256). In Berksy's case, marriage had, in his own words, enabled him to "settle down". Research has noted how getting married does effect a reduction in some of the social habits associated with delinquency, "notably drinking, sexual promiscuity, prohibited drug use and time spent away from the home" (Knight, Osborn and West 1977 : 359). Apart from marriage, another significant factor, operative in Charlie's and Berksy's post-school trajectories was the geographical mobility which enabled them to secure full-time employment and had removed them from the subcultural norms of their peer group in Hartingleigh. A third significant factor in Berksy's case was his four year spell in the

armed forces which he maintained had expanded his horizons, helped to curb his volatile temper, and enabled him to "settle down to ordinary life".

Whereas marriage, geographical mobility and employment enabled Charlie and Berksy to break the adolescent bonds which had tied them to the norms and values of the Northside Jungle Crew, for Russell Robinson and Jimmy Bee, despite an initial retreat from the informal friendship network, their local affiliations continued. Coffield *et al* (1986) noted a similar tendency: "We found that men initially saw less of their friends, but once their relationships with girlfriends were established, they returned to the male group after a period of a few weeks to a few months (1986 : 176).

Courtship, marriage, and in Russell's case, full-time employment, at first reduced the amount of time the pair spent pursuing recreation and leisure with 'the lads', but a combination of factors produced a return to the male informal network. Both participants cited domestic pressure as a reason; for Jimmy, the problems associated with coping with his first child within the confined space of his parents home, and the delay in securing council accommodation produced a defensive reaction in favour of 'going out' with his 'mates'; for Russell, his wife's depression following her miscarriage, and the domestic pressure engendered by attempting to conduct normal married life, firstly in his in-laws home, and then in the home of his parents, produced a similar reaction. Conversations with Jimmy Bee, at the time, provided additional insight to explain his retreat from marital and parental responsibilities

7.8.3 Jimmy Bee : "Getting in"

The worst of Jimmy's domestic difficulties occurred in the period between October 1986, when his daughter was born, and July 1987, when he was finally granted council accommodation. Up until the latter date, Jimmy, his partner Julie, and their baby daughter lived within the household of Jimmy's parents. During this time, he was unemployed, though working on a cash-in-hand basis for the Donaghue family, work which, though

poorly paid (£2 an hour), when combined with the supplementary benefit he claimed on behalf of himself, his partner and their child, provided a modest standard of living. However, during this period, Jimmy was plagued by feelings of inadequacy. He blamed himself for being unable to provide a "decent start" to married life for his partner and child. In Jimmy's terms, he was a "failure". He saw himself as having failed both as a father and as a husband because he could not provide his "wife an' kid with a decent home". He saw his inability as a home provider reflected in his failure to secure a "proper job". His everyday experience was one of status frustration; as a working class male he was, in his own terms "a blown out nobody".

In the face of such feelings of failure and inadequacy, he retreated back into the familiar security and alternative status systems of his adolescent peer group. Although not a central character in the core activities of the informal network, his 'fiddle job' for the Donaghue family brought him into daily contact with the status enhancing illegalities of core members of the anti-employment subculture. His work on the market stalls owned by the Donaghues was essentially 'legal but undeclared' income, but, as the family used the stalls as a cover for other, more illicit, activities (including the movement, transportation, and 'fencing' of stolen goods and the distribution of prohibited drugs), Jimmy was often required to, at best, "keep it buttoned", and at worst, become directly involved through handling commodities or passing on vital messages, etc. Within the milieu of the anti-employment subculture, Jimmy occupied a peripheral role, but one that at least ensured him a measure of local status and respect. As he put it: "I might be a turd at 'ome but I can 'old me 'ead up down the Vic".

Within the subculture of his peers, 'successful' criminality was a source of status and esteem. Association with successful illegality ensured that among his peers Jimmy was considered "a sound guy". As Pat Donaghue, a leading member of the Donaghue family and something of a role model for Hartingleigh's unemployed males, put it : "He's sorted, keeps it buttoned, knows the score - that'll do for me". Though at £2 an hour for indirect

involvement in situations that could have possibly resulted in Jimmy's imprisonment for criminal conspiracy, it might be considered that Pat Donaghue could afford to be generous in his praise. Essentially, Jimmy was more exploited in his 'fiddle job' than within the formal labour market. Nevertheless, such positive feedback in terms of the norms and values of the subcultural context was in direct contrast to that which he experienced in his domestic situation. On the street, Jimmy was not considered a failure. Being a 'somebody' (if only by association) in the eyes of a localised audience provided part of the explanation for his retreat from domestic and parental responsibility. Within the domestic domain of his parents home, he was, in his own words, "a blown out nobody", on the streets, he was "a sound guy". During this domestically troubled period, he increased his involvement with, and participation in, the 'after hours' sociability of the unemployed male network, during which he would often stay away from the parental home for several days at a time moving from his work on the markets to the pubs or homes of his mates. Heavy drinking and smoking 'draw' were the norm, leisure time activities which led him to neglect both his marriage and his daughter.

Things improved in terms of Jimmy's home life after he was finally granted 'the keys' to a two bedroomed council flat on the Marton estate. He spent a lot of time decorating and equipping the flat which drew him away from the 'lads' network and back into his marriage. He also redoubled his efforts to secure a proper job and was finally successful in obtaining moderately well paid employment in a local butchers eight months after moving into the council flat with Julie and the baby. Although he still occasionally went out with his 'mates', residential mobility and full-time employment ensured that this was not a nightly occurrence.

The domestic pressures he had experienced living with his partner and child in the natal home had now evaporated. He also saw himself as a successful provider and was able to derive his sense of self from the 'breadwinning' role of full-time employment. The routine and discipline of daily employment also stabilised his life and he settled into a conventional

working class male role. In August 1990, the couple produced their second child, a son. Jimmy and Julie called him Lee Martin in honour of the Manchester United full-back of the same name who had scored a winning goal in the 1990 FA Cup Final against Crystal Palace. Jimmy had finally "got in" to the conventional working class world of male adulthood.

7.8.4 Georgie B : "Getting on, getting out"

The domestic career transition of the fifth male protracted transitionary, Georgie B., was a transition into courtship, engagement, owner-occupation, and marriage. This transition, though equally as protracted as the other four male participants was less complex. Georgie's journey into adulthood had much in common with the traditional transitionaries whose movement towards adult roles and status followed the same stage-like progression. For the traditional transitionaries, movement into adulthood complemented their progress within the labour market. They secured employment upon school leaving and, through forward planning and financial management, gained adult status and residential independence by their early twenties. The frames of reference associated with this form of transition were "getting on" and "getting out" of the working class cultural context. The only difference between Georgie's domestic career transition and that of the traditional transitionaries was that his was delayed by a total of four years. This included a year of unemployment, two years at college, and a one year training scheme.

Although he retained an insular and somewhat defensive demeanour, the geographical mobility afforded by his parents move to Oldham at least ensured that he was no longer the victim of the daily taunts, harassment, and bullying which had plagued his early adolescence in Hartingleigh (Section 7.4.1). During this period, Georgie did not have a girlfriend, nor did he embark on any of the spontaneous or casual sexual liaisons which formed a significant part of the early adolescent experience of most other study participants, both female and male. It was not until he was in to the second year of college that he embarked on his "first ever date".

Success in his college work and on the 'industrial placements' that were part of the two-year course, together with the status derived from early selection for further training sponsorship, increased his self-esteem and confidence. Moreover, away from the harsh and often cruel urban environment he had encountered in Hartingleigh, he gained a measure of respect, even popularity, among the young people on his course who came to value his willingness to assist them with the more difficult and technically demanding aspects of the course. It was out of such unselfish conduct that he evolved the friendship which produced his first date. As Marjorie, his partner, explained:

> "It wasn't as though he was ego-tripping or anything ... he genuinely knew more than anyone else and was so enthusiastic for the technology, for what it could do ... it was infectious really ... I kept getting stuck, losing my 'rag' and he'd ... calmly explain ... putting it simply without putting you down ... I couldn't resist it ... he was so innocent ... charming really. It's like there was something untouched about him ... I had to ask him out in the end ... and his face, he was so bewildered and then ... I don't know how to put it ... sort of joyous really, but he never said anything, it was all in his face ... Oh! I couldn't resist him ... it was all so genuine ... am I making sense?"

From this first date with Marjorie grew the relationship which led to their engagement in 1988, followed by home ownership and marriage in 1991. As Marjorie was also pursuing her own career in the computer industry, the couple decided to defer parenthood. Georgie in the meantime was seeking an upward career move and anticipated moving to a job in the South of England (Section 7.4.1). If successful in his applications for employment in the South, the couple planned then to have a baby as Marjorie intended to give up her work when they moved.

7.8.5 The Women

In their early 'teens, most of the women in my study group began to venture out with their female friends into the pubs in Hartingleigh. Occasionally, this was in the company of their parents. With the aid of make-up and clothes, they sought to disguise their true ages, so that they could "pass for an eighteen year old". After the opening of the Youth and Community Centre, a special 'Girls Only' room was, in 1982, inaugurated by Project youthworkers, Gail Hindle and Marie Hulton. In part, this was a response to problems between and among the sexes in the Project's mixed youth groups. Eventually the 'girls

only' nights at the Centre evolved into a regular 'girls night out' (Chapter Four, Section 4.2.2). For Tracy Smith, Cathy Tittle, and Amanda Gardiner, the 'girls nights' at the Centre, the 'girls night out', and the informal autonomous support groups that evolved from these domains of female sociability and recreation, formed significant resources, particularly in their teenage years.

The Project's 'girls nights' and the 'girls night out' were important to the women for two reasons. Firstly, they allowed them to "get out of the house and have a good laff" (Amanda), free from the constraints placed on their social behaviour by the presence of young men. Such resources also provided a relief from domestic constraint and unemployment; and, for Tracy Smith at that time, the added difficulties of coping with both a violent father and an abusive boyfriend. The 'girls nights out' were special occasions which often did not include men. At a special meeting convened at the Centre to decide whether the 'lads' should be allowed to join the 'girls night out', both Tracy and Amanda argued persuasively against the idea, swaying the vote in favour of maintaining a separatist policy. "It's our space ... one night when we don't have to play the game of being nice and that ... I don't think we should let them in" (Amanda). For Cathy, who was going 'steady' at the time, the purpose of the girls night out was NOT to meet or be with men. Although, for the women who were unattached, the 'girls night out' also served a second, non-separatist function in that it allowed them to pursue potential partners in the 'safety of numbers'. The girls group could be relied on to lend support if a lad encountered on a 'pub crawl' or in a City Centre club turned out to be "a problem" or a "dork".

Sometimes the women deliberately chose a City Centre venue for the 'girls night out' which was free from the predatory hassles of unattached males. Frank 'Foo Foo' Lamarr's gay club 'Foo Foo's Palace' (outlined in Chapter Four, Section 4.2.2) was one such venue. On other occasions, the girls would arrange to travel *en masse* to a disco or club, where they might be likely to encounter groups of unattached males, who were similarly "doing

the rounds". Such venues provided important locations for early adolescent courtship moves as they were generally places where loud music kept problematic conversation making to a minimum; where the rules of interaction were guided by the disco dance: "If a lad starts to dance next to you and you fancy him, then it takes off from there" (Cathy).

Relative poverty in their post-school periods of unemployment ensured that the 'girls night out' was at most a fortnightly and, more usually, a monthly occurrence. Though in between these more formally organised outings, the girls would informally arrange to gather in groups in one of three local pubs for a scaled down version of the 'girls night out'. Again, the safety in numbers factor seemed to be operative, particularly in their early post-school periods of sociability.

Within the Project, the 'girls only' youth group went further than "nights out in Town". Marie and Gail arranged sponsored trips "away" for the weekend and, also went on two subsidised holidays to Spain for a fortnight with a group of girls drawn from the local community.

Friendships within the girls group provided the women with different kinds of support; sometimes practical, in terms of sharing baby care and baby sitting routines; sometimes financial, in terms of borrowing or lending money until the next giro and so on; sometimes emotional, sharing hardships which often centred on male oppression (and sometimes violence). Even though Cathy, Tracy and Amanda in their early 'teens quickly developed steady relationships with young men, they also retained 'best friends' and other contacts with the girls group. Often the women felt the need to maintain contact with other women in similar situations to themselves in order to have someone to confide in. Other researchers have noted the significance of 'best friends' within the girls informal culture (McRobbie 1978; Stafford 1991). According to McRobbie, girls "own private culture" is characterised by a tremendous sense of solidarity (1978 : 106).

For Tracy Smith, her best friend was someone she could trust and with whom she could discuss the problems she had both at home with her violent father and within her relationship with an occasionally violent and abusive boyfriend. Such friendship and support enabled Tracy to begin the process of confronting her father over incidents of drunken violence which had involved both her mother and herself. Her friend's practical support enabled her to summon the courage to call upon professional intervention from the police and social services when the incidents were repeated. Later the same friendship allowed her to break free of her boyfriend - who, when attempting to harass her at the Centre, was "given a good talkin' to" and then "chased away" by her friend's two older brothers.

The three women loosened their affiliations to the girls informal group in the early period of their relationships with male partners. In Tracy's case, this happened as a result of her boyfriend's insistence. He was "so jealous". He complained that Tracy was meeting other men at the Centre on the 'girls night' and, on one occasion, he was caught obsessively attempting to peer in through an upstairs window into the room utilised by the girls only youth group (though, when confronted, he claimed to be repairing the drainpipe from which he was hanging!). Similarly, Cathy's early relationship demanded increased amounts of her time, so that she had little opportunity to maintain her contacts in the youth group. Later, however, all three women re-established their contacts and friendships, with the Youth Centre forming a consistent focus for their gatherings.

The same-sex friendship patterns among the three women protracted transitionaries differed from those reported by other researchers. Even after forming heterosexual relationships, the young women maintained contact with their closest woman friend, and later continued to meet and "go out" regularly with an all-women group; the trend observed by other researchers was for contact with female friends to be lost once the process of heterosexual courtship had begun (Sharpe 1976; Leonard 1980; Griffin 1985). Described by Griffin as a process of "deffing out", she has argued that the process is more

prevalent in the post-school domestic careers of young women because the daily contact with same age, same sex, friends disappears after school leaving:

> "If a young woman started to go out with a regular boyfriend, she gradually lost touch with her girlfriends, often at the young man's insistence. This 'deffing out' process was even more prevalent after young women left school, because they could no longer rely on the daily contact with girlfriends at school" (Griffin 1985 : 61).

At meetings where the women were close friends, or had friends in common, a considerable amount of the conversation was about sexual matters, relationships, and about who was going out with whom. Such conversations included the censorious and controlling features of women's talk noted by McRobbie (1978) and Wilson (1978). For example, during the early meetings of the Project's developing youth group, there were competitive rivalries amongst some of the young women, particularly over boyfriends. On one occasion, previously discussed (Chapter Six, Section 6.6.2), the girls from the estates, including Tracy Smith and Cathy Tittle, attacked and hospitalised another female member of the youth group. Young women from the Kings Road area of owner-occupied terraced houses were described as 'snobs' and were subjected to an ongoing process of antagonistic exclusion until they were eventually driven out of the Project's youth group. This incident had its origins in the more destructive rivalries and jealousies engendered by an intense interest in the minutia of another girl's life. The flames of competitive rivalry were fuelled by malicious gossip.

In their early relationships, the three girls' sexual proclivities and reputation were *circumscribed* by the role of gossip, even within the same-sex informal group. As McRobbie has similarly argued, it is the girls' "own culture which ... is the most effective agent of social control ... pushing them into compliance with that role which a whole range of institutions in capitalist society also, but less effectively, directs them towards" (1978 : 104). The role of gossip and local reputation in upholding the double standard as regards women's sexuality operated to "safeguard their entry into the mainstream of adult social life, namely marriage" (Wilson 1978 : 72). Cathy Tittle summed up the double standard:

"They can sleep with a million girls and they're bloody Clint Eastwood in the pub, you sleep with one of them an' you're a prossie [prostitute], but it's always been like that". The three women agreed that a good reputation was important to them, not so much in terms of their future marriage prospects, but more in terms of attracting unwanted attention "from the wrong sort of bloke":

> ... "You know, chats you up for ten minutes, then expects you to get 'em off in the back of 'is car ... " (Cathy)
> ... "The hello, what's your name, d'ya wanna shag, type ... " (Tracy)
> ... "Sometimes they don't even ask your name ... " (Amanda).

All three women had experienced 'bad relationships' during the course of their domestic transitions. For Tracy Smith, this took the form of an early teenage sexual relationship with a young man who was constantly "in trouble with the law" for acts of violence, including "GBH" (grievous bodily harm), ABH (aggravated bodily harm), and aggravated burglary". He was also addicted to smack (heroin) and, when his finances were such that he was unable to 'score', or during periods when the drug was not available, he became agitated and violent with her. It was only as a result of professional counselling that Tracy was able to relinquish her contact with the man. In part, her therapy enabled her to establish the link between her childhood experiences of paternal violence and her adult disposition to a relationship that mirrored her past.

Amanda's first serious relationship was similarly "a disaster". After a lengthy courtship which lasted for over a year, she agreed to share a flat with her boyfriend and a young woman who had been to school with her. Although Amanda was committed to the relationship, she was not "thinking in terms of marriage or anything like that". In part, she had decided to undertake the move to escape from the family home and protracted rows with her parents which centred on two issues: her parents' profound disapproval of her relationship with her boyfriend, who they considered to be "too rough"; and financial issues connected to disputes over her share of the family finances. With regard to the latter, Amanda was unemployed at the time and had been supplementing her 'keep' by

babysitting her two younger sisters when her parents went out in the evening or at weekends. When she withdrew her babysitting labour, her father sought to increase her financial contribution to the household budget. It was when Amanda refused to pay the increase that the rows ensued, arguments which were fuelled by the growing controversy over her deepening relationship.

Aside from domestic disharmony within the parental home, Amanda was also eager to "leave home" to assert her adult independence: "I was sick of being treated like a school-kid, I wasn't a teenager any more but my Dad kept on treating me like I was". For almost a year, the move into privately rented accommodation proved to be successful. Although Amanda, her boyfriend and her old school friend were all unemployed, supplementary benefits and a shared financial arrangement ensured that life, though not "luxurious or anything", was at least "manageable". Amanda by this time was working fairly steadily within the Youth and Community Project and, though registered as unemployed and in receipt of benefits, was receiving informal payments from the Project's petty cash.

However, a chance early return from the Youth and Community Centre caught her boyfriend and school friend in bed together. In the scene that ensued, the pair confessed to having secretly developed a relationship over a number of months. Considering the circumstances, Amanda left the situation with a great deal of composure and dignity. She simply "packed, emptied the electricity meter, and caught a taxi home."

Cathy Tittle, in her post-school domestic transition, also "left home" to live with a steady partner, a young man she met as a result of one of the 'girls nights out'. Again, the problems associated with attempting to sustain residential independence whilst unemployed prevented the move from developing beyond a few months. Her partner at the time was initially employed as a builders labourer but, after a night out with his workmates, he seriously injured a leg in a car accident and, as a consequence, was unable to sustain his employment. The couple struggled to "make ends meet" on the income

derived from benefits, but eventually debt forced them to abandon the flat and both returned to their respective family homes. For another year or so, the couple maintained their relationship, but lack of income and the fact that her boyfriend lived outside of the local community meant that for Cathy "there was no future in it". She had several brief relationships in the period that followed, in particular, one relationship with a minor celebrity who was a promoter of local radio and also a disc jockey. Cathy hoped that this liaison would lead into marriage as the man embodied many of the qualities she sought at the time: "He wasn't broke, he had his own house, and he drove a Rover". Unfortunately, this relationship too proved to be a "bummer", due to the man's "unhealthy" interest in sexual experimentation:

> "It wasn't healthy, he wanted me to 'perform' for him with another woman ... went on about it all the time. I thought he had it all, but he was a pervert ... just my luck."

From experiences like these, the three women developed a fatalistic cynicism about their possibilities for a "good relationship". Nevertheless, despite their pessimism about securing a "decent" or "good" relationship, none of the three undertook, or even considered, the alternative route into female adult status, namely that of an early 'career' of lone parenthood. Unlike other women study participants who were undertaking post-school transitions against a backcloth of protracted unemployment, they chose not to get pregnant and raise children alone. In contrast, four of the eleven women who were unemployed in the period 1985-1986 had chosen lone parenthood as an 'alternative career' and transition route to residential mobility and adult status (see Table 10, Chapter Four, Section 4.7). Cathy Tittle did become pregnant in her late 'teens as a result of an "accident" during a brief relationship which had "not worked out". Rather than lone parenthood, she chose instead an early termination:

> "I couldn't handle it ... There was no way I was doin' it on my own, no way! Kids need a decent start ... what could I give it livin' round here ... No I made me mind up an' I'm glad I did."

Amanda Gardiner's view was: "I love kids but it'll do to be working with them all day ... There's enough kids in the world an' half of them's got no parents." And, according to Tracy Smith: "I don't want to end up like me ma, 'done in' when I'm forty."

In 1991, after my research was officially complete, Tracy Smith, by then in her late twenties, became the only one of the three women protracted transitionaries to have undertaken the journey into parenthood. Her son, Joey, born in March of that year, was the culmination of a relationship which began soon after she started work for the Project. Tracy met her "fella", Bruce, early in 1987 when she was working full-time as a cook in the Youth and Community Centre. At that time, she was still living, unhappily, within the parental home. Bruce worked part-time for a garment manufacturers in the City Centre, but his main hobby, preoccupation and source of income were the karate classes he led both at the Centre, one evening a week, and for other community organisations in the north Manchester region.

After their initial meeting at the Centre, Tracy "went out" with Bruce and their relationship developed to the point where Tracy was spending most of her free time with him, often accompanying Bruce to the various martial arts classes he ran in the region. Bruce still lived at home but Tracy "got an OK with his Mam an' Dad" and often stayed the night with him in his parents' house. After a courtship which lasted for almost eighteen months, the couple decided to set up home together. In 1988, they undertook the shared tenancy of a privately rented flat in nearby Newmarch Heath. Two years later, when announcing her pregnancy to friends at the Centre, she declared Bruce to be "the love of my life". However, despite this, and several proposals from him, she was determined not to get married:

> **Tracy Smith**: "He's strong ... kind an' he never loses his temper ... doesn't smoke, doesn't drink."
> **Gail Hindle** (gentle, mocking, little girl voice): "An' he's kind to little furry animals."
> **Marie Hulton**: "An' 'e doesn't play with 'is winkle or fart under the [bed] covers!"
> **Tony Boyle**: "An' 'is shit don't stink ... the perfect man!"
> **(laughter)**
> **Gail Hindle**: "When you gettin' married Trace?"
> **Tracy Smith**: "I don't like 'im <u>that</u> much."

Despite the guarantee that her job would be "kept open", Tracy chose to continue her work for the Project throughout the pregnancy. She finally stopped work two weeks

before the estimated delivery date, but, despite the protests of Project staff, returned to the job within a fortnight of her son being born. Whilst she was working, she carried the child in a back-sling and unselfconsciously stopped whatever she was doing to breastfeed whenever the baby cried. Much to the chagrin of Youth Centre staff and users, Tracy's parental commitments ensured that the Project's lunchtime menu underwent radical rearrangement; salads and sandwiches became the main staple: "Joey doesn't like the steam" was Tracy's explanation. Towards the end of 1991, Tracy's "winter salads" became something of a standing joke at the Centre. The following Summer, when Joey was bigger and no longer solely dependent on Tracy for breastfeeding, the couple juggled responsibility for the child's care between the demands of her job at the Centre and the free periods that were available to Bruce from his part-time work. Project staff also occasionally helped out with the child-minding duties and the 'Mums and Toddlers' group provided Tracy with a readily available resource as a result of which "hot dinners" were again back on the Project's lunchtime menu!

Working class girls often have "impoverished personal lives" (Banks *et al* 1992 : 54); they have poor access to financial stability and material resources, more restricted leisure activity, and the overall expectation that they will provide domestic services for the natal family, in ways that boys do not. These basic differences interact with employment routes and aspirations. The cumulative impact of these differences directs working class girls towards forms of employment which, in various ways, serve the domestic career (Banks *et al* 1992). Early marriage and parenthood are typically expected, to some extent anticipated, as are part-time or full-time employment soon afterwards in order to augment the family income. Unemployment often serves to accelerate the process of a domestic home-caring, child-rearing 'career'. In the absence of primary employment, women are expected to fulfil a domestic role within their parents' home or else to move out to establish a domestic life of their own (Griffin 1985). What was remarkable about Cathy Tittle and Amanda Gardiner's protracted transitions was their resistance to the pressures

which direct working class girls towards both 'orthodox' (marriage and parenthood) or 'alternative' (cohabitation and parenthood; lone parenthood) domestic careers.

7.8.6 Cathy Tittle : "The Right to Party"

Cathy Tittle was able to resist a conventional transition to female domesticity partly as a result of her affiliation to a growing subcultural phenomenon in Manchester - this was the "Acid House" or "Manchester Rave Scene" (*Daily Mirror*, 30.1.90 : 9).

Although Cathy remained within the parental home until her mid-twenties, her social life considerably developed as a consequence of her part-time employment in a City Centre florists. Through her work, she cultivated friendships with two young women who were also employed on a part-time basis within the shop. One of these was an art student at Manchester Polytechnic with an extensive network of student and non-student friends. In the company of her work colleagues and these friends, from 1986 onwards, Cathy came to define her identity in terms of the "hardcore hedonists" (*Manchester Evening News* 14.12.90 : 26-27) who were at the heart of the City's burgeoning subcultural scene.

Her developing social life took her out of the local community and broadened her social horizons. In the company of her work colleagues, she developed new friendships and an autonomous social existence based on an affiliation to the subcultural norms and style of the "Manchester Scene". The *Sunday Times* (October 30, 1988) suggested that: "If they had been born ten years earlier, they would have been punk rockers ... twenty years, taken LSD and listed to Jim Morrison". By 1988, Manchester City Centre was at the very heart of a subcultural phenomenon that quickly gained national, and then international, popularity. In Manchester during the mid-1980s, discos and unofficial, illegal, 'Warehouse Parties' mushroomed to cater for the "new music", which, during the 'scene's' early period, often was produced as a cottage industry on tapes and records for distribution to a growing army of local devotees. This home-produced, electronic music -

"... fused two forms, both based on [electronic] sampling. Acid House, a derivative of Chicago House music dance styles ... came to mingle with Balearic Beat, a crazy mixture of Euro-pop. The sound of Acid House was hailed as the acme of reconstitution" (Redhead 1990 : 2).

Apart from the home production of recorded music for local distribution on tape and record, live music based on Manchester bands such as New Order, the Stone Roses, Happy Mondays, and Inspiral Carpets, heralded, in 1988, a new "Summer of Love". During much of 1988, the "Summer of Love" was primarily located in a City Centre club, The Hacienda. "Summer of Love" 'raves' at The Hacienda produced "a weekend meltdown of sounds and styles as youth culture underwent its greatest convulsions since punk a decade earlier" (*Observer,* 24.5.92 : 53). By 1990, the 'quality press' was hailing Manchester as being "at the sharp end of subcultural style and its bands ... have given the dormant, menopausal British rock scene a welcome goosing" (*The Guardian*, 22.4.90 : 24-25).

For Cathy, and other study participants, especially the long-term unemployed, the "Manchester Scene" of the mid- to late 1980s was a self-created haven. It was "their scene", a positive source of cultural identity and self-esteem; a subcultural refuge which temporarily allowed them to transcend the stigma of unemployment and the institutionalised social and economic insecurity of being young and working class in a City "locked in permanent economic and social decline" (Kelly 1992).

In Cathy's case, the 'scene' facilitated significant changes in her life. Although she was able to pursue casual relationships within the context of her subcultural affiliations, the norms and values of the 'scene' precluded the development of anything 'serious'. The clarion call was "the right to party", affiliates were "twenty-four hour party people" (Happy Mondays). Hedonistic immediacy was the norm, not forward planning or emotional commitment.

After her part-time employment was upgraded to full-time in 1987, Cathy was able to consider a move towards sustained residential independence. In February 1989, she finally left the family home in Hartingleigh to occupy a room in a house shared by one of her work colleagues and other students from Manchester Polytechnic's Art Department. This move followed partly as a result of opportunities created through her expanded social horizons, and also as a consequence of the financial independence secured from full-time employment. In my last contacts with Cathy in 1991, she was still employed in the same City Centre florists and had maintained her room in the "house full of ravers". Free from attachment to any sustained heterosexual relationship, or partner, she did confess to having "a few really good men friends", none of which were "serious". As for marriage?

> "I don't even think about it anymore, there's plenty of time, I suppose ... I'm just into having a good time ... the party's not over yet."

7.8.7 Amanda Gardiner : "Coming Out"

Amanda Gardiner similarly avoided any long-standing attachments to male partners. Her work for the Youth and Community Project eventually led into full-time employment in a Council-sponsored playgroup. Though she enjoyed her work, the income it generated was not sufficient to allow her to embark on residential independence and for the next few years she continued to live at her parents' home. During this time, she maintained an almost continuous affiliation with the Youth and Community Project, and often accompanied youthworkers on sponsored events such as holidays or weekend outings. She did not form any 'serious' partnerships during this period, though occasionally 'went out' with unattached males to commercial discos or concerts in the City. Amanda also maintained her attachment to the 'Girls Group' at the Centre and was a leading figure in the organisation of the 'girls night out'.

In some respects, Amanda's involvement in community-based work and with community activists like Gail Hindle and Marie Hulton at the Project enabled her to construct a self identity based on an affirmation of her status as an unattached woman.

Within inner City communities like Hartingleigh, there are enormous pressures on working class girls to prove their normality and adulthood by becoming involved in a heterosexual relationship. As Griffin's study in Birmingham demonstrated:

> "Having a boyfriend was seen as a mark of adulthood, and a move away from the child-like status of the schoolgirl. It was also seen as proof of 'normal' (i.e. heterosexual) femininity" (1985 : 56).

By the time she was in her mid-twenties, Amanda was confident enough about herself to resist and rebuff the jibes and banter about her non-attached, non-married status. Cracks about her being a "lezzie" (lesbian) were swiftly dealt with, either verbally or, if necessary, physically. She had the constant support of both Gail and Marie as well as other women workers within the Project, including two part-time youthworkers. Thus, it came as no surprise when, at the age of twenty-five, she finally left home to share a flat in nearby Marton with one of the women part-time youthworkers. However, this was not an act of "coming out" (Hemmings 1986) in the sense of declaring herself to be gay, for, despite what many assumed, Amanda was in fact "strictly straight". Rather, her choice to live with another woman (who <u>was</u> gay) was a sign for her that she had finally broken through the invisible conventions and traditional expectations associated with working class femininity. Amanda decided to share the flat in the face of parental opposition and the inevitable stigma attached to living with a woman who had openly declared her lesbianism, because, in her own terms, it was a "sound practical move". Her co-tenant was someone she worked with, was close to, and confident about being able to spend time with, but she would not "be havin' sex with her". More importantly, she "didn't care" if people assumed she was. Amanda had "broken through", and maintained that for the first time in her life she was acting for herself.

The move was tremendously significant for her in that it was a self-affirming signal that she was in control of her life and no longer subject to the pressure of conventional expectations, both from her family and the wider community, including some of her former friends. Moreover, she no longer felt the need to "even make the attempt" to conform to

the traditional adult status roles assigned to working class women such as wife, housewife, girlfriend, or mother. She felt able to assert her adulthood in her own terms. She was indeed 'coming out' -

> "... makin' my stand ... like I suddenly knew I didn't 'ave to do it anyone's way 'cept me own ... I've got this far without a man, maybe I don't need it ... Maybe I just need to be me."

7.9 Conclusions: Protracted Transitions and Institutionalised Economic and Social Insecurity

The protracted transitions of the eight study participants who had eventually secured primary employment, five, six, or, in two cases, over seven years after school leaving, need to be understood within the wider context of institutionalised social and economic insecurity. Participants' experiences of lengthening transition and the evidence they provide for its increased complexity reflect the cumulative impact of government policy changes since 1979, especially in areas like benefits, housing, and youth (un)-employment training policies. With regard to the latter, throughout my study I have critically examined the impact of policy interventions in the area of youth unemployment (see, for example, this Chapter, Sections 7.1 and 7.4; Chapter Two, Section 2.6.2; Chapter Four, Sections 4.5.1 and 4.5.2). In the main, participants' experiences on training schemes or special programmes did not lead into employment and served only to temporarily remove them from the unemployed register and extend their post-school transitions to 'proper jobs'.

The collapse of the youth labour market and the loss of employment opportunities upon which to structure post-school transitions to adult independence resulted in participants becoming more, not less, dependent upon their parents and families. Their position has been exacerbated by the fifty or so changes in benefit regulations which since 1979 have reduced overall the living standards of the benefit dependent (Kirk *et al* 1991 : 39). Micklewright and Atkinson (1988) have been able to model the effect of restoring twenty

of the changes to the 1979 situation on a sample drawn from the Family Expenditure Survey. They concluded: "The total effect is that the unemployed covered by our analysis would have received £150 million more than under present policy". The difference was equivalent to "around 7% of the predicted total benefit expenditure for the unemployed" (in Atkinson 1989 : 143 and 145). According to other research, the impact of policy changes in the area of benefits and benefits entitlement has produced the risk of "absolute destitution" for young people (Roll 1990 : 63), and, moreover, increased their dependence on family households:

> "Any single, childless person under 25 who cannot be entirely self supporting is likely to find it difficult to manage to live independently because of the 'junior' benefit rate which applies to both Income Support and Housing Benefit" (1990 : 63).

The overall effect of benefit policy changes has been to reduce the living standards of the young unemployed, increase dependency, and lower the status of the problem of youth unemployment as a policy priority:

> "Young people have been particularly affected by a move away from benefit and other policies based on a recognition of the external causes of unemployment and a consequent public responsibility for compensation. The effect of all the policy changes has been ... to delegitimise the claims of these unemployed [young] people to state support and assistance" (Kirk *et al* 1991 : 41).

The 'housing careers' of study participants must also be understood within the context of the deteriorating housing situation which has confronted the young working class since 1979. According to Allatt:

> "Changes in the labour and housing markets have turned what seemed a fairly straightforward progression into work, housing and domestic independence into one fraught with uncertainties" (1988 : 19).

The Conservatives' ideological push for privatisation has been responsible for a major restructuring of the nation's housing stock. The policy, pursued by successive Conservative governments, of encouraging home ownership meant that in 1990 66% of dwellings were owner-occupied compared with 55% in 1979 (Kirk *et al* 1991 : 31). The shift in housing tenure did not happen by chance but was a consequence of state planning.

Home ownership was vigorously promoted, for example mortgage interest tax relief rose from £1,5 billion in 1979 to £7.7 billion in 1990; at the same time 1.5 million properties (20% of the total stock) were taken out of local authority ownership through the "right to buy" (Smith 1991 : 8). The government's efforts to decrease the public housing stock were clearly illustrated in the 1985 Housing Act. The legislation continued the government's right to buy policy. It maximised the incentive through offering potential purchasers substantially increased discounts (60-70%), and extended the repayment schedule for council house purchases. According to Kirk *et al*, the 1985 Act can be viewed as part of a wider movement which sought to redistribute state benefits in housing towards the "better off" owner-occupiers:

> "Through such primary instruments of housing policy, e.g. Mortgage Interest Tax Relief, the sale of council houses, and exemption from capital gains tax, the state conceals 'invisible' forms of public finance particularly beneficial to employed, middle-aged citizens. The bulk of state benefits in housing is being systematically transferred to the owner-occupied sector (and within that sector to better-off dwellers)" (1991 : 31).

The shift from waged employment to training and unemployment, together with the negative impact of changes in benefit regulations, means that the income of many young adults has fallen in real terms. The overall effect is that most working class young people do not have the capital or the income to enter the private housing market. The rise in house prices, combined with the relative decrease in income, puts owner-occupation out of reach. Without considerable assistance from family members, as was the case with the housing careers of the three traditional transitionaries (Chapter Six, Section 6.5.7), young people face enormous difficulties amassing the necessary capital for a deposit. Berksy and Georgie B. were able to undertake owner-occupation because of the accumulation of income from army service in Berksy's case and from extremely well-paid employment in Georgie's case, but these were the exceptions. Even after protracted transitions to employment were secured, the remaining six participants could not contemplate owner-occupation as their low incomes precluded the undertaking of large mortgages. Moreover, aside from the reduction in public properties (council houses) for rent, the number of properties available for private renting has also declined. Young people are the

group most commonly found in this sector of the housing market (Smith 1991). At the start of the 1970s, around 16% of the housing stock was private rented. By 1988, this figure had been reduced to 7.3% (Smith 1991 : 8).

The problems faced by study participants in the private rented sector are not only problems of supply. This sector may also be prohibitory because of expensive rent levels and the ceiling placed by local authorities on the allowable amounts of housing benefit paid in terms of rent. Moreover, for participants who moved into part-time employment during the course of transition, such income would preclude entitlement to housing benefit and income support (or supplementary benefit as it was then known). Thus, although a participant may have been 'better off' overall through part-time work, the loss of entitlement to assistance with rent payments ensured that privately rented accommodation was not undertaken.

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 had secured a traditional transition to primary employment upon school leaving. The traditional transitionaries left home and were formally engaged by their early twenties, and had all married and successfully undertaken owner-occupation and parenthood by their mid-twenties. A traditional transition to employment provided the economic foundation upon which stable adult roles and identities were constructed.

In contrast, the post-school transitions of the eight protracted transitionaries 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 mitigated against the forward planning and saving which had characterised the domestic careers of the traditional transitionaries. Apart from George B. (Sections 7.4.1; 7.8.4), the protracted

transitionaries' domestic careers were developed within a context of institutionalised social and economic insecurity; their movement towards adult roles and status showed little in the way of the stage-like progressions of the traditional transitionaries. Essentially, the protracted transitionaries were attempting post-school progressions into working class adulthood without employment whilst often still living at home with their parents. Most of the study participants who effected a protracted transition to jobs were unable to sustain residential independence until their mid-twenties and only two had successfully undertaken owner-occupation.

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 and residential mobility. There then followed a traditional pattern of courtship, engagement, marriage, owner-occupation and parenthood. Traditional transitions to employment were reflected in relatively unambiguous transitions to traditional adult roles and statuses. In contrast, among the protracted transitionaries, relationship-family formation was often extended and complex, characterised by economic instability and social insecurity. For both Amanda Gardiner and Cathy Tittle, however, the insecurity of their transitions to adulthood paradoxically afforded new spaces within which to conceive of, and recreate, their adult identities, unencumbered by partnership or child-rearing commitments. Nevertheless, among the protracted transitionaries, progressions to adult roles and statuses were typically elongated, delayed by economic instability, marred by residential uncertainty and, in some cases, characterised by emotional precariousness. The institutionalised economic instability produced by protracted bouts of unemployment was reflected in the social ambiguity of participants' protracted transitions to adulthood.

The patterns of economic instability, residential insecurity, and psychological ambiguity were also repeated in the post-school transitions of the majority group within my study - the long-term unemployed. Their experiences in the labour market frequently produced

cyclical post-school transitions. This was a "Black Magic Roundabout" of unemployment, underemployment, government schemes, more unemployment, more schemes, and so on. Cyclical transitions were also the post-school experiences of the protracted transitionaries. However, unlike the protracted transitionaries, for those study participants undergoing a cyclical transition, primary employment was not an end result. The cyclical transitionaries could be distinguished from the protracted transitionaries in terms of their final labour market destinations. Thus the cyclical transitionaries were study participants whose progressions into adult identities occurred in the absence of the major 'structuring' influence of full-time employment, the implications of which are examined in the following Chapter.

CHAPTER EIGHT

CYCLICAL TRANSITIONS

"Round an' round an' round we spin
their evil system hems us in"
(Slumshine: *The Black Magic Roundabout)*

8.1 Introduction : The Black Magic Roundabout

"'Humble objects' can be magically appropriated; 'stolen' by subordinate groups and made to carry 'secret' meanings ... which express, in code, a form of resistance"
(Hebdige 1979 : 18)

The interested observer travelling through the contemporary urban landscape cannot fail to notice the ways in which bus shelters, public shelters, public transport, under-passes on main arterial roads, factory walls, shop-fronts, and especially public buildings, have been colonised by the slogans, "tags" (signatures) and elaborate wall murals, or "pieces" (from master-pieces), of the contemporary urban graffiti artists. Hartingleigh's urban landscape was, and still is, no exception. During my youthwork practice, and later when my fieldwork was under way, my walks round the local estates, or to and from the markets, shops, and bus stops, would be frequently illuminated by the colour, humour, persistence, and vibrancy of the local graffiti artists.

In the early days of my youthwork, certain recognisable tags frequently reoccurred, often in the most inaccessible of locations. "Coggs", "Maz", "Dilly", "Tex", "J.W." and "Digger" were study participants whose elaborately stylised signatures were to be found spray-painted in numerous places throughout the ward. Within the milieu of the practitioners of graffiti art, prestige, recognition, and status, could be derived from the production of such tags in dangerous or difficult to reach positions. High status locations in Hartingleigh included, for example, a railway bridge, the outer faces of the deck-access walkways found on local estates, or the outside upper level of the double-decker buses which ran through the ward. These prestige tags would be achieved co-operatively and involved the assistance of friends who would precariously dangle the prospective tagger

upside down by the legs over a railway bridge or walkway, to enable the tag to be made. Similarly, associates of a tagger would engage bus drivers in protracted negotiations over the cost of a journey in order to allow the tagger time to scramble on top of a bus shelter to administer the "tag" or "hit" to the upper deck of a bus.

The specialised vocabulary of the graffiti artist differentiates between the different forms - to "tag" is to produce a stylised signature, while to "piece" is to produce a complete mural. Public transport such as buses or trains which have been tagged are said to have been "bombed" or "hit":

> "Those who know how to yield the 'bunts' (from cans of Bunt-Lac spray) are 'writers' who 'burn' or beat the competition with 'def' (i.e. really good, derived from death) designs, whilst those still learning are 'scribblers' or 'toys' whose 'throw ups' (quickly painted outlines) are 'wak' (substandard, inept, with drips visible)" (Coffield 1991 : 66).

Aside from serving as a vehicle for establishing individual identity or prestige, tags and pieces also symbolically demarcate collective psychological or territorial boundaries. The slogans of the Northside Jungle Crew, "N.J.C.", were, for example, common not only throughout the Chicken Lane estate, but also the walls and walkways of all the visible public spaces in Hartingleigh. Other ethnographers of the urban young have similarly noted the significance of graffiti in marking the parameters of a social and geographical area for male informal groups (see, for example, Patrick 1973 : 118-121; Jenkins 1983 : 42-44). Patrick's study of the subcultural norms and values of Glasgow gangs in the late 1960s highlights the role of graffiti in marking the parameters of a gang's 'territory':

> "This is one feature of gang life which all Glaswegians have taken cognisance of, mainly because it is virtually impossible to walk the streets ... of the city without one's eyes being accosted by such slogans as 'Tongs ya Bass', 'Wild Young Derry, 1690', 'Toon Boys' and 'Randy Andy fae the Pak'. Some of the graffiti are truly memorable. On a tenement wall in Maryhill Road, I read the proud boast, 'WE ARE THE PEOPLE'" (1973 : 118).

In Hartingleigh during the first phase of youthwork practice, graffiti and huge wall slogans, testified to the territorial dominance of the 'Crew' and also proclaimed their

geographical subcultural and football supporting affiliations (Chapter Four, Section 4.2.3; Chapter Six, Section 6.6.2). Examples included the widespread proclamations of territorial and subcultural assertiveness: "Northside Jungle - No Go Area!"; "Northside Jungle - We Hate Humans"; "Northside Reds Kill Scousers"; or more simply, "Northside Rules". Other graffiti similarly sought to assert in physical form the notions of "street survival" and the "dramatic permutations of hardness" (Willis 1990 : 103) of Hartingleigh's young male unemployed.

On the overcrowded walls and buildings in Hartingleigh, tags, pieces, slogans, and miscellaneous graffiti, also sought to give voice to the cultural significance of the bands of the 'Manchester Scene' of popular music, especially in the mid- to late 1980s. Local favourites such as 'The Happy Mondays', 'Inspiral Carpets', 'New Order', 'The Smiths', or 'Stone Roses', vied for signification along with home-grown bands from the immediate area such as 'King of the Slums', 'Northside, 'The Refugees' and 'Slumshine'. Popular graffiti also articulated the focal concerns of various subcultural affiliates, including the use of proscribed drugs such as the use of 'Dope', 'Hash' or 'Weed' (cannabis); 'Acid' (LSD); 'E' (Ecstasy); 'Coke' (cocaine); and 'Smack' or 'Brown' (heroin). Slogans included: "No Dope No Hope", "Taste the Colours", "Trip out, Trip up, Fuck Off, and "An E a day rots your brain away".

Other signs and slogans have articulated a growing sense of hopelessness and more despairing concerns: The slogan, "Too Drunk to Fuck", sprayed on the side of a local pub produced the written response, "Too Fucked to Drink", which, in turn, later engendered the riposte "Too Ducked to Fink". In the early 1980s, the implications of worklessness also began to inform the nihilistic slogans derived from the subculture of Punk: "God save the Queen - it's a fascist regime" (a line borrowed from a song by the Sex Pistols) was prominent on a wall of the local Job Centre along with: "No Job No Dole Stick the System up yer 'Ole". "No Future UK 1982" was, for a long time, emblazoned on the main external wall of the offices of the local Social Services Department, and to the

message "Smack Kills", on the wall of a local doctor's surgery, was added the epitaph of hopelessness: "So What".

A final example of a piece is derived from a recent cultural 'moment' in the concerns and interests of local football supporters. Shortly after the arrival of French footballer, Eric Cantona, transferred from Leeds to Manchester United during the 1992-1993 season, a huge mural of a resplendent emerald green 'Kermit'-like figure (the frog from the American children's TV series, 'Sesame Street'), complete with Gallic beret and string of onions, appeared on the external wall of the local superstore. The slogans "Eric the Frog" and "Ooh Aahh Cantona!" were emblazoned around the piece. However, unlike "Eric the Frog", some signs defied easy decoding. One such elaborate piece was, in the early 1980s, a mural constructed overnight on the main wall next to the entrance of the local offices of the Careers Service. It was a complex piece, again depicting various characters from a children's television series, the "Magic Roundabout". However, unlike the rather endearing Gallic Kermit, there was something strangely disconcerting about the Magic Roundabout piece. The faces of the familiar characters, 'Dougal', 'Dylan', 'Zebedee', etc. had all been provided by the graffiti artist with demonic eyes and seemingly embittered scowls or faces drawn in pain or anguish. Beneath the piece were to be found the words, "Black Magic Roundabout".

If, as Clarke (1976) and Hebdige (1979) have both argued, "object and meaning constitute a sign", and an assembly of signs conforms to a coded discourse, then the act of understanding is located in the code. The code provides the key to the discourse, which provides the key to unlocking the sign (to the object and meaning of the sign). Unlike the slogans or pieces with which I was familiar, and understood as inspired by subcultural codes informed by music, football, localism, or drugs, the 'Black Magic Roundabout' defied decoding. Quite simply, I did not understand it as I did not know the code. According to Volosinov: "A sign does not simply exist as part of reality - it reflects and refracts another reality" (in Hebdige 1979 : 13).

According to the semiotician, all aspects of culture possess a symbolic value and the most taken-for-granted phenomena can be appropriated and redefined symbolically as a form of subversive practice; this has been described by Eco (1972) as "semiotic guerrilla warfare". Thus, when significant objects, such as the characters in a children's television programme, are stripped of their conventional symbolic connotations by, for example, being portrayed as in some way demonic, or possessed, especially if presented in conjunction with the words 'Black Magic', the significant objects and their meanings are relocated in a different symbolic discourse, a different message is conveyed. But what was the code of the Black Magic Roundabout and how could the messaged embedded in this particular piece of semiotic communication be unlocked? My interest in the signification of the coded graffiti of Hartingleigh's urban landscape ensured that I was, at least, intrigued enough to investigate, to seek to discover what was being communicated in this disturbing piece. An early clue was provided by Jim Donovan at the Centre who explained that the 1980s repeats of the original Magic Roundabout series, made and produced for children's television in the 1960s, constituted part of the day time viewing of Hartingleigh's young unemployed. The phenomenon of excessive day time television viewing by the unemployed young has been noted by several researchers. According to one of the participants in Wallace's study, for example: "Well, I'd get up, help me mum with the housework, then sit down and watch afternoon television all afternoon" (1987 : 149).

Among Coffield *et al*'s participants, the day time TV show, 'The Sullivans', was something of a metaphor, "a recurrent joke, a shorthand way of referring to activities typical of young people when unemployed" (1986 : 62). For several unemployed study participants, day time television in general, and Magic Roundabout repeats in particular, had a similar symbolic significance. The daily episodes of the Magic Roundabout constituted a local eccentricity among some of Hartingleigh's young unemployed; a private club perpetuated by the enforced leisure afforded by protracted periods of unemployment. Over time, it became "a pervasive part of [their] cultural and symbolic

life" (Willis 1990 : 30). The small group of Magic Roundabout devotees would, in the early 1980s, meet in one or other of their homes to "get stoned" in the mid-afternoon and watch the latest adventures of 'Zebedee' and friends. Such was the extent of their attachment to the programme that video tapes were compiled by the group who would spend time watching sequences of episodes before discussing the hidden significance contained within the storylines.

Coggs, I discovered, was not only a leading figure in the small group of Magic Roundabout devotees, but had also constructed the Black Magic Roundabout piece outside Hartingleigh's Careers Office. In conversation with Coggs, I sought to draw out the meaning and symbolism of the piece. Was it, I asked, a significant reference to the 'voodoo'-like quality of television which pacified young unemployed people and distracted them from poverty, wagelessness and the search for jobs? "Sort of" was his reply. It transpired that the inspiration for the Black Magic Roundabout piece came from a song of the same title by the local band, 'Slumshine'. At times, I felt like an interviewer from some Channel Four arts programme trying to tease the meaning of an obscure piece of contemporary sculpture from a moody and recalcitrant artist. Just as he would refuse all help to develop or promote his undeniable talents (Chapter Four, Section 4.2.4), Coggs similarly refused to talk directly about his work. "OK, so what's the song about?", I asked - perhaps here would lie the code, the key with which I could unlock the meaning of the piece:

> "It's more than voodoo, it's to do with yer life ... runnin' round in circles an' gettin' nowhere ... like YOPs an' all the other shit. Watchin' Magic Roundabout ain't bad ... see you've stopped runnin' round. It's like the 'shine say it ... goin' nowhere when you think you should be goin' somewhere. That's where the fuckin' grief is man ... goin' round on a fuckin' ride that's goin' nowhere ... That's what the piece is about as well."

There were numerous times during the course of my fieldwork when, intellectually, I felt helpless. This was one of them. No amount of academic understanding would allow me to 'get inside' the meaning of the Black Magic Roundabout, certainly not in the way that Coggs understood the piece ... ("Ya university mong! Ya dosey cunt! That's it!" -

Riseborough 1993 : 228). Of course, academic meaning was taking shape. In my field notes I wrote that the piece was "a metaphor for futility". Located outside the Careers Office, a siting which was not accidental, here was the setting, as far as Coggs was concerned, where illusions were peddled under the guise of careers guidance, or where government schemes were offered as hope for a proper job. Was this the Black Magic? Coggs became exasperated by my persistent questions and apparent lack of understanding:

> "It's in the fuckin' song ... about an evil spell that makes you blind, fucks you up ... sends you chasin' yer own arse like the bastards down the Careers place ... got it now University shite ... go an' see the fuckin' band."

In 1984, during a weekend home from University, I was provided with the opportunity to see the band whose song had so inspired Coggs's piece. 'Slumshine' were formed in the late 1970s post-punk period and included musicians who were contemporaries of my study participants. Band members were drawn from nearby Moat Pitton and, as they were playing their first local gig in almost a year (having been away from North Manchester on a minor venue national tour), there was a 'buzz' of anticipation amongst the young people in the community. Though not signed to a major record label, it was felt that the musicians were on the verge of national success and there was a good deal of local identification with the band and for its potential future career. Local identification explained only part of their popularity; another consideration was the music itself - a unique blend of post-punk psychedelia - which was at the time attracting a growing number of devotees. The music was circulated informally among the young people of North Manchester on cassette tapes recorded and produced by the band themselves. The cassettes were marketed for local distribution, at a nominal cost, at their live gigs. The venue for the gig was a club called 'The Dome', which had been converted from an old cinema in the late 1970s and was situated on the main Manchester Road in Moat Pitton. The club provided the main local venue for several bands in North Manchester in the early 1980s including 'Northside' and 'King of the Slums' which were both later destined to gain national prominence and popularity during the 'Manchester Scene' music phenomenon of the mid- to late 1980s. Years later, the 'quality' press 'discovered' the music and described

it in the following terms: "The Manchester sound is strong stuff, from a flourishing club circuit, true 'garage bands' playing home made, survival kit music" (*The Guardian*, 29.11.90 : 25).

I travelled to the 'Slumshine' gig together with a mixed group of people from the Youth and Community Centre including research participants, Coggs, Dilly, Maz, Digger, Willie, Stella, Susan Hargreaves, Amanda Gardiner and Cathy Tittle. In a packed club, full of "scallies and hustlers, totters, wheelers, dealers, blaggers and dossers", which is how Stella described the crowd, 'Slumshine' played an inspired set to a rapturous audience. The band played for over two hours and then, because of the danger of a mini-riot by the seemingly ecstatic crowd, returned for a series of encores which lasted for a further hour. Even then, when the band departed for what was surely the final time, the cheers and whistles of the crowd refused to abate. Five minutes passed and the house lights were switched on, and still the crowd continued to roar; a rhythmic chant developed, assisted by the improvised percussion of ashtrays and cans. Hundreds of feet stamped in unison, urging the band to return. Perhaps another ten or fifteen minutes elapsed but the noise would not abate and no one in the club seemed to want to leave. More time passed and finally the band's singers, Julie Train and Vinny Marshall, appeared suddenly on The Dome's tiny stage. Once again the crowd erupted, the house lights were dimmed and the singers urged the crowd into an expectant silence. Unaccompanied, the two singers began a gentle, hypnotic, accappella version of the song which had so inspired Coggs's mural outside the Hartingleigh Careers Office and which was also to provide the inspiration for this Chapter:

> "Round an' round an' round we spin
> there's somethin' evil hems us in
> But it won't be long, remember your song
> It won't be long.
>
> Round an' round an' round we spin
> their evil games are made of sin.
> But it won't be long, keep your faith strong.
> Don't crave their illusions, or deal in delusions
> just keep your faith strong.
> It won't be long.

Round an' round an' round we spin
their evil system hems us in, but it won't be long.
It won't be long.
Keep your faith with the dreamers
not the Y.T.S. schemers, they'll make you spin.
They'll make you spin an' do you in
but it won't be long, it won't be long.

Round an' round an' round we spin
there's somethin' evil hems us in.
But it won't be long, it won't be long.
Don't let yourself bleed.
Keep your faith strong.
Take just what you need.
It won't be long.
All else is but greed.
But it won't be long, keep your faith strong.

Round an' round an' round we spin
their evil system hems us in, but it won't be long.
Don't crave their illusions
or deal in delusions.
Just keep your faith strong.
It won't be long.
It won't be long.

Round an' round an' round we spin.
Round an' round an' round we spin.
Round an' round an' round we spin.
Round an' round an' round and round.

Marvellously atmospheric, I recognised the melody as a gentle pastiche of an old Neil Young song, except this was something uniquely different with rawer edges, evocative of the post-punk urban angst. The song seemed redolent with the imagery of futility and yet at the same time conveyed the message of hope in resistance. In part, the atmosphere of the song was created by the contrasts and tonal shades of the singers' voices as they bounced the lyrics between themselves and the audience. Their mesmeric vocals were enhanced by some form of electronic echo-phasing device, so that the sound reverberated over the heads of the crowd and around the darkened, compressed, now silent club. What had been a celebratory, party atmosphere was transmuted into something weirdly supernatural; the song at times, like a strange ethereal Gregorian chant, but one suffused with local significance and meaning - or so it seemed - as people I recognised as 'tough customers' joined in with the song's communal 'hook-lines'. Julie Train whirled around and around like an anguished dervish whilst she simultaneously maintained the flow of the

dreamy, mesmeric, vocal passages. Overall, the effect was electrifying. I felt the hair at the base of my neck stand on end and involuntary shivers ran down my spine - responses generally reserved for an Aretha Franklin high note, Little Walter blues harp solo, or early Motown bass-line. This was popular music at its very finest, an accidental conjunction of time, place, mood, and audience need and response. According to Frith: "rock can express the values of specific communities only briefly" (1983 : 52); nevertheless, for a brief subcultural 'moment', 'Slumshine' appeared to offer a salve for the depredations of young lives lived out at the margins of opportunity.

If there is one insight that comes from the most noted novels, television drama series, and plays of the 1980s, it is that, during the Thatcher decade, the nation was "overtaken by something malevolent" (Brenton 1990). It may seem like an exaggerated claim to make for a political era characterised by economic stringency and political cynicism, but contemporary culture, the arts, theatre and literature gave voice to something else, some form of 'black hole of amorality' in the political sphere which informed social values and attitudes. The growth of an unemployed urban 'underclass', for example, was not some unforeseen and unintended side-effect of government social and economic policy interventions but was revealed as a necessary part of wider strategic thinking: "The role ascribed to them by the radical right [was] restraint on wage claims" [*The Guardian*, 13.12.92 : 16). The social and economic strategies pursued by the Thatcher governments from 1979, and Major's government from 1991, gave priority to reducing inflation and industrial 'overmanning'. Unemployment was regarded as a largely unavoidable by-product of deflationary policies:

> "Although the Government was aware of the consequences of their economic and political decisions, the benefits of increased industrial efficiency were seen as outweighing the human costs of unemployment" (Furlong 1992 : 71).

Any "adverse social by-products" of unemployment were considered "as necessary casualties in pursuit of the overall [economic] objective". These quotations, taken from a confidential Metropolitan Police discussion document circulated in 1986, also outlined that

such "necessary casualties" of the "overall objective" were the consequence of a "Treasury driven social policy with one goal, the reduction of inflation" (quoted in *The Observer*,. 5.7.92). According to Brenton, "it was as if some kind of evil was abroad in our society, a palpable degradation of the spirit" (*The Guardian*, 29.11.90 : 25).

Writers and artists sought to capture this eighties "state of the soul". In television drama, for example, there was Alan Bleasdale's memorable series of plays, *Boys from the Blackstuff*, about the loss of identity and dignity in worklessness. Martin Amis's novel, *Money*, contained the ultimate yuppy hero, "John Self", who epitomised Thatcher's spiv morality of 'no society', individualistic, lascivious, materialist, ambition. Salman Rushdie's classic, *The Satanic Verses*, beneath the religious furore engendered by its publication, provided an attack on contemporary manifestations of the degradations of humanity. Alan Ayckbourn's 'boulevard' comedies also began to take on a darkened viewpoint, "the poet of the lower middle classes ... began to smell something putrid behind the privet hedges and net curtains of Thatcher's natural constituency" (*The Guardian*, 29.11.90 : 25).

The themes of the 1980s were explored and articulated in a variety of forms by the culture industry as writers and artists sought to examine the darkness, social cruelty and suffering behind the political rhetoric of monetarism. "The right to choose", "freedom under the law", and "rolling back the state", were exposed as Orwellian double-think, 'newspeak' in the decade of subservience to the Market; a single-value culture with one creed, "by their sales returns shall ye know them" (*The Guardian*, 29.11.90).

Profane culture (Willis 1978), as the spontaneously formed expressions of the dispossessed, also articulated the same concerns and anxieties, particularly during the Thatcher decade; except, of course, such expressions of what Willis (1990) has more recently described as "common culture" rarely made the Arts pages of the 'quality' newspapers. But common culture was also a culture of heightened sensibility to the depredations of the decade, more so perhaps as its finest exponents were members of

those social groups who were at the cutting edge of governmental amorality. The pictorial and musical metaphor of the Black Magic Roundabout, for example, takes it meaning and significance from the social and political climate of the 1980s. According to Willis, popular expressions of common culture such as graffiti art and locally generated popular music are not just something young people like, do, and participate in. Under certain circumstances, "in a context where the priorities are those of day to day economic survival, independence from state control and the use and meaning of leisure" (Willis 1990 : 81), such 'common' cultural pursuits articulate, give meaning to, and reflect "the ways in which young people make sense of the social world and their place within it" (Willis 1990 : 82).

Popular music that is generated within a commonly shared cultural context is not just the passive consumption of a commodity as exists in the pop-music industry. To describe it as such would be to ignore the vital creative relationship between local production and consumption. The popularity of local bands like 'Slumshine', 'The Refugees', 'Northside', and 'King of the Slums' among the young working class of North Manchester was based on the consumer's ability to make value judgements, to talk knowledgeably and passionately about the locally generated genre and to place the symbolism and meaning of the music within the context of their lives. The local music scene generated a symbolic subcultural community based on shared experience and resistance. Lyrics contained in such songs as 'Refugee' by 'The Refugees', for example, had in the mid-1980s enormous local significance for unemployed study participants, as this was a band generated from within their community singing about their lives and experience:

> "No hope, no help, no identity
> just another free West refugee ...
> ... On the outside of the outside
> on the side with no share in the deal"

In the song "Wrote for Luck", the Manchester band, 'The Happy Mondays', provided a scathing condemnation of Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher and the economic policies of Thatcherism:

"I wrote for luck, they sent me you,
I ordered juice you gave me poison."

The popularity of certain local bands was also based on their selective use of popular symbols or objects drawn from the conventional cultural discourse of, for example, children's day time television. Like the Magic Roundabout cartoon characters, this cultural discourse was reinvented and invested with symbolic meanings used for their own imaginative purposes. As with the symbolism of the Black Magic Roundabout song and graffiti murals, the new meanings sought to reflect participants' particular experience of the social world and their place within it. According to Willis, such processes involved the exercise of -

> ".. critical, discriminating choices and uses which disrupt the taste categories and 'ideal' modes of consumption promoted by the leisure industry and break up its superimposed definitions of [cultural] meaning" (Willis 1990 : 60).

At the 'Slumshine' gig, I finally grasped the code of the Black Magic Roundabout. For me, it was an empathically understood metaphor for the political spell cast over the broken dreams of the young working class; an endless roundabout of diminished opportunity and thwarted aspirations with the hope for proper jobs being cynically peddled through the Job Centre and Careers Office under the guise of (un)employment training schemes; a roundabout fuelled by the constant desire for non-existent jobs, with morally duplicitous government agencies turning the wheel, massaging statistics, reducing benefits, benefit entitlements, and robbing young lives of the opportunity for adult citizenship.

The Black Magic Roundabout is an ideological spell cast over the young unemployed which directs some to believe their broken transitions are a product of their own failings or skill deficiencies; an ideological spell which leads into the classic reactionary strategy of 'blaming the victims', a strategy which seeks to direct attention away from the culpability of the Nation's political and economic decision makers. In the famous words of John Milton:

"They who have put out the peoples eyes reproach them of their blindness."

Such a strategy renders some young people "MSC junkies", waiting for a next fix of job search skills, social and life skills training, or employment attitudes training, with which to "conjure up the illusions" of proper jobs (Coles 1986 : 192).

The Black Magic Roundabout is, in strictly sociological terms, a cyclical post-sixteen transition, a (not so) merry-go-round into adulthood; a cyclical transition into an adulthood frequently distorted by institutionalised social and economic insecurity. Cyclical transitions have in some cases resulted in desperate survival adaptations to the "mumbo jumbo of the dark towers of monetarism" (McIlvanney 1992). In the welfare ghetto, such survival strategies are now part of the folk-lore and street wisdom of the urban young; survival strategies that enable some to withstand and resist the cumulative impact of government policy interventions which since 1979 have cast a shroud over employment, post-school training, housing and welfare benefits. The social cost in terms of the gulf created between the dispossessed and the majority is alienation and crime: "All over Britain we can see developing pockets of disenchantment, large and small, filled with young people alienated from society (Dobson 1992); young people for whom "crime and attacks on the police [are] acceptable social norms" (Rose 1992).

The Black Magic Roundabout is a "long" (Hollands 1990), "extended" (Furlong 1992), "uneasy" (Corbett 1990), "fractured" (Wallace 1987), and "broken" (Griffin 1986a) post-school transition into non-citizenship (Dahrendorf 1987). It is a cyclical transition through unemployment, government schemes, underemployment, work in the informal sector, more unemployment, more schemes, and so on. Such a life-course has prompted at least one sociologist to raise the question, "transition to what?" (Bynner 1987b). According to Ken Roberts, the cyclical transitions of those trapped on the Black Magic Roundabout involve -

> "... early careers in which young people become trapped in special programmes, youth jobs and secondary labour markets" (1987 : 17)

It is a life-course which has -

"... cut a swathe through young people's landscapes, leaving an open wound filled with broken transitions, massive disillusionment and smouldering resentment" (Chisholm 1990 : 42).

8.2 Cyclical Transitions : Career Components

In the third phase of my study (1985-1986), during preliminary sampling and fieldwork, I compiled a 'snapshot' of the employment/unemployment of study participants (see Table 9, Chapter Four, Section 4.4). At that time, twenty-five participants (14 male, 11 female) were unemployed, and seventeen study participants had been without employment for more than twelve months. In the final year of the fourth phase of my study, 1989-1990, I compiled a second 'snapshot'. This revealed some limited individual movement both into and out of employment but the actual numbers of study participants who were unemployed remained remarkably constant (See Table 11, Chapter Five, Section 5.5). By this final stage of fieldwork, there were still twenty-five study participants unemployed (14 male, 11 female), and the overwhelming majority of these 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 majority of the unemployed women were characterised by a general withdrawal from the formal labour market into home-based domestic and child-rearing careers (Section 8.4.3). Of the fourteen men who were unemployed in 1985-1986, thirteen were still unemployed in 1989-1990. All the long-term unemployed males were characterised by withdrawal from the formal labour market into alternative careers within the local informal economy, or through proactively developed careers and identities based on more socially proscribed modes of income acquisition (Section 8.4.4; 8.4.5).

Of the twenty-five study participants who by the fourth phase could be identified as long-term unemployed, most had early post-school careers which were characterised by a cyclical mode of transition. Typical transitions involved protracted periods of post-school unemployment, movement into and out of government inspired (un)employment training

schemes and special programmes, frequently punctuated by short periods of employment in youth jobs, secondary labour markets, and the informal economy, followed by a return to unemployment, more schemes, and so on. This was also the post-school experience of the protracted transitionaries examined in Chapter Seven. However, unlike the protracted transitionaries, for those study participants undergoing a cyclical transition, primary employment was not an end result. In some respects, it was difficult to distinguish between the participants who had made a protracted four, five, six,, or even seven year, transition to their first proper jobs and those who had not, except, of course, in terms of their final labour market destination.

In earlier Chapters, I sought to outline, explore and document the main career components involved in a cyclical mode of transition (see, for example, Chapter Four, Section 4.5; Chapter Seven, Section 7.3). In order to avoid the lengthy repetition of similar biographical material, I propose not to duplicate such labour market and life-course biographies here. Much of the material relevant to a cyclical mode of transition was explored earlier with reference to the post-school careers of the protracted transitionaries. The eight study participants who made protracted transitions to proper job had all experienced a mixture of the elements which constitute a cyclical post-school transition. The post-school careers of the protracted transitionaries contained, for example, early movements into and out of unemployment interspersed with participation in one or more varieties of (un)employment training schemes or special programmes (Chapter Seven, Section 7.4).

Further career components characteristic of a cyclical mode of transition were also highlighted in the post-school trajectories of the protracted transitionaries. These included underemployment in casual, contract, or part-time employment (Chapter Seven, Sections 7.3.1; 7.3.2), as well as work within the cash-in-hand, informal economy (Chapter Seven, Sections 7.3.3 and 7.8.3). For three of the protracted transitionaries, post-school careers also included routinised theft and other illegal modes of income acquisition

(Chapter Seven, Section 7.3.3). Such socially proscribed 'alternative careers' eventually formed a major focus in the lives of several female and the majority of male long-term unemployed study participants, for whom the hope of legitimate employment had receded into a distant and diminished possibility. Details of the nature and development of such alternative careers, I previously examined in Chapter Four (Section 4.8).

In an earlier Chapter, I also examined in some detail the nature and consequences of multiple participation in government schemes with direct reference to a cyclical mode of post-school transition (Chapter Four, Section 4.5). As was revealed in Wendy Fisher's case study, a not untypical, embittered and fundamental cynicism was the consequence of her cyclical movement into and out of a variety of government schemes and special programmes (Chapter Four, Section 4.5.2). As such disillusionment precedes the slide into long-term unemployment and often results in withdrawal from the orthodox labour market, it is worth briefly documenting some of the reactions produced among study participants as a consequence of cyclical scheme participation.

8.2.1 Government Schemes and Cyclical Transitions

Discussions with the long-term unemployed participants produced reactions to scheme participation that were ranged on a continuum from unfavourable:

> "I don't know whether they're a good thing or what. I suppose they're good in a way, but not in another ... When I did [work experience in a local department store] ... they was able to take yer on, pay yer dirt, then they say you was gettin' experience but what experience? I was fillin' shelves ... It's stoppin' 'em takin' on someone else ... They might be able to 'ave say ten over from the Careers [Service] but they couldn't really afford to pay for ten proper workers if you wasn't doin' it through the scheme like ... It's silly really, they get you to do it for nothin' ... The business 'u'd be knackered if they paid proper wages ... it's silly" (Spider).

to bitterly hostile:

> "If the government stopped thinkin' we was so fuckin' 'divvy', they'd stop tryin' to piss us about. I'd rather fuckin' die than go on another [scheme] ... It fuckin' gets me steamin' just talkin' about it. On my last 'un I was supposed to be apprentice carpenter ... a trade like, so I thought yeah fuck it we'll 'ave a go like ... within two days I was in the fuckin' canteen washin' pots and peelin' spuds, 'cos they sez they was short ... fuck 'em I'd rather go 'graftin" man, at least you get to 'old yer fuckin' 'ead up ... Well you can laff ... would you do it, peelin' hundreds of fuckin' spuds, washin' pots ... fuck off I told 'em, put me on

carpentry or I'm off ... He said I 'ad the wrong attitude ... snotty fuckin' git ... I told 'im to stuff it an' walked out ... That's it ... never doin' another. Nothin' else to say" (Poolie).

References were also made to the poor working conditions:

"They 'ad me cleaning out the bogs [toilets] ... it made you 'eave, honest the drains were all rotten an' kept floodin' up like ... It was degradin' ... I thought yes it's come to this, cleanin' up someone else's shit. I complained but they said, well we'll get you some overalls!! What's the point? I couldn't stand it in the end an' went on the sick" (Lynda Willcox).

And the failure of such schemes to provide the amount or type of training promised:

"They said it was [a training placement] learnin' telephonist [skills] but when I got there it was packin' [cartons of children's toys for transportation] ... six months ... I can tie a pretty good parcel now! (Heather Lawley).

"I was supposed to be doin' double glazin' ... my Dad says it's a trade sort of, so I says o.k. ... what a mistake ... I 'ad a week with the glazier, out on the vans ... It was 'top' ... the rest of the time was [in the factory] brushin' up an' makin' brews ... total waste of time" (Mick Kenney).

Complaints were also made about the derisory 'training allowances'. In 1981, the training allowance on the work experience component of the Youth Opportunities Programme was £23.50 for a forty hour week. The same rate was payable to participants entering a Training Workshop. Weekly supplementary benefit was paid at a basic rate to those participants who were unemployed and not participating in schemes or special programmes. In the early periods of post-school unemployment, the supplementary benefit rate was £16.85 for unemployed under-eighteen year olds. After the age of eighteen, this rose to almost £19, then to £22.85, and subsequently £23.65. However, the government retracted £3.10 housing allowance from participants living in the parental home; thus, by 1984, most participants who were unemployed and living at home received a basic benefit level of £20.55. During the same period, the rates of training allowance for participation in schemes and special programmes increased to £25 (in February 1982) and then in Autumn 1984 it went up to £26.25. In effect, participants on work experience schemes were only "£6 a week better off" for working forty hours on work experience placements. Often schemes were undertaken on the basis of threats, either direct or implicit, of benefit withdrawal if schemes were refused. Participants

bitterly complained about the sense of being trapped between these two options, and of being substantially "ripped off" for working on work experience placements alongside full-time employees who were earning up to four times the amount of training allowance for doing exactly the same work:

> "I was exactly six quid better off [on a work experience scheme]. I was doin' a forty hour week, eight o'clock [a.m.] start ... forty minutes for dinner while the others [full-time employees] were gettin' an hour. The job was exactly the same, 'takin' t'cartons off t'carousel [conveyor belt] an' stackin' 'em on pallets. I was gettin' twenty odd [pounds] a week, they was gettin' over a 'undred, an' that was without the bonuses. Schemes it's all a con, a rip-off (Wilf).

There were further expressions of bitter complaint concerned with the sense of being patronised by training supervisors on the community-based schemes, or within the Training Workshops (see also Chapter Four, Section 4.5.2; Chapter Seven, Section 7.4):

> "He [the Training Supervisor] treated us like some sort of moron ... if you was late it was all this 'assle 'about fillin' in t'time cards what you needed for t'giro [training allowance]. He used to say 'you shouldn't be a naughty boy' ... 'late for school', an' that! Or, like, usin' posh words to talk down t'yer ... they all thought 'e was 'bent'; but if yer let off at 'im [answered back] 'e'd fuck up yer time card so yer'd lose some of yer giro ... 'e was a twat like that ... I couldn't wait to get out" (J.W.)

> "I 'ad to go to classes [in the Training Workshop] an' the cunt [Training Supervisor] used to take the piss ... [He would say] ... 'off to College', or 'make sure they give you 'un [a book] with pictures ...' I came close to 'chinnin" 'im, he was only supposed to be doin' the brickieing [bricklaying] but 'ed be on at yer ... takin' the piss" (Dilly).

Despite the imposition of government policy in the form of youth and (un)employment training schemes, there was no evidence amongst my study participants that scheme participation provided access to employment or compensated for social and educational disadvantage. The most common complaint amongst study participants was that their cyclical transitions into and out of training schemes and special programmes had not produced proper jobs. The thirty-nine participants in my study had amassed between them a staggering total of almost ninety training schemes and special programmes of different styles and varieties. In terms of the aggregate amount of time spent in scheme participation, this represented a total of almost sixty years of their lives. In only one case, that of Georgie B., examined in Chapter Seven (Section 7.4.1), had scheme participation provided direct access to primary employment. From a social policy perspective,

government scheming and policy intervention and the millions of pounds spent on training schemes had, for the majority of study participants, achieved virtually nothing beyond an unsatisfactory exercise in containment and control.

8.2.2 Government Scheming and Cyclical Transitions

The story of the return of mass youth unemployment and the impact of the Manpower Services Commission in radically reshaping education and vocational training, the "New Curriculum" for young people (Edwards 1984), has provided the focus for an avalanche of sociological studies and reports. In earlier Chapters, I have sought to draw out the main areas of criticism (see Chapter Two, Section 2.6.2; Chapter Four, Sections 4.4.2, 4.5, 4.5.1, 4.5.2; Chapter Seven, Sections 7.4, 7.4.2). I argued that the early, hastily implemented, government policy interventions amounted to an implicit 'national youth policy' concerned with the containment and socialisation of the young working class. They were based on an ideological smokescreen located in a pedagogical model of rectifying deficiency, remedying so-called 'skill shortages' and inculcating work discipline. The schemes and special programmes substantially transformed post-sixteen transitions and firmly established vocational training as a central state strategy for youth containment (Davies 1986).

These early interventions have been gradually revised and formalised into an evolving system of vocational training - the "culture of the New Vocationalism". In the hands of an employment-based government agency - the MSC - the whole culture of employment and educational planning in the 1980s evolved into an almost classically formulated system of oppression. Through its control and allocation of massive budgets, the MSC succeeded in restructuring the transition from childhood to adulthood; MSC thinking became *the* way of thinking:

> "It is not merely the use of asymmetrical power, or force, or only financial control. But it is 'cultural' domination. For, to the degree that the MSC has been a success, it has succeeded in making its client groups anticipate its demands, to think its thoughts, even before it has formulated them itself ... it is the oppressed acting in anticipation of the

> next whim of the oppressors. This is much more powerful than educational accountability. The heart of 'the new vocationalism' is centred not just on financial control and incentives, but in the very language, thinking and culture which has been so successfully spread by the MSC (Coles 1988 : 8)

The system of the new vocationalism now ranges from the Technical and Vocational Educational Initiative (TVEI) for school pupils, through various versions of the Youth Training Scheme (YOP, YTS to YT) for school leavers, to Employment Training (ET, or "extra tenner" as it is locally known due to trainees being paid £10 above the basic level of Income Support) for adults, especially the long-term unemployed.

The unprecedented series of government inspired responses, new 'initiatives' and programmes to change the situation of young people was originally inspired by the Holland Report (DE 1977; Broomhead and Coles 1988; Coles and MacDonald 1990), and what Brown (1988) has described as "the (not so) - Great Debate". The not so Great Debate was engendered by Labour Prime Minister James Callaghan's speech at Ruskin College, Oxford (18.10.76), which was delivered in response to a series of attacks by industrialists upon the education system at that time (CCCS 1981; Coles 1988). Callaghan's speech and the ensuing 'Great Debate' were significant because for the first time:

> "Educational aims, standards and accountability were being deliberately and cold-bloodedly attacked in public by an incumbent Labour Prime Minister (Coles 1988 : 2).

As Brown (1988) has argued, the speech finally marked the end of one political consensus and the growth of another which was organised around the principle that "education must be made more accountable to the 'needs' of industry" (Coles 1988 : 2)

The beginning of this process can be located in the Holland Report's attempt to rationalise a whole set of job creation and work preparation measures under the umbrella of the Youth Opportunities Programme. This began as a six month scheme involving a mixture of work experience, skill training, and 'social and life skills' (See Chapter Four, Sections 4.5.1 and 4.5.2). The interventions into the lives of young people making the transition from school to work was subsequently embraced by the radical right philosophy inspiring government policy at the time (See Chapter Two, Section 2.6). The early policy

of keeping potentially unemployed young people 'warehoused' through containment and work creation programmes gave way to a new generation of schemes propagated under a 'deficiency model' of equipping the next generation with the 'new skills' that modern industry supposedly required. The culmination was the white paper *Employment for the 1990s* (DE 1988) and most recently *Education and Training for the 21st Century* (DES 1991).

The problem with the strategy behind the development of national programmes of vocational education and training was that crucially they relied on economic growth to bolster the labour market. However, despite minor economic growth in the mid- to late 1980s, there is little contemporary evidence for any significant upturn in the economy or any immediate prospect for a return to former levels of employment. Economic restructuring has shifted labour from old to new industries and occupations, but new technology usually required fewer production or traditional craft employees. In Chapter One (Section 1.7.1), I highlighted how these processes in local manufacturing industry had resulted in production levels being maintained at the cost of labour shedding with dire consequences for the local labour market.

The strategy of unemployment as a tool for combating inflation, especially the notion of 'market forces' (in the form of unemployment) lowering wages and wage expectations for unskilled workers, also affected the youth labour market. Market forces, especially lower wages for new workers, were, for example, supposed to have arrested and reversed the trend towards the employment of adults in youth sector jobs - areas of employment that were traditionally the province of the unskilled, unqualified school leaver. But, as Roberts *et al* (1988) have argued, there are fewer vacancies for young workers to apply for and stronger adult competition whenever jobs reach the market:

> "Many managements explained how they had virtually ceased youth recruitment because, in recent years, there had always been more experienced and better-qualified applicants ... Young people had been forced out by better competition" (1988 : 29-30).

In Hartingleigh, as a result of processes like these, throughout the 1980s there were very few jobs for the unqualified and unskilled school leavers. Often, as a result, they took on the mantle of 'triple failures'. These were young people who had 'failed' educationally, 'failed' to secure employment after school leaving, and then went on to 'fail' to find employment after scheme participation. Subsidised training on youth allowances aimed at such groups has in practice replaced real training and wages that employers used to provide. The main effect is an overall deterioration in the less-qualified young person's terms and conditions of employment without any equivalent increase in demand for their services. Often the inferior 'sink' schemes and programmes that were available served only to contain participants' unemployment, whilst simultaneously preserving their labour power, and deflating aspirations and wage expectations, in line with the limited prospects available for their future employment; this I have described as the Black Magic Roundabout.

While the economic recession of the 1970s and 1980s inspired these national programmes of educational and training reforms, contemporary studies confirm the case study findings of my own research. The studies report how the new initiatives have failed to make any lasting impact on youth unemployment nationally, or on particular groups of people in specific localities (see, for example: Chisholm *et al* 1990; Corbett 1990; Hollands 1990; Furlong 1992; Kerckhoff 1990; Stafford 1991; Wallace and Cross 1990). Local labour markets shape the choices available to young adults and evidence suggests there are huge regional differences in the structure of opportunities, particularly between the North and the South (DES 1988; Banks *et al* 1992). Government interventions in the form of (un)employment training have produced little measurable effect. If the employment opportunities are not available within a given local labour market, no amount of community programmes or social and life skills training will produce a proper job:

> "Although the economic recession has increased the level of youth unemployment nationally, school leavers' chances of employment and 'choice' of work are still greatly influenced by the structure of their local labour market" (Ashton *et al* 1982 : 19).

In Manchester, early evidence for the disappearance of opportunities in the youth labour market was provided by a report prepared by the Planning Department of the City Council. In the academic year 1976-1977, for example, 42.4% of all Manchester minimum age school leavers entered employment within six months of the end of compulsory schooling. Two years later, 1979-1980, in the academic year my study participants left school, this proportion had dramatically shrunk to 17.2% (City Planning Department Economic Briefing Note : No.5, no date). This trend was similarly reflected in the increased levels of school leaver unemployment throughout Britain, a trend that became particularly acute from 1980 onwards (Raffe 1983a; 1984; 1987): "Teenage unemployment in Britain rose by more in 1980 than in the whole of the 1970s" (Raffe 1984 : 4).

In high unemployment areas like Hartingleigh, even full participation in a whole range of schemes and special programmes cannot provide nor guarantee participants employment (Corbett 1990; Hollands 1990; see also Chapter Seven, Section 7.4). As a consequence, the North of England has "some of the best trained dole queues in the world" (MacDonald and Coffield 1991 : 2). Research in the 1980s and 1990s suggests that the post-sixteen progression route to jobs is, at best, an "uneasy transition" (Corbett 1990) or a "long transition" (Hollands 1990); at worst it is a "fractured" (Wallace 1987) or "broken" transition (Griffin 1986a).

> "The 'progression' from school into the labour market has been radically disrupted, extended and transformed. And often these extended routes only lead back to the lengthening dole queues" (Coles 1988 : 77).

8.2.3 Government Scheming : The Historical Continuities

The young unemployed men and women in my study sought but were denied the opportunities brought by an independent income and the status of full-time employment. The plight of young adults attempting to gain a foothold in the labour market in order to

effect successful transitions to a working class adulthood is not a new phenomenon. Evidence suggests that, although the conditions faced by the unqualified young during the era of Thatcherism were, to some degree, unprecedented, the problem of youth unemployment and the exploitation of young people on training schemes does have an historical continuity. R.H. Tawney, for example, writing in 1934, could almost be describing the contemporary situation facing young people:

> "The havoc wrought by casual labour, the prevalence in certain industries of 'blind alley' employment, the systematic exploitation of cheap juvenile labour by firms which take on successive relays of children, employ them 'for their immediate commercial utility' and dismiss them, when they demand higher wages, to make room for another batch, which will be dismissed in its turn - all this is an old story" (1934 : 4-5).

As Coffield *et al* (1986) have argued, the problems encountered by the young working class of fifty or eighty years ago have a contemporary ring. There is historical evidence of similar processes of job substitution, the poor quality of 'Juvenile Instruction Centres' instituted in 1918 (the prototype Training Workshops?), and huge regional disparities in rates of youth unemployment: "60 per cent of all the young people in Great Britain unemployed in 1934 were found in the North East, the North West and Scotland" (Coffield *et al* 1986 : 55). Similarly, according to Rees and Rees (1982), government intervention then, as now, concentrated on the "needs of industry"; debate centred around the problem as defined by the industrial and commercial sectors, i.e. 'the failure of education', and the policy 'solutions' were similarly designed to increase the 'employability' of young people.

Significantly, the way that policy was pursued in the inter-war years also reflected concerns over the moral implications of worklessness. Such fears led to the institution of "Juvenile Unemployment Centres" in 1918 and "Junior Instruction Centres" in 1930. In part, these policy interventions were prompted by extensive youth riots directed largely at the police in various parts of London in the period following the First World War (White 1981). The view at the time was that unemployment produced "a generation of people not amenable to discipline and unable to stand on their own feet; filled with desires which

crave satisfaction but not knowing how or where realisation might be sought" (Meara 1936; cited in Rees and Rees 1982 : 17).

Prolonged periods of enforced idleness were seen as undermining the employability of young people and promoting deleterious, even dangerous, consequences. Years later, an elderly participant in a study by Seabrook (1973 : 202) suggested that Juvenile Unemployment Centres and Junior Instruction Centres, the "dole schools", were designed "to keep us off the streets". Thus, the contemporary experiences of study participants, involved in a policy promoted containment exercise effected by cyclical transitions through unemployment and semi-compulsory attendance of government inspired training schemes and special programmes, may be viewed as historically typical of their class.

During the Thatcher decade, successive Tory governments pursued economic policies which exacerbated the demise of employment possibilities whilst cynically implementing training policies which presupposed their existence. In this context, it may be viewed that there is the historical continuity of an ideological agenda concerned with 'the problem of youth'; of middle class fears of an unemployed, or otherwise idle, young working class (see also Chapter Two, Sections 2.2 and 2.6). As outlined and examined in earlier Chapters, these fears have extensive historical antecedents; for example, unemployed working class youth were often regarded as both "parasite and predator" during the mid- to late nineteenth century:

> "Workless youth were ... regarded as the source of contamination of manners, deviance and corruption, just as surely as bacteria, if untreated, would inexorably infest and destroy otherwise healthy organisms ... biological analogies of this sort were much in favour at a time when there was a market for the wilder ideas of eugenicists, social darwinists and other crude forms of biological reductionism" (Mungham 1982 : 31).

In an earlier section (Chapter Two, Section 2.;2), I argued that the historical development of youthwork and youthwork practice, from its philanthropic roots, could best be understood in terms of the Victorian bourgeoisie's near obsessional interest in "the

relationship between crime and poverty, deviance and class membership, and the relationship of the 'dangerous classes' to the labouring population as a whole" (Pearson 1975 : 154). In the first third of the twentieth century, such middle class fears about 'juvenile unemployment' produced policies such as the Junior Instruction Centres referred to earlier whose aim was -

> " ... inculcating habits of discipline and self respect and giving some instruction both of an academic and practical character to increase [the unemployed young's] adaptability and to make them more capable of accepting any suitable employment which may be offered them. At the same time ... it is held that attendance at a class which provides any form of organised instruction is better than loafing about the streets" (Public Records Office; cited in Rees and Rees 1982 : 18) (my insert).

In contemporary terms, the evolution of an implicit 'national youth policy' of containment and socialisation *via* the interventions of government policy, mobilised through the MSC (as a central state strategy for youth), also reflects, into the late twentieth century the historical continuity of middle class fears concerning the young unemployed working class (Chapter Two, Section 2.6; Chapter Four, Section 4.5.1). As a consequence, the young unemployed working class have found themselves increasingly 'conscripted' onto schemes and special programmes and thus kept 'off the streets'. The provision of training for jobs has ensured relative compliance. Social control has been effected through time and work discipline, and containment secured through regulation, surveillance, and "schooling for the social order" (Gleeson 1986 : 393).

8.3 Characteristics of the Long-Term Unemployed

8.3.1 Residential Location

The majority of the study participants who endured Government Scheming and post-school transitions on the Black Magic Roundabout had by the mid-1980s entered the ranks of the long-term unemployed. The long-term unemployed participants in my study were characterised by a number of distinctive factors. They were all drawn from Hartingleigh's council estates and a significant number (nineteen) had originated from families who lived on the Chicken Lane estate. The original deck-access flats in the Chicken Lane estate

were built in the mid-1960s and were among the first wave of housing developments under the local authority's planned programme of clearance and redevelopment. Planned as a dormitory development to accommodate inner-City overflow, the Chicken Lane development was something of a model estate in which the 'respectable' working class (in the context of official attitudes at the time) could live respectable lives in modern surroundings:

> "The new deck-access flats of Hartingleigh are of significant interest from an architectural point of view ... they add greatly to the character of the area. The tall, finely proportioned blocks overlook the surrounding landscape and provide variety and contrast to the urban development."

This description of the first wave of redevelopment in Hartingleigh was contained in a leaflet, issued in 1966, which outlined the City Council's housing development proposals for the ward.

Even during the course of my youthwork and during the first part of fieldwork and sampling (1985-1986), long after the Chicken Lane estate's character had deteriorated in many people's eyes, it was still seen in favourable contrast to the district that had been demolished. As Gail Hindle recalled:

> "I remember the old district, some of 'em paint a rosy picture of back to backs, washin' on the line and 'matchstick men' going to an' from the factory, but it was a slum, no doubt about it, a slum. There was damp an' the air was rotten, an' no toilets or bathrooms. Some of 'em cried when they knocked it down, not me ... they weren't fit for decent folk to live in."

Initially, the Chicken Lane flats were considered a desirable place to live. As one local resident remembered:

> "I can remember when we was offered a place [on the Chicken Lane estate] ... all of us came to see it. They'd not finished it then but it looked lovely. In them days you thought bloody hell a new council flat ... it was like goin' up in the world.

However, with changes in local authority housing allocation procedures during the late 1960s, the estate's function changed from overspill accommodation to housing families from areas of slum clearance. This produced an influx of families from some of the City's most deprived areas. Due to the phased construction of council property in Hartingleigh, the newcomers were concentrated in the Chicken Lane flats. The estate gradually

developed a local reputation of roughness and undesirability. 'Decent' or 'respectable' families gradually moved out into more desirable housing accommodation within the public sector or sought home ownership. Allocation procedures tended to exaggerate this distinction in residential patterns; local anecdotal evidence suggests that the Chicken Lane estate became a 'dump' for so-called 'problem' families who, once ensconced in he flats, were then refused council transfers elsewhere.

Changes in the character of the estate were exaggerated as a result of the process of out-migration of 'respectable' families. Flats that were hurriedly vacated were by the mid- to late 1970s subjected to extensive damage. Plumbing was removed, leading to flooding, wiring was ripped out, doors and windows smashed. Sometimes empty properties were used for impromptu parties by young people from the estates and were then occasionally set on fire after the 'guests' had left. As the squeeze on local authority budgets began to take effect in the early 1980s, damaged properties were not repaired or re-occupied, but were boarded up. By the time new tenancies had been agreed for empty properties, damage was so extensive that tenants refused occupation. As a consequence, unoccupied, boarded up flats were a common sight on the Chicken Lane estate throughout the 1980s.

There were further factors which also affected the condition of the housing stock. Some of the flats praised so effusively in the quotation at the beginning of this section were six-storey structures containing twelve two-bedroomed maisonettes, heated by 'under floor' electric central heating. Originally built in the 1960s, these maisonettes were popular as first homes for young married couples. However, because of the growing undesirability of the estate to couples who were seeking to 'get on' (due to its developing 'bad reputation'), the local availability of more attractive public sector housing, and the rising costs of the electric central heating, several of these small blocks fell into disuse. They were extensively damaged and more or less permanently boarded up with corrugated metal sheeting over doors and windows. This served to add to the growing aura of disreputability of the Chicken Lane estate as a whole.

By the early 1970s, there had developed within the Chicken Lane estate a network of 'rough kids'; a large number of young people who were dislocated from their original surroundings in traditional inner City areas and unsettled by the move into the estates. The origins of the masculine status identification with toughness, hardness, criminality, and the Northside tradition of football culture, has its origins in this period (see Chapter Four, Section 4.2.3). The Northside Jungle Crew of unemployed male study participants originally drawn from the estate were not an organised gang with a leader and internal organisation but were a 1980s manifestation of a subcultural ethos originally established in the late 1960s and 1970s particularly on the Chicken Lane estate.

The Northside Crew then are not an institution in any concrete sense but may be seen as something akin to Glasgow's "Maryhill Fleet", an umbrella term for the subsumption of small 'teams' within a larger local identity (Patrick 1973 : 36). Membership consists more in terms of a "diffuse symbol denoting membership in a particular ... network" (Jenkins 1983 : 44). It identifies the 'lads' when outside their estates at football matches, for example, and inside the immediate area as distinct from 'snobs', 'shirtlifters' or 'mongs' (i.e. non-estate dwellers). As such, the Northside tradition remains as potent an ideology today as ever. This brief account brings into focus the subsequent circumstances and context for the development of the Youth and Community Project in Hartingleigh outlined in Chapter One (Section 1.8).

When I first arrived in Hartingleigh in 1979, the estate had then, and still has, a reputation as a very 'rough' area. In other districts of Manchester, 'The Jungle' has a distinct reputation as a violent district, a place to be avoided, if at all possible. This was, to some degree, my own view until I got to know the place and its inhabitants better.

Statistics for unemployment levels on the Chicken Lane estate are not available. Local estimations indicate that the unemployment rate, particularly in the early 1980s, was higher than for the ward as a whole. In many respects, certainly in architectural design and

general social profile, the Jungle shares similar features to the deck-access flats known as the 'Crescents' in Hulme; here in the mid-1980s, two out of three economically active males were unemployed (Chapter One, Section 1.7). In the context of the sub-divisions and employment/residential stratification within Hartingleigh as a whole, the Chicken Lane estate throughout the 1980s was 'rough' rather than 'respectable', populated by unskilled rather than skilled workers, many of whom were unemployed rather than employed. In following sections, I shall explore how these factors came together and found expression in the lived experience of study participants (Sections 8.4.3 and 8.4.4).

The remainder of the long-term unemployed participants were originally drawn from the Marton housing estate, which, although considered not as 'rough' as the Jungle, became from the mid-1980s onwards increasingly tainted with the same local stigma. In part, this was a consequence of high unemployment, local authority housing allocation decisions, and the developing reputation for 'undesirability', all of which ensured that vacated properties were not quickly occupied. As a result of these factors, the flats and houses on the Marton estate were subjected to the same kinds of destructive treatment as were found in the Chicken Lane estates. From the mid-1980s, empty and boarded up properties on the Marton estate served to confirm its rough reputation in the eyes of local residents (see Chapter Four, Section 4.2.1).

8.3.2 Local Unemployment

Research has indicated that local area factors, such as relative social deprivation and above average rates of unemployment, tend to result in restricted opportunities for young people (Ashton *et al* 1988; Garner *et al* 1988; Banks *et al* 1992). Such areas tend to be districts like Hartingleigh with a concentration of manual workers who were often employed in traditional local industries such as manufacturing. In 1981, 57% of Hartingleigh's labour force consisted of manual workers (see Table 4, Chapter One, Section 1.5), 35.5% of whom were employed in manufacturing (see Table 5, Chapter One, Section 1.7). Industries such as local manufacturing were exactly those which have experienced the

greatest number of net job losses in the Thatcher decade (see Chapter One, Section 1.7.1, for details). Up to 1983, for example, 150,000 jobs were lost in manufacturing (*Poverty in Manchester* 1986 : 5); this represented a fall in employment of 43.3% in the inner industrial core (Mellor 1989 : 4).

According to researchers such as Furlong (1992 : 89), "local all-age unemployment rate tends to be the best predictor of total unemployment among young people". In areas of high all-age unemployment, young people spend a greater proportion of their time, after school leaving, unemployed. Statistics published by the Planning Department of Manchester City Council reveal that, during the period of my study, the unemployment rates in Manchester consistently outstripped the national figures. Between 1980 and 1989, the unemployment rates for the City were almost double the national rates (Chapter One, Section 1.7.2). In January 1986, for example, the unemployment rate was 13.9% for Great Britain; in the City of Manchester the unemployment rate was 24.0%, or almost one in four of the City's resident workforce (*Unemployment in Manchester*, Manchester City Council, City Planning Department, February 1986). However, in certain areas within the Inner City, unemployment rates, particularly among the young, exceeded not only national levels but also those of the City as a whole. In January 1985, for example, almost three-quarters of the young people eligible for work in the Crescents, Hulme, were unemployed (GMC policy background paper 85/1, 1985 : 5). In other parts of the inner City in the mid-1980s, unemployment rates among the under-25s exceeded 50%, particularly in Hulme, Rusholme, St. George's, Hartingleigh, and Central Salford. Unemployment was not a temporary phenomenon in these areas. In 1985, for example, 36% of the inner City's young unemployed had been out of work for over a year (GMC County Planning Department, *Local Unemployment in Greater Manchester : Analysis by Age and Duration*, 1985 : 5). The tendency towards long-term unemployment amongst the young was similarly reflected in the overall marked increase in long-term unemployment amongst the City's workforce as a whole. In July 1980, 25% of the all-age unemployed had been out of work for more than one year and 9% for more than three. By 1986, the figures had

risen to 48% and 21% respectively (*Manchester : A Picture of Ill-Health*, Manchester City Council Planning Department, 1985 : 5).

The long-term unemployed cyclical transitionaries were characterised by their original residential locations within families situated at the rough end of the 'rough/respectable' continuum. They were from an Inner City ward characterised by persistently high unemployment and from parts of the ward that suffered a considerable amount of local stigma. In part, such local stigma was due to unemployment levels on the Chicken Lane and Marton estates which appeared to exceed the ward as a whole. Among the young men, the cumulative effect was that unemployment came to be regarded as the norm. In the Square on the Chicken Lane estate where Maz's mother lived, for example, twenty-three out of the thirty surrounding flats contained families he described as "Dole-ies", that is families that were characterised by family members' prolonged unemployment. Similarly, in the low-rise maisonettes on the block in the Marton estate where Digger and Stella lived, thirteen out of the fifteen families who lived there were what Digger described as "Giro-technicians". Stella described unemployment as "the Marton disease, it's summat in the water .. d'ya wanna brew (laughs)". The background of profound unemployment generated its own cumulative social disadvantage associated with long-term benefit dependence. When unemployment was regarded as the norm, there was no use in fighting against it; the longer these study participants were unemployed, the less likely they were of gaining conventional employment: "They were caught up in the spiral of no job experience leading to no job offers" (Gill 1977 : 110). The only options that appeared to be available were those marginal opportunities that existed within their informal networks. These were semi-legal and illegal alternatives which served to further remove participants from commitment to the formal labour market. Such cumulative social disadvantages increased the 'rough' reputation of the area as a whole:

> "Hartingleigh? ... It's full of defaulters, layabouts and thieves ... I don't want to sound like Colonel Blimp but I think in their case there's a good argument for briging back conscription" (Martin Parkray, Community Social Worker).

8.3.3 Cumulative Social Disadvantage : 'The Rough'

Aside from their original residential locations on the estates characterised by persistently high unemployment and from within families at the rough end of the rough-respectable continuum, the long-term unemployed study participants (who had all undertaken early careers involving a cyclical transition into and out of unemployment, government schemes and underemployment) were also characterised by extensive familial and parental unemployment. For twenty-two of the twenty-five study participants who had entered more or less permanent unemployment, their families contained main income providers (generally fathers) who were also long-term unemployed. Generally, the main income providers from such families had formerly been employed in typically unskilled or semi-skilled engineering or manufacturing jobs. Redundancies during the early part of the recession had left many family income providers unemployed in their forties or fifties, at an age when the potential for re-training or the acquisition of different employment had become a diminished possibility. Unemployment within such families was endemic and often such families were also characterised by the unemployment of older and/or younger siblings. Moreover, in the case of eight of the long-term unemployed participants, paternal figures were actually absent from the family household due to death, divorce and separation, or long-term imprisonment.

The literature on youth unemployment has consistently shown that young people from such socially (and educationally) disadvantaged backgrounds tend to experience a disproportionate share of unemployment (Ashton *et al* 1982; Gray *et al* 1983; White and McRae 1989). Unlike the traditional or protracted transitionaries drawn from respectable families, or families at the mid-point of the rough-respectable continuum, the long-term unemployed participants within my study were more likely to be drawn from Hartingleigh's 'rougher' estates, and to have fathers who were absent or unemployed. The unemployed were less likely than those study participants who had secured employment to have come from families whose main income providers were still in employment (see, for example, Chapter Six, Section 6.3; Chapter Seven, Section 7.5).

Using data drawn from the 1980 and 1981 General Household Surveys, Payne (1987) has similarly shown that young people who are unemployed are far more likely than those in waged employment to have another family member who is also unemployed. As I have previously discussed, employed family members are able to bestow social and labour market advantages on job seeking youngsters. In some respects, having family members, relatives, or friends, who supplied the contacts or information which led to that vital first job interview explained much of the variation between the traditional and protracted transitionaries' post-school labour market careers and those of the long-term unemployed. As working family members may be a useful source of unadvertised job vacancies (Manwaring 1984), family unemployment may sever a young person from an important, informal, information network.

The social disadvantages of the unemployed have been emphasised in numerous studies. Family experience of unemployment has a strong influence on the employment chances of a young person, as does coming from a large family, coming from a single parent family, and belonging to an ethnic minority (White and McRae 1989). Educational disadvantage adds to the cumulative impact of such social disadvantage. However, White and McRae (1989) argue that it is wrong to depict the unemployed as an "unqualified residue in the labour market", as they have the same educational profiles as those young workers employed in low-skilled occupations. Unskilled workers are simply more vulnerable to unemployment under specific economic circumstances. As Furlong has also argued:

> "Unemployment is caused by a lack of demand for labour rather than by inadequacies in the labour force. Those who are unemployed in a recession are perfectly acceptable to employers when labour demand is high" (1992 : 87).

Young people with no or few educational qualifications, those from disadvantaged social backgrounds, and with a cumulative personal and familial history of prolonged unemployment, are particularly vulnerable to unemployment when demand for labour is low.

In the early part of the recession, when my study participants first entered the labour market, there was what has been described as a "disequilibrium" in the supply and demand for jobs for young people within local labour markets (Wells 1987). In some local labour markets, the gap between employment supply and demand was far larger than in other areas (Ashton *et al* 1986; Banks *et al* 1992). In some areas, for example, even highly qualified people from socially advantaged backgrounds found it difficult to get jobs (Ashton *et al* 1986). The 1983 Employment Survey drew attention to the major differences which now divide the North from the South (*Employment Gazette*, February 1987). The much delayed publication of these findings came as a shock because of the magnitude of difference they expressed. The Leicester-based study focused upon a carefully selected sample of 1786 young people aged between 18 and 24 in four locations: Sunderland, Leicester, Stafford and St. Albans. Almost one in three young men in Sunderland had never experienced full-time paid employment compared with only one in thirty-three in St. Albans. These findings have been replicated in the work of Ashton *et al* (1986) who found that in Sunderland, for example, even those young people with GCE A-Levels had problems finding employment, while in areas with low unemployment, such as St. Albans, high levels of post-school employment were reported both among qualified <u>and</u> unqualified school leavers. Employers faced with increasing numbers of applicants for a reduced number of vacancies tend not to make radical changes in their recruitment procedures, but rather accentuate existing practices (Manwaring and Wood, 1984; Roberts *et al* 1988; Wallace 1987). They make greater use of informal networks (Wallace 1987 : 59), recruit experienced workers rather than school leavers (Roberts *et al* 1988 : 29-30), and, when they do recruit young people, they are able to choose from among the better qualified (Furlong 1992 : 87). As a consequence, many young people from socially disadvantaged backgrounds in areas of high intra-generational unemployment "become trapped in a cycle of unemployment and unemployment based schemes from which they ... [find] it increasingly difficult to escape" (Furlong 1992 : 85) (my insert).

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 decade it was young people from socially and educationally disadvantaged backgrounds who remained particularly vulnerable to unemployment (Banks *et al* 1992; Furlong 1992). In Hartingleigh where, as I have indicated, 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.

To the extent that these young people found it difficult to escape from unemployment, even after participation in a succession of government schemes and special programmes, it can be argued that labour market opportunities were further diminished by their 'training placements'. These inferior, community-based, detached, 'sink' schemes served to produce a Black Magic Roundabout of thwarted aspirations and diminished opportunity, which served only to contain participants' unemployment and produce an additional sense of failure. Cynicism and disillusionment were often the consequences of cyclical transitions through unemployment and unemployment based schemes; such disillusionment preceded the slide into long-term unemployment, scheme refusal, and eventually labour market withdrawal.

8.4 Cyclical Transitions and Labour Market Withdrawal

8.4.1 Introduction

Amongst long-term unemployed study participants, the common response to the enforced idleness promoted by denial of access to jobs was a progressive reduction in commitment to the orthodox labour market. Many of these unemployed young people had become trapped in a cycle of unemployment and unemployment-based schemes which they found increasingly difficult to escape. In such circumstances, they abandoned commitment to proper jobs and withdrew from the orthodox labour market. Labour market withdrawal

enabled participants to "regard themselves as having some control over their life events and to regain some self-esteem" (Furlong 1992 : 98). The escape from a cycle of job-search and rejection, scheme participation and unemployment, allowed them to relinquish the inevitable sense of personal failure which accompanied such a post-school transition.

Reducing the effort put into the search for work can have positive consequences for the unemployed. In a study of unemployed men in the United States (Yancey 1980), it was discovered that research participants protected their self-confidence and self-esteem by restricting their job search. Similarly, the participants in MacLeod's (1987) study of "levelled aspirations in a low income neighbourhood" withdrew from the dominant ideology of individual economic achievement into alternative status systems afforded by the peer-group subculture. In a situation of social and economic disadvantage, this allowed them to "maintain some semblance of a positive identity" (1987 : 150). Labour market withdrawal amongst study participants took three forms: a return to full-time education; a retreat into home-based domestic careers; and the proactive development of 'alternative careers' with Hartingleigh's burgeoning sub- and anti-employment subcultures.

Labour market withdrawal into full-time education was an option pursued by two unemployed women study participants in order to escape from unemployment and unemployment-based schemes. However, post-compulsory education did not result in employment for the two participants and eventually they were undistinguishable from the majority of long-term unemployed women in my study who had withdrawn from the labour market in order to work in the home. The long-term unemployed women study participants had the same social backgrounds and characteristics as the unemployed as a whole, the main difference being that they were more likely to be married or cohabiting and to have the main responsibility for dependent children.

For the majority of unemployed men in my study, who had endured the Black Magic Roundabout of a cyclical transition through schemes and unemployment, there was often a

reaction in terms of retreat into the norms, values, and alternative status systems of their peer group subcultures. This often took the form of proactively developed 'alternative careers' within Hartingleigh's sub- and anti-employment subcultures (Chapter Four, Section 4.8).

For many of the long-term unemployed study participants, a reduction in personal commitment towards employment and the effort put into the search for jobs, and a progressive withdrawal from the orthodox labour market, had positive psychological benefits. For the women, especially those with children, labour market withdrawal was often a socially acceptable alternative to unemployment. For the majority of men, the income derived from 'alternative careers' together with the alternative status systems of the peer group allowed them to "reject the official authorised interpretation of their social situation" (MacLeod 1987 : 150).

8.4.2 Labour Market Withdrawal and Full-Time Education

For two study participants, Lynn Chapman and Spider, cyclical post-school transitions by the mid-1980s had produced a return to full-time education. Lynn Chapman's early career was characterised by an early departure from compulsory education at the age of fifteen when she found herself to be pregnant. Her son was born in May 1980 and eventually, after a short period living in her parents' home, she moved into a council flat in Marton with the father of her child. Here the couple made a brief attempt to 'set up home', but her partner's unemployment, and the pressure of financial hardship, produced an early breakdown in the relationship, and separation. For almost a year, Lynn continued to live in the flat with her son and struggled to maintain her residential independence on the income derived from lone parent benefits plus the occasional periods of local part-time work she was able to secure. However, the struggle of coping alone proved too great and she returned with her baby to the family home. Over the next two years, Lynn made several attempts to gain a foothold in the labour market *via* three separate training

schemes secured through the Job Centre, none of which led into or produced the full-time employment she desired.

In September 1985, following advice from the Careers Service, Lynn enrolled for a two year full-time course at Marton College of Further Education. At first, Lynn undertook five GCE O-Level subjects but, because she found the course work too demanding, and also because she had difficulties dividing her time between homework, college work, and the care of her son, she reduced the number of subjects to three. Although the Local Education Authority paid the course fees, there were no statutory maintenance grants available for the course of study Lynn had undertaken. She did receive a nominal sum of just over £400 a year from the LEA to cover travelling and other expenses, but this could not be considered an adequate sum for a mother and child to live on.

In November 1986, just over half-way through her studies, as a consequence of financial hardship and problems with the DHSS, Lynn decided that she "couldn't handle it anymore" and abandoned her course of study. Not only had she found the work demanding but Lynn had also been subjected to financial pressure as a result of DHSS investigation and benefit suspension. Lynn had contravened the rules of supplementary benefit entitlement by maintaining her claim for lone parent benefits whilst pursuing full-time education. When the DHSS discovered this, her benefit was immediately withdrawn and threats were made by the investigating officials that court action would be pursued to recover the outstanding payments which had, in their terms, been "fraudulently claimed". Court action was narrowly avoided when a negotiated sum of £530 was agreed as adequate recompense. Her parents were forced to borrow the money to pay the sum on Lynn's behalf.

Without the basic income derived from benefits, Lynn could not afford to continue her course of study. Despite her appeals, the DHSS would not consider maintaining payments as long as she was in full-time education. As a consequence, Lynn was

compelled to give up her College work in order to regain her only source of income. Following the development of a steady relationship which culminated in the birth of her second child in January 1987, she joined the majority of unemployed women study participants in establishing a home-based domestic and childcare 'career'. However, in March 1990, Lynn did manage to secure a measure of labour market mobility after securing part-time employment in a cake shop. This was only for twelve hours a week but she welcomed the opportunity to "get a break" from the baby.

Spider had similarly undertaken a two-year course in 1985 in order to escape from unemployment and unemployment-based government schemes. At that time, Spider lived with her boyfriend in a privately rented flat in Stretford. Although her boyfriend was in full-time employment, Spider sought to maintain her financial independence by registering as unemployed and claiming supplementary benefit. Again, this was contrary to the rules of benefit entitlement, as a partner's income is taken into account when assessment for entitlement is calculated. However, Spider chose not to declare her relationship to the DHSS and instead registered her claim as an unemployed single person. This strategy, though productive with regard to the income she was able to derive from benefits, produced its own "hassles" in terms of the periodic, semi-compulsory requirement to register for participation in unemployment based schemes. In all, she completed four such schemes during a five year post-school transition before entering full-time education in November 1985.

None of the schemes Spider undertook produced full-time employment. However, it was as a consequence of a post-scheme follow-up interview with Careers Guidance at the Job Centre that she was offered a place on a music technology course run by the Local Education Authority at her local College of Further Education. Although it was LEA administered, the course was one of the earliest MSC financed, post-sixteen, college based, technical and vocational courses - an experimental initiative first introduced in 1983. The course consisted of a mixture of academic subjects like maths and physics and

various practical components concerned with recording technology such as using a (sound) mixing-desk, and other music studio technology.

Although Spider enjoyed the course enormously and for a while harboured hopes of securing employment in a recording studio, the course had not supplied a level of skills which were transferable to the job market. After completing the two years, she once again returned to registered unemployment. Like Lynn Chapman, Spider eventually undertook a home-based domestic career of parenthood with the birth of her first child in July 1987, followed by marriage in 1988, and the birth of her second child in January 1989. These events ensured that her employment aspirations were constrained by the demands of domesticity and child rearing.

8.4.3 Labour Market Withdrawal and Home Based Domestic Careers

For a majority of unemployed women participants, labour market withdrawal often took the form of a realigned commitment to a traditional domestic role of home and child care. 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. Westwood (1984) has suggested that domestic life is often viewed as an attractive option by women employed in boring or repetitive jobs; although among study participants the subsequent reality of domestic life often conflicted with the romantic ideology surrounding marriage and domesticity (see Chapter Four, Section 4.7). The majority of young women who had found it difficult to secure employment, and who suffered the effects of prolonged unemployment in terms of their social identities and the transition to adulthood, came to regard motherhood and domesticity as an escape from wagelessness (see also Griffin 1985 : 56-57; Roberts 1987 : 20; Wallace 1985 : 24). For a young woman without a job, parenthood (and/or marriage or cohabitation) was often the only route to securing independent adult status, either within or outside the natal home (Wallace 1986a : 24; see also Campbell 1984; Willis 1984a, b, d; and Chapter Four, Section 4.7.1).

As I have illustrated throughout my study, the social and occupational lives of women participants were circumscribed by a traditional, taken-for-granted, adherence to domestic roles and duties. As Griffin has demonstrated, monogamous, heterosexual, partnerships, motherhood, and the responsibility for domestic chores, are regarded as an inevitable feature of adulthood for working class girls (1985 : 48-53). However, it was evident from some study participants that this was not an actively planned alternative to prolonged unemployment, but one that they turned to when other options appeared unattainable:

> "I could 'ave 'ad 'n' abortion but I couldn't stand the thought, no, I thought at least with a baby to look after I can take care of it an' make sure it's alright ... I knew they'd give me a [council] flat, an' anyway there was no work ... nothin' else in my life ... " (Lynda Willcox).
>
> **S.C.**: "Do you think you'd have done it differently if you'd got a job when you left school?"
>
> **Janet Wallace**: "Oh I don't think so ... It's sort of expected innit? Women 'ave kids an' stay 'ome, men go to work. It's always been like that ... No, there again I suppose if it'd been a good 'un [a good job] maybe I'd 'ave changed me mind, but that's just dreamin' ... there's no good 'un's round 'ere, not for the likes of us anyway."

Although, like the women in the studies by Griffin (1985) and Wallace (1987), the women in my study had grown up serving a 'domestic apprenticeship' within the natal home, there were, in general, important distinctions made between their role as domestic assistant in their mother's home and their roles as "houseworker" within their "own home" - "with the possibilities of status, independence and control that this implied" (Wallace 1987 : 83):

> "At 'ome it's like I 'ad to do it ... me Mam would go on an' that, but in yer own place you <u>want</u> to do it ... Keep it nice ... for the kids an' that. I 'turn it out' every Friday, top to bottom, just like at Mam's ... when it's done an' all sorted out I sit back an' feel nice ... You could eat yer dinner off the floor it's so clean" (Heather Lawley).

Some participants, like Heather, embraced their domestic roles wholeheartedly, regarding it as proof of adulthood, especially when combined with residential mobility, cohabitation or marriage, and parenthood. A home of one's own had a special status and ordinarily this was achieved within the provisions of public sector housing following a heterosexual partnership and/or parenthood (see also Chapter Seven, Section 7.7.3).

Others, however, were critical of marriage or motherhood and home-based domestic careers and expressed the desire for work outside the home (Chapter Four, Section 4.7). Nevertheless, the lack of other viable options, such as the possibility for a good job or an independent life-style, made motherhood a higher status occupation than long-term unemployment. "It's not all love an' roses, I've learnt that much ... but at least I've got the kids, I wouldn't change that for the world" (Lynda Willcox).

Cohabitation, marriage, and parenthood, were sometimes a haphazard, unplanned state of affairs, rather than being actively espoused statuses, a product of 'a drift into' rather than, as was the case with the traditional transitionaries (Chapter Six, Section 6.5.6), a product of forward planning and prudent financial management. In part the romantic ideology surrounding young women's sexual liaisons conflicted with the de-romanticising role of condoms. 'Accidental' pregnancies were common, though these were less the product of irresponsibility than the result of fatalistic ethos generated within the context of economic uncertainty. In such a context, there was really no point in 'planning' a relationship or a family when insecurity was a psychological and economic (institutionalised) fact of life. The solution was either to actively 'choose' not have children, or simply to allow them to happen: "It stops you from making plans, what's the point ... Planning ahead, what's that mean? You just think about today, just try to survive. You can't plan anything" (Julie Birchall).

Wallace's research (1986a : 28) confirms that unemployed women "drift into" parenthood, "for lack of any positive alternatives". Although participants would not necessarily 'plan' to have children whilst unemployed, family planning was haphazard. Ideally, couples would have preferred to have waited until they had a job and a home. However, there was a general fatalism associated with the knowledge that this was a remote possibility. In fact, some couples actively pursued parenthood as a means for augmenting their council house applications (see Chapter Four, section 4.7.1; Chapter Seven, Section 7.7.3). Moreover, some unattached women had accepted pregnancy and

early careers of lone parenthood as a means for demonstrating adult identity and securing residential independence, just as others had sought to demonstrate their rebelliousness and autonomy through lone parenthood:

> "They tried to say I couldn't cope, but I knew I was gonna make it work ... this was something for me, no-one was gonna talk me out of it" (Tricia Hartley).

Of the four women who were registered for benefit entitlements as lone parents in 1985-1986 (see Table 10, Chapter Four, Section 4.7), only one (Tricia Hartley) was by 1989-1990 still bringing up her child without a regular male partner. Ten of the eleven unemployed women were by 1989-1990 either married or cohabiting and living in privately rented or council accommodation.

Labour market careers were progressively relinquished as women's daily activities became circumscribed by childcare and domestic duties. In cases where both partners in a relationship were unemployed, benefit claims were usually registered by the male partner on behalf of the family. In these cases, women were not required to attend the Job Centre in order to sign on, and thus were separated from even the tentative possibility for the acquisition of employment through Job Centre attendance. Labour market withdrawal into home-based domestic careers was an accepted fact of life, and one which contributed to the reproduction of traditional working class gender roles. According to Wallace (1987 : 85), the reproduction of traditional gender roles takes place on three levels. Gender roles are reinforced materially by the fact that child rearing women are generally economically dependent on support, either by family or, more usually, a male partner; traditional roles are reinforced socially through the inherited expectations of appropriate adult roles and behaviour; these are reinforced symbolically through codes of conduct that prescribe social behaviour for both genders. Women who had sought to escape unemployment through education (Section 8.4.1), lone parenthood (Chapter Four, Section 4.7.1), or even full-time waged employment (Chapter Six, Section 6.6.9), eventually succumbed to full-time domestic and child care careers based within the home; generally such careers involved a fundamental withdrawal from the labour market.

However, it was not all domesticity and child rearing for the unemployed women. Financial hardship and restricted labour market opportunity had led four into more or less full-time alternative modes of income acquisition. For Susan Hargreaves, this took the form of multiple activities (including cheque and credit card fraud and 'dealing' proscribed drugs including methadone, heroin, and cannabis) through which she sought to maintain her own 'habit' (addiction to opiate drugs). Tricia Hartley worked regularly 'off the books' as a 'masseuse' in a sauna club. Lynda Willcox and Wendy Fisher also had regular 'fiddle jobs', Lynda as an artists' model in a Manchester School of Art and as a barmaid in a City Centre nightclub, and Wendy as a regular helper on a market stall owned by the Donaghue family. These were the minority. Amongst the long-term unemployed women, withdrawal from orthodox labour market activity was generally articulated in terms of a retreat into home-based domestic and childcare routines. In contrast to the long-term unemployed men, most of whom were involved in 'alternative' economic activity, proactive criminality was a significant, but nonetheless minority, status role amongst the women in my study.

Why there is no female equivalent to the 'alternative' economic activities of Hartingleigh's male dominated sub- and anti-employment peer group subcultures can be explored with reference to research by Brake (1980 : 137-154) and Jenkins (1983 : 44). Among other reasons, the following factors are important: firstly, the ideology of working class 'decency' for girls as this relates to their future marriage prospects and generally circumscribes their subcultural activities; secondly, their atomistic culture which precludes the ongoing peer group solidarity upon which alternative subcultural careers are based; thirdly, the relative subordination of girls and young women to the social demands of their male partners often precludes autonomous subcultural activity; fourthly, their ongoing domestic responsibilities associated with home and child care routines; fifthly, the distinction between the public domain of men and the private world of women generally inhibits the creation of a socially active 'rough' female subculture or life-style; and, lastly, the disappearance of manual labour as a traditional domain for the articulation of the

'normal' working class male status role of breadwinning provided an added impetus towards the creation of alternative routes for defining adult masculine psychological and economic potency, whereas for women, the traditional routes towards displaying working class adult femininity through domestic labour and child care remained open.

8.4.4. Habitus and Labour Market Withdrawal

Perhaps the most useful theoretical construct available to explain the labour market withdrawal of the long-term unemployed cyclical transitionaries is Bourdieu's concept of habitus, which he defines as -

> " ... a system of lasting, transposable dispositions which, integrating past experiences, functions at every moment as a matrix of perceptions, appreciations and actions" (1977 : 82-83).

Bourdieu's model has been criticised as "a deterministic materialist epistemology, regardless of how far removed the final instance of that determination might be" (Jenkins 1983 : 8). Bourdieu's model also does not account for cultural innovation or subcultural resistance (Giroux 1983). Nevertheless, his view that culturally induced aspirations reflect an individual's internalisation of the objective probabilities for social mobility has much to recommend it. Put simply, the habitus is composed of the beliefs, attitudes and experiences of those inhabiting an individual's social world. This conglomeration of deeply internalised values defines attitudes towards employment, for example. The structure of employment with its in-built regard for educational credentials, the "cultural capital" of the middle classes, promotes a belief among working class pupils that they are unlikely to attain high status employment. Thus there is a correlation between objective probabilities and subjective aspirations, between institutional structures and cultural practices (Bourdieu and Passeron 1977 : 156).

Work commitment and aspirations reflect an individual's view of their life-chances and are an internalisation of objective probabilities. But work commitment and aspirations are not the product of rational analysis; rather, they are acquired in the habitus of the individual. A disadvantaged working class child, for example, growing up in a context

where success is rare, is much less likely to develop strong occupational aspirations than a middle class child growing up in a social world peopled by those who have experienced social mobility through academic and occupational success. According to Bourdieu:

> "The habitus is the universalising mediation which causes an individual agent's practices, without either explicit reason or signifying intent, to be none the less 'sensible' and 'reasonable'" (1977 : 79).

The habitus engenders attitudes and conduct that result in the reproduction of social formations. The educational and employment opportunity structures are such that disadvantaged working class individuals have significantly reduced chances of securing professional or managerial occupations. Bourdieu's argument is that subjective responses to objective structures are engendered from the habitus, from the experiences and attitudes of the cultural milieu. Bourdieu's determinism is a result of the circular relationship he posits between structures and practices in which "objective structures tend to produce structured subjective dispositions that produce structured actions which, in turn, tend to reproduce objective structure" (Swartz 1977 : 548). Bourdieu's argument that subjective hopes mirror objective chances, although positing too mechanistic a relationship, is, nevertheless, a very useful explanatory device with respect to the cyclical transitionaries' labour market withdrawal.

The long-term unemployed cyclical transitionaries viewed their prospects for substantial social mobility as very remote, which accounted for their realistic occupational aspirations. Reference to the 1980 Youth Survey questionnaires of these study participants revealed the typical desire for unskilled or semi-skilled jobs such as "labourer", "factory worker", "gardener", "shop work", "milk man", "building work", "driver", and so on. Moreover, drawing on the wider experiences of their families, peers, and later their own encounters with the job market, participants' appraisals of the possibility for what Bourdieu has described as "social upgrading" often precluded the formation of <u>any</u> occupational aspirations (which, incidentally, perhaps accounts for the significant number of "don't knows" in answer to the question, "What do you think is ... likely to be your first

full-time job?", in the Youth Project questionnaire (see Appendix A). The available evidence indicated that the absence or unemployment of the parents of the long-term unemployed cyclical transitionaries precluded parental intercession in terms of the development of participants' work commitments or aspiration formation (see Section 8.3). In general, the parents of the long-term unemployed cyclical transitionaries exerted little significant influence on their children's lives, either in terms of the ability to bestow social 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 families 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 cyclical transitionaries, both the traditional and protracted transitionaries displayed a firm commitment to employment and employment aspirations. 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 some cases, lasted for over seven years (Chapter Seven, Section 7.5).

Like most parents, those of the long-term unemployed cyclical transitionaries "wanted the best" for their offspring but, as was indicated by Dilly's mother, she was hesitant about encouraging exaggerated expectations for fear of laying the basis for subsequent disappointment:

> "I told 'im 'e'd got no chance an' I was right ... All our lives it's bin the same, rich wot gets the pleasure, poor wot gets the pain. 'Ow could I tell 'im different?"

Or, as Maz revealed in Chapter Four (Section 4.8.5):

> "We knew there was nowt' down for us. It's what they was tellin' us right from the off ... teachers, probation, my ol' man ..."

Although the families of the unemployed cyclical transitionaries did not contribute significantly to the inculcation of work commitment and aspirations, most participants nevertheless, unsuccessfully, attempted post-school entry into the formal labour market. In their struggles 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 government inspired 'sink' schemes. These types of first-hand experience 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:

> "It was like a bloody circus 'cept we were the clowns" (Tracy Smith).
>
> "I'd rather fuckin' die than go on another [government scheme]" (Poolie)
>
> "I'd rather go beggin'. I'm tellin' you, I mean it, I'm never doin' another bloody scheme" (Wendy Fisher)
>
> "I'd rather go graftin' man, at least you get to 'old yer fuckin' 'ed up" (Poolie)
>
> "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] ... [Hustling] ... it's all I know an' it's all I want to know, the rest of it's for cunts" (Willie)
>
> "D'ya wanna know what my motto is now, fuck 'em all!" (Mick Kent)
>
> "Fuck 'em all, no work, no money we knew it was up to us to get it sorted" (Maz)

Such disillusionment and embittered cynicism provides a partial explanation for the development of anti-employment subcultural norms and values and for the progressive abandonment of commitment to the formal labour market.

In attempting to understand the impact of social disadvantage, family influences, and labour market experiences on the employment commitment of the unemployed cyclical transitionaries, Bourdieu's theory that the habitus engenders aspirations which reflect objective probabilities seems accurate. However, the concept of the internalisation of objective probabilities - because it limits the scope for human agency, creativity and subcultural resistance - has little explanatory value when considering the influence of the peer group (Chapter Three, Section 3.5), or the economic and psychological benefits of subcultural affiliation and labour market withdrawal (Chapter Four, Sections 4.6.3, 4.8.4, 4.8.5, 4.8.6). These are considerable theoretical deficiencies because, according to the

ethnographic sketches provided in Chapter Four, the subcultural milieu is of primary significance in the articulation of resistance (Giroux 1983) and procreativity (Fryer 1986a), particularly for the unemployed males of my study group. Subcultural resistance and procreativity were articulated in terms of a progressive reduction in commitment to the formal labour market, leading eventually to an ethos which stressed the value of labour market withdrawal. As Maz put it: "You're never gonna make big quids if you're out at work all day". The ability to reap high rewards for the minimum of effort provided status and self-worth within the subcultural milieu. As Tex put it: "A job?! Fuck that! I can make more in a coupla 'ours than my 'ol man used to make in a week. Fuck workin'".

In a situation where success is defined largely in terms of income and occupational status, the long-term unemployed of Hartingleigh have a problem. Unemployed, living with their parents or in public or privately rented accommodation, and located at the very bottom reaches of the Social Division of Welfare (Chapter Four, Section 4.6.1), they are, in objective terms, 'triple failures'. Participants are seen to have 'failed' educationally, 'failed' to secure employment upon school leaving, and to have subsequently 'failed' to get into a working class adulthood through employment, even after participation in a succession of government schemes and special programmes. This hardcore of the young unemployed working class are frequently viewed as 'failures' by potential employers and the Careers Service (Roberts 1987; Furlong 1992) and, to some extent, by themselves (Sennett and Cobb 1977). They have been semi-compulsorily 'conscripted' onto (un)employment training schemes and special programmes designed for "mongs and fuck ups" (as Poolie put it); they have been subjected to periodic harassment by the Social Security (Chapter Seven, Section 7.3.2), even in circumstances when attempting mobility through education (Section 8.4.2). The unemployed may feign to have little of their self identities tied up in formal employment but, nevertheless, they cannot help but feel the judgement of failure and social inferiority cast upon them. As was revealed in Jimmy Bee's biography (Chapter Seven, Section 7.8.3), a cyclical transition, protracted

unemployment, and the consequent failure to provide a "decent start" to married life for his partner and child, had left him feeling "a blown out nobody".

The retreat of unemployed female participants into a realigned commitment to home-based domestic careers (Section 8.4.3), the evolution of sub- and anti-employment subcultures among Hartingleigh's unemployed males, together with the fundamental withdrawal from formal employment that these strategies entailed, must be understood as an attempt by study participants to insulate themselves from negative social judgements and evaluations. Such strategies provided contexts within which some semblance of self-respect and dignity could be upheld.

To characterise the sub- and anti-employment subcultures of Hartingleigh as a defence mechanism against onslaughts to self-esteem would, however, be incomplete. As Willis (1977) has argued, counter cultures have both defensive and independent, creative characteristics. The Northside Jungle Crew, whose adherents and affiliates eventually comprised membership of both the sub- and anti-employment subcultures, have their own distinct set of norms and values (Chapter Four, Section 4.2.3). Such norms and values are indigenous to the parent working class culture; they do not arise simply out of subcultural oppositionality, either to the school (Willis 1977) or towards the conventional labour market. The Northside tradition, for example, with its valuation of physical hardness, emotional resilience, quick-wittedness, masculine potency, group loyalty and solidarity points to norms and values which have been transmitted inter-generationally. Through the utilisation of cultural resources that are largely based on indigenous working class principles and practices, the Northside are able to re-create subculturally traditional procedures for survival:

> "They understand some of the elaborate ways of subverting authority, getting round the formal, squeezing some enjoyment out of a dry context and making extra cash on the side" (Willis 1977 : 109).

Such informal "cultural continuities" are part of the fund of experience built up historically within working class communities. This informal cultural continuity can be seen as the fundamental bass-rhythm of "experience and response which informs the whole of working class culture in its long arc of adaptation to hostile conditions and its development of particular kinds of social relations" (Willis 1977 : 95).

8.4.5 Labour Market Withdrawal and Alternative Careers

By far the largest group amongst my research participants were those who had moved from school into early cyclical transitions through unemployment, unemployment-based government schemes, and had then entered the ranks of the long-term unemployed. By the mid-1980s, the progressive disillusionment and embittered cynicism of many unemployed participants who had endured early post-school transitions on the Black Magic Roundabout resulted in a retreat into the norms, values and status-systems of their peer groups. My fieldwork during the third phase (1985-1986) illustrated how the fourteen unemployed males progressively restricted their social networks to contacts with others in a similar position. They came to recognise and build on a common sense of identity with others sharing their economic circumstances and social background. Generally, their social networks were characterised by an ethos which involved a progressive reduction in commitment to formal labour markets and to the conventional working class routes for 'getting into' adulthood through waged labour. As I discussed earlier (section 8.3), these were socially disadvantaged young people who had become trapped in early careers located in a cycle of unemployment and unemployment-based schemes. Denied legitimate access to opportunity, they found it increasingly difficult to 'get into' the adult working class world of waged labour. In such circumstances, there was a general reaction in favour of their subcultural milieu within which they gave up hope of finding 'proper' or 'straight' jobs and progressively relinquished their commitment to conventional labour markets.

For all the unemployed males and four of the unemployed females in my study, cyclical transitions had produced proactively developed "escape attempts" (Cohen and Taylor 1976) in the form of alternative careers. Through the utilisation of actual and symbolic resources, tactics, and strategies of the local community, these participants were able to proactively construct social identities that were independent of the status supplied by the formal labour market. For the long-term unemployed males in my study, such alternative careers were located within Hartingleigh's sub- and anti-employment subcultures. In part, these subcultural formations were generated within the cultural ecology of an "alternative enterprise culture", sponsored by the legal, semi-legal, and illegal, entrepreneurial activities of two local 'hard families', the Hattons and the Donaghues (Chapter Four, Section 4.8.2).

Throughout the 1980s, the sub-employment subculture was characterised by a loose interlocking network of male study participants and their peers. What often began as 'coping' on the minimal provisions of welfare benefits solidified into a distinctive subculture. According to Turner *et al* (1985): "Among the younger generation ... the only way to cope on social security is to develop a new strategy of ... 'cheating'" (1985 : 487). 'Cheating' among study participants involved such strategies as fraudulent benefit claims and various forms of legal but undeclared, 'off the books', 'fiddle jobs on the side'. Within the sub-employment subculture, participants sought to maintain benefit entitlement and claims by not declaring the extra income derived from sub-employment to the Social Security (Chapter Four, Section 4.8.1). Within the sub-employment subculture, participants' lives were organised around, "moves between full worklessness and 'fiddle jobs'. This shady world blends imperceptibly into the full criminal existence" (C. and L. Goffon 1984 : 282). Through a life-style organised around movements into and out of sub-employment, participants were able to derive income, autonomy and status from living off their wits. However, through adherence to the subcultural norms, values, and status systems of the peer group, participants increasingly drifted into a semi-legal, marginal existence. This produced a gradual withdrawal from the formal labour market and from conventional routes to adult status and identity formation (Chapter Four, Section 4.8.3).

An intermediate set of careers grouped together under the local terms 'hustling' and 'totting' involved a range of semi-legal and illegal occupations (Chapter Four, Section 4.8.4). Generally, these careers involved participants and their peers in a progressive movement into illegality through such activities as street-level, relatively unorganised, drug dealing or handling stolen goods (Chapter Four, Section 4.8.4). Both Susan Hargreaves and Tricia Hartley had developed full-time careers involving, in Susan's case, cheque and credit card fraud and dealing proscribed drugs, and in Tricia's case, prostitution. Both participants described their activities as 'hustling'. Such activities blended into a fully criminal anti-employment subculture within which could be located a range of alternative careers including 'hoisting' (organised shoplifting), 'dealing' (organised dealing of proscribed drugs), 'grafting' (burglary and theft) and 'blagging' (robbery). The anti-employment subculture was characterised by a full-blown commitment to an anti-employment ethos. This involved not merely the rejection of conformist values, such as work commitment, but also an inversion of such values, so that, for example, the ability to prosper without recourse to paid employment of any kind, including that available within the informal economy, became a virtue in itself (Chapter Four, Sections 4.8.5 and 4.8.6).

The overarching context for study participants labour market withdrawal and the proactive development of semi-legal and illegal subcultural alternatives was the institutionalised social and economic insecurity of endemic local unemployment: As Hakim (1982) has argued:

> "There is extensive evidence ... that unemployment is a factor contributing significantly to crime and delinquency ... Unemployment is generally found to be associated with property crimes ... in particular burglary and theft" (1982 : 450).

The unemployment/crime link (Chiricos 1987; Crow 1982; Dean 1982; Farrington *et al* 1986; Glaser 1979; Liu and Bee 1983; Lieberman and Smith 1986; NACRO 1982, 1986; Pyle 1987; Raskin-White *et al* 1985), though repeatedly denied by Conservative politicians, has been generally acknowledged by some of the country's most senior policemen; including, for example, Scotland Yard Chief Commissioner, Sir Peter Imbert

(quoted in Chapter Four, Section 4.8.6), Commander David Stevens (quoted in *The Guardian* 19.2.92) and the former Chief Constable of Greater Manchester, James Anderton. Anderton explicitly proclaimed the link between unemployment and crime in his Chief Constable's Report (1985) when he maintained: " ... burdens on police in Greater Manchester have grown against a background of alarming unemployment" (1985 : 3)

The long-term unemployed participants in my study, through the proactive development of alternative careers within the legal but undeclared informal economy, through the intermediate range of occupations known as hustling and totting, or through anti-employment careers such as dealing, hoisting, grafting and blagging, were effectively developing an alternative career structure. Such an alternative career structure has also been noted by Lucas (1973 : 1-27). According to historical evidence provided by Humphries (1981) and Pearson (1983), this alternative career structure was also present in the male informal street networks from the Victorian era onwards. Historically, these loosely and informally structured groups tended to be concentrated in inner-city areas of deprivation and high unemployment, among white working class boys in their mid to late teens, and they proliferated at times when parental and police control was relaxed, notably as a consequence of wartime recruitment.

The street culture of such groups derived to some degree from the parent culture which valued physical strength and was tolerant of displays of assertive aggression. According to Humphries, such a street culture offered working class males "momentary reprieve from their inferior social identity" (1981 : 175), and offered the opportunity to conquer feelings of "failure and insignificance ... to assert a proud and rebellious identity through which its members could feel masters of their own destiny" (1981 : 179). Some developed into 'delinquent subcultures' with their own alternative argot, skills, and hierarchy of status which often "reversed respectable values" (1981 : 177). Some subcultures were geared to exploiting conventional society through "bag-snatching" (Pearson 1983 : 35-36); and street robberies involving, among other things, coshes (*ibid* 21), garotting (*ibid* 128-129),

and pistols (*ibid* 101-106). In Manchester in the 1880s to early 1900s, such street gangs were known as 'scuttlers', who developed their own distinctive subcultural style:

> "You knew him by his dress. A loose white scarf would adorn his throat; his hair was plastered down upon his forehead; he wore a peaked cap rather over one eye; his trousers were of fustian, and cut like a sailor's - with 'bell bottoms'. This fashion of the trousers was the most distinctive feature of his attire" (Russell 1905 : 16).

Charles Russell's *Manchester Boys, Sketches of Manchester Lads at Work and Play* (1905) provides some insight into the ways in which the informal street networks of Manchester's working class males, in the 1900s, provided an inarticulate and immediate solution to the problems of disadvantage that confronted them. The 'Ikes', 'Street Arabs', 'Scuttlers' and 'Loafers' were sometimes comprised of older youths who could find no regular employment, or who rejected regular employment in favour of itinerant street trading and petty crime:

> "What eventually becomes of such youths? Too often they drift into the ranks of the railway tout or the racecourse frequenter, living on from day to day with an odd honest job, or by some achievement which would not bear that description" (1905 : 15).

According to Humphries, though only a minority, these "delinquent subcultures" of working class youths -

> " ... formed a link with the underworld of professional gangsters and criminals whose network of protection rackets at racecourses ... [and] ... drinking clubs provided an <u>alternative career structure</u> for juvenile gangs" (1981 : 177) (my emphasis).

The historical continuity of this alternative career structure has also been examined by Raphael Samuel (1981) based on interviews with Arthur Harding, a man brought up in the 'Jago', the most notorious of Victorian criminal slums. It contains a remarkable reconstruction of a boy's passage through delinquent gangs and the criminal underworld of London's East End leading to Borstal and prison.

Contemporary criminologists have described the similar biographical pattern of young adult offenders as "crime career trajectories". This phrase conjures up a picture of people firmly in control of where they are heading and consciously choosing a deviant career structure. But (as Marx has indicated), though participants were actively involved in

making their own history, it was not under circumstances of their own choosing. As such, the alternative career structure available to study participants could be understood as a "careering structure":

> "The young person may nominally be in the driving seat - after all it is his car - but in fact he is being given a whole set of contradictory instructions by a large number of back seat drivers, some of whom are selves, some of whom are others. Although everyone may think they are in control, the car itself is quite out of control, and often finishes by crashing into a dead end turning" (Robins and Cohen 1978 : 162).

Nevertheless, the proactivity involved in developing non-conventional options within the local alternative career structure of Hartingleigh enabled male participants in particular to recover a sense of personal autonomy and dignity in a situation where unemployment had rendered obsolete conventional access to the adult working class status roles associated with waged labour. The traditional post-school transition to work for the disadvantaged school leaver in Hartingleigh had been broken; the conventional route to 'getting in' to a working class adulthood no longer existed. In such a context, where the only viable option was the futility of the Black Magic Roundabout, participants explored, constructed and pursued alternative economic options. These not only provided alternative routes to income but also ensured a measure of psychological survival in a situation of institutionalised social and economic insecurity.

Research has similarly indicated that to those for whom full-time paid employment is only a distant possibility, alternative status systems, alternative routes to self-esteem and, as a consequence, alternative modes of identity formation, are proactively developed (Chapter Four, Section 4.6.3). Relevant to a discussion of the psychological benefits for study participants stemming from their withdrawal from the formal labour market is the social psychological research which has shown that low self-esteem is not an inevitable outcome of negative or 'deviant' social labelling (Stager *et al* 1983 : 9). On the contrary, research has indicated that individuals within peer group subcultures reject or invert the negative evaluations of their group held by the larger society, and those who are most committed to 'deviant' identities have high self-esteem (Hall 1966; Kaplan 1980;

Rosenberg and Rosenberg 1978; Schwartz and Stryker 1970; Hammersmith and Weinberg 1973). Similarly, in MacLeod's (1987) study of the 'deviant peer group subculture' he identifies as the "Hallway Hangers", a process of inverting negative labelling was developed as part of the alternative status system of the group.

The Hallway Hangers were subject to the same stigma and social disadvantage as my study participants; social disadvantage associated with, for example, educational failure and residence in a deteriorating public housing development (1987 : 150). Within the peer group, the Hallway Hangers inverted the dominant culture's definitions of achievement in a way that provided access to 'success' in their own terms. However, this occurred in forms the dominant culture commonly recognises as failure, for example, through drug taking and petty crime (1987 : 29-32). Nevertheless, through hardness, emotional durability, and alternative enterprise, the Hallway Hangers developed subcultural strategies which provided a self-protective means of "maintaining a measure of dignity and self-respect" (1987 : 151):

> "The Hallway Hangers, who have developed alternative criteria for success, understand their situation in a way that defends their status; they manage to see themselves differently from the way the rest of society sees them" (1987 : 118).

Within the sub- and anti-employment subcultures of Hartingleigh, the alternative status systems of the peer group were not entirely a self-protective psychological inversion; their ways of understanding their situation were also real. The long-term unemployed study participants were not living an illusion. The Black Magic Roundabout of cyclical transitions and protracted unemployment exists - they are the 'adverse social by-products' of Conservative social and economic policies, the policy-driven shadow accompanying a society that is not as open as recent announcements from Prime Minister John Major would wish us to believe. In this context, the Northside Crew have drawn upon their indigenous skills and qualities. The Crew <u>are</u> physically hard, emotionally resilient, and enterprising in a situation of severely restricted opportunity. Those of us who are claiming success in conventional terms need only to venture into their world for the

briefest amount of time to understand how conventional success through, for example, educational achievement, is, in that environment, about as substantive and 'real' as the 'emperor's new clothes': "They understand that everything is not as written in the book" (Willis 1977 : 109).

8.5 Domestic Careers, Cyclical Transitions : Masculinity

8.5.1 Introduction

A fundamental aspect of habitus is gender. As males, the long-term unemployed cyclical transitionaries within the Northside Crew could inhabit subcultures whose values received a good deal of distorted validation from the dominant culture. Moreover, the subcultural process of status inversion, employed to convert negative labelling into a positive status identification, was based on an exaggerated valuation of working class machismo - taken to the extreme. Being hard, cool and resistant, all derived from an exaggerated pride in working class masculinity which, in turn, may be viewed as located in the traditions and focal concerns of the parent culture. As Willis has argued:

> "Physical labouring comes to stand for and express, most importantly, a kind of masculinity, and also an opposition to authority ... It expresses aggressiveness; a degree of sharpness and wit; an irreverence that cannot be found in words; an obvious kind of solidarity. It provides the wherewithal for adult tastes, and demonstrates a potential mastery over, as well as an immediate attractiveness to, women: a kind of machismo" (Willis 1977 : 104)

In the late twentieth century, such masculine ideals receive further exaggerated 'external' validation from the 'video heroes' of contemporary commercial culture. Figures like Sylvester Stallone ('Rocky' and 'Rambo'), Arnold, 'Arnie' ('The Terminator'; no pain, no gain) Schwarzenegger, and Clint ("make my day punk") Eastwood, are contemporary cultural heroes who represent just such an overstated pride in toughness, emotional illiteracy and violent masculinity. The Northside Crew manipulate these ideals investing them with new dimensions until they embody such contemporary distortions as an exaggerated reverence for guns and the use of guns (Chapter Four, Section 4.8.6):

> "Teenagers involved in a new Moss Side gun battle are sporting bullet wounds like trophies ... The sad truth is that this type of bullet wound raises this type of kid's street cred. It's like having a key to club membership" (*Manchester Evening News*, 25.11.92 : 12).

Even commercial culture's most recent anti-hero, the psychopathic, cannibalistic serial killer, 'Hannibal Lectern' from the popular film *Silence of the Lambs*, can be invested with a distorted masculine subcultural identification. With the growing popularity of the film and its psychopathic anti-hero, a new song could be heard on the terraces at Old Trafford:

> "Hannibal the Cannibal is our friend
> is our friend, is our friend,
> Hannibal the Cannibal is our friend
> he eats coppers!"

This was the 1990s version of a similar terrace song developed by Manchester United's 'Stretford End' in the late 1960s and dedicated in honour of Harry Roberts who, in 1968, murdered two policemen, went on the run, and was eventually sentenced to life imprisonment. In the late 1960s, Harry Roberts became a hero to Manchester United's skinhead soccer fans:

> "Harry Roberts is our friend
> He kills coppers
> Put him on the streets again
> Let him kill some others
> Harry Roberts is our friend
> He kills coppers!"
>
> (Robbins 1984 : 135)

A combination of profound social disadvantage and post-school cyclical transitions into long-term unemployment have ensured that the Northside Crew lack nearly every social attribute that defines status or success in conventional terms. Against such a background, the Northside Crew have continued and perpetuated the cultural/subcultural inheritance of their forebears. The Crew have latched onto, and subculturally inflated, the one quality they still possess: their masculinity. This provides the focus for group bonding and solidarity in the face of social and economic disadvantage in every other respect.

8.5.2 Masculinity : The Subcultural Context

The subcultural inheritance of group bonding, loyalty and solidarity, is among the Northside Crew very strong. As Jimmy Bee revealed (Chapter Seven, Section 7.8.2): "Goin' out with a bird's just what you do, but your mates are more important". Jimmy was only a peripheral affiliate of the unemployed males peer group network. At the core of the group were held even more discriminatory views:

> "Women'll let yer down, mess up yer 'ead, but yer pals, the boys're what counts ... when it's on top like, it's down to yer pals coverin' yer back" (Summers)

For most of the long-term unemployed males, protracted spells of post-school unemployment ensured that the peer group affiliations, fostered in their early teenage years, remained central to their lives. As a consequence, same-sex friendship patterns formed the predominant focus for their domestic career transitions, even into adulthood. Within the informal group, there was a general suspension of individual interests, even with regard to courtship and heterosexual relationships; the overwhelming focus was a commitment to the reality of the group and its aims. The decision to break away from the group to pursue a sustained pattern of heterosexual courtship was partially constrained by a generalised ethos of subcultural loyalty and the bonds of cohesion engendered from the mutual interdependence of individuals within the group. Such interdependence existed not only at the level of psychological necessity, in terms of the perpetuation of group norms and status-systems, but also in respect of the need to rely on other group members for the successful commitment of crime and for support in dangerous or threatening situations. As Summers maintained, when it was "on top", either in the form of physical confrontation with other male informal groups, or the police, store detectives, or 'Joe's' ('have a go Joe' - citizens or employees seeking to prevent a theft or robbery), often it would be "down to yer pals coverin' yer back".

In 1985-1986, partly as a consequence of their loyalties to the informal group, there was little evidence of unemployment propelling the Northside Crew into early marriage, heterosexual cohabitation or paternity (see Chapter Four, Section 4.7.1). At that time,

only four unemployed male participants cohabited with young women. These were: Digger, who shared a council flat on the Marton estate with Stella; Willie, who shared a privately rented flat with his girlfriend in nearby Collington; and Barlow and Summers, who both lived with young women in privately rented flats in Hulme; none of these were child rearing partnerships. Two other participants, Coggs and Wilf, shared a large sub-divided house in Hartingleigh with Mick Kent who, at that time, was in full-time employment (see Chapter Four, Section 4.4.2); these three study participants shared the house with two other male friends from their peer group network and the house became a location for informal sociability among the unemployed. Six of the unemployed males were still living in the parental home. These were Maz, Dilly, Mick Kenney, J.W., Davvo and Jimmy Bee (who, after a protracted post-school transition, eventually found full-time employment in March 1988; see Chapter Seven, Sections 7.3.2 and 7.8.3). Two other unemployed male study participants lived alone in privately rented flats; Tex lived in Collington near to Willie, and Poolie lived in Sale, which is a suburb in the south of the Greater Manchester conurbation.

Of the fourteen male participants who were unemployed during the period of my preliminary fieldwork, none were in child rearing partnerships. In contrast, during the same period, four of the six males who were in full-time employment were in child rearing relationships and either married or cohabiting. These early observations provide tentative support to those studies of post-school transitions which emphasise the significance of waged employment for your working class men in the transition to the adult role of father, and the adult statuses of husband/breadwinner. My preliminary fieldwork suggested that the conventional working class transitions to male adult roles and statuses had been fractured by the interplay of youthful unemployment and the consequent propensity towards increased subcultural affiliation. What has been described by Roberts (1987 : 20) as a "deceleration theory" appeared to hold good for the majority of unemployed young men in my study group - with a combination of unemployment and the subcultural norms

of the male informal group delaying the processes of sustained courtship, marriage and parenthood.

Geographical mobility, stable employment, courtship and marriage appeared to be factors which had enabled both Charlie Dougan and Berksy, former core members of the Northside Crew, to relinquish their propensity towards adolescent criminality (see Chapter Seven Sections 7.3.3; 7.6.4; 7.8.2). Whereas Charlie and Berksy had both been able to break the adolescent bonds which tied them to the norms and values of their peer group subculture, for the majority of unemployed males economic necessity, a fierce localism, and overwhelming loyalty to the group ensured that patterns of adolescent law-breaking were perpetuated into adulthood. As I have previously argued, such adult criminality often depended on exaggerated masculine concern with projected images of potency, dominance, aggression and mental and physical 'hardness'. The tension and contradictions engendered by adherence to these focal concerns have been marvellously captured by local poet Johnny Creschendo (1986) in his poem, *Bother*:

> "I'm not looking for trouble but
> If that's the way you want it
> Don't push me around buddy boy
> You know what you can do with it
> Listen pal
> O.K. Chum
> (sorry seems to be the hardest word)
> Step outside and say that
> You cringing little turd
> Are you calling me a liar
> Can't you say it to my face
> You and who's army pal
> You're sitting in my place
> Look, don't get excited
> Call yourself a man
> Up yours, stuff you anyday
> Excuse me sir, you're banned
> None of your bleedin' business
> Who asked you anyway?
> No one talks to me like that
> You get this if you don't pay
> And your wife as well you silly creep
> Excuse me I was first
> Manchester United
> Come on then, do your worst." (1986 : 25)

Such focal concerns often precluded the emotional repertoire necessary for sustained courtship. Displays of compassion, tenderness, gentleness, kindness or regret were interpreted as weakness ("sorry seems to be the hardest word") and were aggressively confronted ("step outside and say that, you cringing little turd"); or were ridiculed and often derided in homophobic terms. In the following extract, Mick Kent had been observed giving a bunch of flowers to his girlfriend on Valentines Day:

> **J.W.:** "I seen it ... 'e gets off the one twelve [bus] with a fuckin' big bunch of flowers.
> **Tex:** Aaaah what a twat!
> **Mick Kenney:** Fuckin' dick-diver.
> **J.W.:** Yeah ... Yeah then 'e goes up to this tart like ... an' 'ands 'em over.
> **Coggs:** An' all 'cause the lady loves milk-tray.
> **Tex:** fuckin' shirtlifter.
> **J.W.:** *'e doesn't even poke 'er.*
> **Coggs:** That's it e's a shit-stabber."

On one occasion during my early youthwork practice when Georgie B. was being manhandled into a large pool of stagnant rainwater outside the Centre, Tony Boyle and myself sought to intervene on his behalf. At the head of the pack of tormentors were several 'lads' from the Crew. A 'stand off' ensued and, after strong words and a few desultory blows had been exchanged, Tony and I were subjected to a torrent of homophobic abuse with the implication that not only were we "up each others arse-'oles", but also Georgie's as well. Humour and goodwill were only returned to what was potentially an ugly situation when Tony sought to affect a camp demeanour and attempted to extract a 'french kiss' from the main combatants.

Adolescent courtship patterns among the group were generally articulated through predatory sexuality and often these patterns continued into adulthood. The masculine 'code of honour' among the Crew ensured that aggressive sexism and a reputation for "pulling the birds" were paramount. Not being "under the brush" (dominated by women), "tied down", or otherwise encumbered by the demands of emotional commitment were generally what guided heterosexual encounters. Even when participants had established

regular relationships with women, as was the case with both Summers and Barlow, they continued to regard their "tarts" in objectivist terms:

> **S.C.:** "Do you think you'll get married ... settle down?
> **Summers:** To that tart, fuck off, she's 'ad more pricks than a second 'and dart-board ..."
>
> "It's allright fer pokin', but she's a tart man ... ah'll gerranother when ah've finished with it" (Barlow).

Beneath the bravado, however, there often lay an insecure masculinity which needed to be continually reaffirmed. This imposed implicit rules upon social behaviour with the danger that lack of conformity, such as Mick Kent's presentation of flowers to his girlfriend, would invoke the accusations of being a "shirtlifter", "shit-stabber", or "dick-diver". Not that any of the Crew displayed any propensity towards homosexuality, but homosexuality implied an ambiguous masculinity and masculinity, as I previously argued, was their main psychological defence against a self-diminishing position within the wider social order. Masculinity was lost, won or redeemed through their status within the peer group. Consequently, the group was bonded through the celebration of 'non-feminine' attributes and qualities. This included exaggerated acts of violence, criminal daring and ingenuity, or the "self-immolating heroism" (Wallace 1987 : 89) of excessive drinking and drug-taking.

Occasionally proprietorial rights over women would be exerted through threats or acts of violence, either towards the woman or towards another male interloper. As Wallace has similarly noted: "If their wife or girlfriend betrayed them, they were expected to extract revenge through an 'irrational' frenzied burst of rage mostly against the other man" (1987 : 87). Amongst my study group, however, protection of the male code of honour was sometimes a much more sinister and calculated affair. During the course of my study, there were several incidents of perceived domestic betrayal among male study participants and their peers. Generally these were resolved through the cuckolded male exacting spontaneous revenge upon the interloper and occasionally, the 'adulterous' wife or girlfriend. However, in two cases I was aware of during the ten year period of my study, the first of which directly involved study participants, extreme violence was carefully

orchestrated. In the first case, a man who had been deemed to have transgressed another's proprietorial rights was permanently crippled by shotgun blasts to his legs and shortly afterwards his business was destroyed in an arson attack. In the second case, which did not directly involve study participants, the unfortunate transgressor was traced and 'paid a visit' on three separate occasions by young men from the local community. On the first visit, his house was ransacked and property was taken and destroyed. On the second, his car was smashed beyond repair. Shortly afterwards, when it was discovered that the couple had been seen together again, the man, who had narrowly escaped on the two previous visits, was killed.

Such extreme acts of orchestrated revenge appeared to have been fuelled by the apparent status of the 'transgressors'. Both were moderately successful young businessmen from the more affluent suburbs. As a participant explained:

> "Rich bastards ... they deserved what they got ... How d'ya think they got their money? By pissin' on the likes of us ... They think they can piss all over us an' fuck around with our women ... they got it wrong didn't they ... The fuckin' message is you're messin' with the wrong boys."

The crimes of these unfortunate men were not only to have been successful in instigating casual sexual liaisons with women from the area, women over whom - in the eyes of their boyfriends - claims had already been established; but also to have been sexually attractive to the women in terms of their affluence and material success. The latter added an extra dimension to what became a collective sense of male outrage. As one of the participants put it ... "fancy fuckin' 'ouse, fancy clothes, fancy car, she wasn't even my fuckin' woman, but I wanted to do 'im proper style". The extremity of response by the 'cuckolded' males and their peers - to what was commonly seen as an incursion on their proprietorial rights, and perhaps more significantly, their self-esteem - may also be interpreted as a recessive affirmation of primitive, patriarchal, working class solidarity. I say this neither to justify nor condone the tragic horrors which ensued but rather to understand them as a lethal combination of distorted group loyalties and an attempt to reinforce an otherwise fragile masculinity.

A generalised threat of violence and aggression was the context in which the young men of my study area lived. This was part of their taken-for-granted world, an accepted fact of life. They were careful, however, not to run risks. Some had reason to act cautiously, particularly those who had been involved in violent confrontations outside their locality. As a general rule, lads rarely 'went out' for entertainment or leisure alone; within their locality, where they were known and had friends, there were few risks. Travelling out of the area, as a crew, either for entertainment, football matches, or 'business', usually involved carrying weapons. In the early 1980s, the favoured 'tool' was a 'Stanley' (knife) as it was light, easy to conceal, lethal in a fight, and could be explained away should the carrier come into conflict with the law. Later, as a result of greater police surveillance and intervention, weaponry was consigned to a single, nominated 'Joey' or carrier. The 'Joey' was often selected on the basis of a 'straight' appearance which was sometimes 'impression managed' through the utilisation of a tradesman's overalls and vehicle. The 'Joey' would travel with, but separated from, the main group, particularly when travelling 'to do business' which often meant travelling to other Inner City estates to buy or sell drugs or stolen property. By the late 1980s, a minority of participants were carrying guns to do "serious business" in the drug trade, or for robberies (see Chapter Four, Section 4.8.6).

In their early post-school years, the Crew rarely made formal arrangements to meet, except for parties, football matches, to co-ordinate drug distribution or theft routines, or organise 'hoisting' expeditions. Though there was no apparent formal structure, everyone appeared to know when or where a particular person or group could be found at any given time. During the day, the Drop-In Centre, organised by the Project but self-managed by the unemployed, was a favourite haunt for meetings, as was the subsidised lunch time meal - 'dinner' - available to the unemployed at the Youth and Community Centre. The flats in Collington occupied by Willie and Tex and the house in Hartingleigh in which Coggs and Wilf lived were also significant ports of call. In the evening the Crew would generally

congregate in the 'Vic', one of the pubs that serviced the Chicken Lane estate, to play pool, drink beer and smoke draw.

8.5.3 The Vic

The Vic is a fairly modern functional structure typical of many of the pubs that have been built since the mid-sixties to service the Inner City housing estates. Architecturally brutalist, the pub appears to have been designed to house the maximum number of potential customers at the minimum amount of building costs. Built in the early 1970s, after the first wave of council flats had been erected on the Chicken Lane estae, it quickly developed a reputation for being a 'rough' working class pub in the terms outlined by Michael A. Smith (1983; 1985):

> "Public houses ... can be defined as 'rough', 'respectable' and 'posh' - to use the categories deployed by 'regulars' ... pubs approximate working class and middle class types adjudged by geographical location and the dominant group of users (1983 : 1) ... the 'rough pub' is certainly distinguishable by its clientele, hard drinkers characterised by tough masculine values (*ibid* : 8).

Situated at the heart of one of two focal squares on the Chicken Lane estate, the pub is an anonymous box-like structure surrounded by the deck-access flats described earlier (Section 8.3.1). Nevertheless, despite its graceless design and cheerless location, the Vic came to occupy a central location in the sociability patterns of the unemployed males in my study.

During their early teens, the majority of young men from the estate started hanging around together, and when they looked old enough to get served graduated from the streets and walkways of the estate to the local pubs. This was a significant 'rite of pasage' and was sometimes initiated by fathers inviting sons to join them for a pint. The movement signified entry into the adult working class world and served to establish a pattern of asociation which connected drinking to adult masculinity. At first an apprenticeship was served through the process of the most mature-looking lad buying the alcohol, sometimes with the assistance of older regulars, and distributing it to the others who hung around outside the pub. By the tme they had left school, most of the male

informal group were 'going out' and drinking regularly. The Vic became the most favoured venue.

The Vic was divided into two main sections, the 'Public' (bar) and the 'Lounge' (bar). Originally, this division had served to separate heavy drinking manual workers in the Public from the social drinkers in the Lounge. The floor of the Public was tiled and the floor design had formerly contained two small "chuckin'" or throwing areas designated for playing darts. The Public's minimal seating provision was afforded by a single padded bench that ran along the length of one of the internal walls. With the deepending recession and changes in the social character of the Chicken Lane estate, the pub's internal boundaries became blurred; both sections of the pub became, for example, more ore less male preserves. The Public evolved into an improvised games room which reflected the changing age group of the pubs regulars. By the early 1980s, the majority of regulars were males in the 17 to 30 year old age range. In the late 1970s, early 1980s, three pool tables were installed in the central area of the Public, followed by several electronic 'one-armed bandits', and then two 'space-invader' game machines, all of which were located on the internal wall opposite to the padded bench. Here was also to be found the pub's wall-mounted 'juke-box'. The juke-box differed from many to be found in working class pubs in that, rather than containing the usual range of commercial pop and chart 'hits' of the day, it reflected the subcultural musical tastes of he pub's youthful clientele. The juke box contained music from Manchester artists who had become commercially successful during the 'first wave' of the City's musical success, with such groups as the Buzzcocks, Joy Division, and punk-poet John Cooper-Clarke. The mid-1980s 'second wave' of 'Manchester Scene' music was also reflected in the juke box listings, in particular, the Smiths, the Stone Roses, New Order, Happy Mondays, the Sundays and Inspiral Carpets. In the late 1980s, the juke box also contained commercial hits from the 'third wave' of electronic 'house'-inspired, Manchester music which included the 'ambient-house' of 808 State; the 'techno-dance' of A Guy Called Gerald; and the home-grown 'rap' style of the

Hulme-based Ruthless Rap Assassins, whose local hit, "*Ain't no justice - just us*" became something of a subcultural anthem in the late eighties.

The Lounge of the Vic retained its original carpetted floor and was, in contrast to the Public, more of a seated area with padded benches running along the length of two internal walls and tables and chairs ranged throughout the central area. The Lounge also contained a large wall-mounted colour television which provided a background focus for sociability. In the mid-1980s, the television contained a video capacity operated from behind the bar and occasionally commercial films would be featured. The long-established institution of 'after-hours' drinking, when the pub's external doors would be locked, also on occasions produced videos of hard-core pornography. Major sporting events, such as the World Cup, or televised highlights of other big football matches, especially those which included Manchester United, often provided a dominant focus for activities in the Lounge. When a televised football match was to be shown, tables and chairs would be rearranged by the clientele in order to afford better, and more comfortable viewing. Though there was a constant flow of human traffic between the Public and the Lounge, on the occasions of a 'big match', the Public would empty into the Lounge and people would kneel or sit on the floor in the empty spaces between tables.

Throughout the 1980s, the Vic was increasingly colonised by unemployed young men, with a preponderance in the 17 to 30 age group. Even before pub-licensing hours made it legitimate, the Vic had an informal 'all-day' drinking policy which made it a significant haunt and meeting ground for the long-term unemployed. The newer, younger entrants to this established domain of masculine sociability were generally concentrated in the Public - playing pool, drinking beer and smoking draw. Although smoking draw was an activity openly practised in both the Public and the Lounge, it was generally concentrated in the Public and participants would occasionally move from the Lounge to the Public for "a game [of pool] an' a draw" before returning to their seats in the Lounge. Generally, older groups were concentrated in the Lounge and younger groups in the Public. Although

there were sporadic and spontaneous outbursts of locally engendered antagonism and violence, in general terms the Vic provided a reasonably safe social context for its regulars. It provided a significant landmark in the local cultural terrain, a context for "fairly localised social relationships and interactions ... a social context for encounters with known others - mates rather than friends" (Smith 1983 : 17).

In part, the relative harmony of the Vic was ensured by the presence of significant members of the Hatton and Donaghue families who utilised the pub to monitor and maintain their commercial interests in the community; for the Donaghues, these included the various market stalls they owned in the area. The Donaghues were also understood to be "taxing" the Vic, that is, being paid by the pub landlord to assure "protection". Other commercial interests in the area were also reputedly "taxed" by the Donaghues and these too, by dint of the family's reputation, remained remarkably free from the perpetual violence experienced by other commercial sites of entertainment and leisure in the Inner City.

Other participant observers have noted the significance of the local pub not only in terms of the cultural ecology of a particular area (see for example Gill 1977 : 75-95) but also for the alternative career structure of locally conceived, informal enterprise cultures (see for example Hobbs 1988 : 142-147). The local pub operated as a socialising institution for the young people of the neighbourhood, particularly the male adolescents: "It is here that they learn about adult life and how to deal with it" (Gill 1977 : 77). The Vic provided a context within which study participants could learn about alternative economic options, about the necessary attitudes, pose or demeanour necessary to promote, maintain or enhance subcultural status, and about what attributes were required to attract 'business' opportunities. In the early periods of their post-school unemployment, the Donaghue and Hatton brothers, among others, provided role models and opportunities for movements into the bottom rungs of the informal career structure. As previously mentioned, members of both families utilised the pub for 'business' purposes, and

participants were periodically recruited for a variety of legal,semi-legal and illegal tasks. Dilly recalled his first attempt to negotiate 'business' from the Hattons at the Vic:

> "The first 'un? It was shit-shovellin' [bagging up: see Chapter Four, Section 4.8.2] with Maz, Digger, Davvo an' Poolie, we was thirteen ... United was playin' Liverpool in the [1977 FA Cup] Final an' we was fuckin' skint ... not a quid between us an' fuckin' desperate to go [to Wembley] ... yer know 'ow it is ... We couldn't talk 'bout nothin' else like, 'ow can we get to fuckin' Wembley ... We was 'angin' [around] down the Vic an' [the Hatton brothers] turn up, big black 'Merc', like the fuckin' Krays, ah'm tellin' yuh ... four of 'em like, an' big Tom [Hatton] 'e chucks us a quid an' sez mind the motor like ... After they'd gone in [to the Vic] Maz sez go on, like, ask 'im ferra job ... Fuck that I sez, go on Dilly, 'e sez, ask 'im ferra job ... An' they all started ... aww go on Dilly ... go on ... go on in, they sez ... go in the Vic an' ask 'im ferra fuckin' job ... So ahm sayin' fuck off like, ask 'im yerself ... but they kept on so I 'ummed an' aahed ferra bit an' they kept on, 'go on Dilly ... go on Dilly', an' then it was a 'trip' [high status dare] ... go on ask 'im ferra job ... but I was shittin' it ... It's a fuckin' big thing innit, I was only thirteen, but it was a 'trip' an' I thought fuck it ... Jumped up pushed open the doors an' ahm in there ... fuckin' shittin' it but not lettin' on like ... kept me 'ead up an' walked up to 'em an' when I open me fuckin' gob I sounds like a mong [imitates person with a severe speech impediment] ... They just started pissin' 'emselves an' I was sweatin', all cherried up [blushing] an' stutterin'. Then [Tom Hatton] 'e starts takin' the piss [imitates] ... 'p p p p p please ... m m m m m m Mister ... H H H H H H Hatton' ... an' they're all crackin' up ... 'E sez 'best laff 'ahv 'ad all week', an' ends up givin' us a fiver ... Told us to meet 'im an' we was set on, 'shit shovellin' ... Did it ferra week, coach to Wembley, jibbed under t'turnstile, stuffed the Scousers [Liverpool] ... 2-1 ... fuckin' magic. After that 'e [Tom Hatton] used ter look out fer us ... 'e used ter say [imitates] 'D D D D D Dilly d'ya wanna J J J J J J Job' ... That's 'ow it all started really."

After serving the necessary early apprenticeships, some study participants evolved alternative strategies and careers of their own such as hoisting (organised shoplifting), hustling (street level drug dealing) and totting (buying and selling stolen property). The Vic contined to occupy a significant position for these sub-groups within the alternative enterprise culture as it provided a relatively safe context for the exchange, temporary storage, movement or distribution of goods. It was also a significant location for the exchange or acquisition of skills, services or information,as well as a domain for the display of status and identity. In part, the cultural ambience of the Vic was due to the tolerance and 'alternative career' of the landlord who was not only prepared to "keep it buttoned and cock a deaf 'un" but was also actively involved in a measure of alternative enterprise himself, providing "ever-ready's" (cash) as a "fence" for certain commodities. All the above facets of the role of the Vic within the local community have been succinctly summarised by Hobbs: "It is in the pub that deals are struck, and information regarding

cheap goods,stolen commodities and exchanges of skills are relayed and it is in the pub that businesslike behaviour is presented for display" (1988 : 142).

Because the Vic had all the connotations of being a rough pub in a rough area, it was almost exclusively a male domain. Male participants viewed the pub as a central context for social meeting and interaction. It was a place where men were mates and the explicit maleness was revealed by the masculine codes and values embedded in the modes of sociability. The ratio of gender representation varied by as much as six or seven men to every one woman on mid-week evenings, to three or four men to every one woman at the weekends. When women were present, it was in a "parallel rather than shared social world" (Smith 1983 : 17). The women who came into the Vic did so usually in the company of their husband, partner or boyfriend, or occasionally as a small group of friends. When women were present, they rarely accompanied their menfolk throughout the evening but rather joined other women to sit at separate tables in the Lounge, though occasionally a group of women would venture into the Public to play pool or the games machines. This informal separatism is part of a traditional, almost ritualised, format in working class 'rough' pubs. As Gill noted in the Luke Street area of Liverpool: "It is not unusual for a Luke Street man to arrive in [the pub] with his wife, buy her a drink and then for both to separate for the evening ... [The woman] will sit at a table with other women separate and distinct from their menfolk" (1977 : 80). (my inserts)

Lone women seldom ventured into the Vic and, if they did, were regarded as "fair-game" for predatory sexual approaches. All the unemployed male study participants regarded the Vic as a male preserve and their general comments revealed a clear sexual stereotyping which viewed unescorted women as notionally sexually available:

> "Women who go in on their own are out for what they can get ... they're after a good pokin'" (J.W.)

> "If a tart's on 'er own she's askin' fer it, no danger, it's a knob-job. I wouldn't let my tart go in there, not by 'erself - there's a lot of bad bastards 'ud be into 'er knickers" (Mick Kenney)

Such views were pervasive and reinforced the notion of the Vic as an all-male club. Women who came to the Vic understood it as a masculine world,they accepted it as a place of men's talk, men's jokes, men's focal concerns, a place where men went to be in the company of other men - their 'mates'. Most women chose not to enter this world. Throughout the period of my study, it was a "hard pub in a hard area" (Gill 1977 : 79).

The Vic's central role in the network of sociability among the long-term unemployed males examplified its position as a bastion of masculine focal concerns and values. Such values were to have enormous implications for the domestic career transitions of the male long-term unemployed study participants.

8.5.4 Leaving Home

As I noted earlier (Section 8.5.2), up to 1986 the fourteen long-term unemployed males in my study group could be clearly divided into two distinct sub-groups according to housing tenure. At that time, there were eight participants who, by their early twenties, had effected residential independence and six who had not. In respect of the six participants who in 1986 were still resident within the parental home, their domestic careers conformed to a pattern of delayed residential mobility as was similarly noted among the protracted transitionaries (see Chapter Seven, Section 7.7.3). The early housing careers of the eight participants who had effected accelerated movement towards residential independence conformed to the pattern discernible among the traditional trransitionaries (see Chapter Six, Section 6.5.5). The three traditional transitionaries were able to sustain residential independence by their early twenties on the income derived from stable full-time employment. The eight long-term unemployed participants were similarly able to undertake residential mobility and sustain residential independence on the income generated from fiddle work or acquisitive crime.

There were several factors that contributed to the delayed residential mobility of six of the unemployed males. Firstly, despite the appearance of residential dependence, the six

participants still resident in the homes of their parents in 1986 enjoyed an unlimited amount of free movement. This was also a factor in the early domestic careers of the male protracted transitionaries examined in Chapter Seven. Like the male protracted transitionaries, all six of the unemployed participants in their early teenage years were granted their own front door keys and allowed free access to and from the natal home. Secondly, the 'home comforts' of domestic servicing, which included meals and laundry, were generally provided by their mothers. These were services which tended to sustain residential dependence. As Maz proclaimed: "I couldn't do it [live in a flat] like Willie ... all the 'assles, an' yer 'ave to cook 'n clean ... Sod that ...".

The six participants were characterised by a significant degree of local attachment and all were involved in daily routines in and around their estates. Freedom of movement, being able to come and go as they pleased, local loyalties and affiliations, and freedom from the constraints of domestic responsibility, ensured that these participants did not undertake early movement towards residential independence. However, living at home did not imply lack of independence. As Maz put it: "[Living at home] doesn't mean you're not free, I can do what I want. Why the fuck should I move out, you can still live at 'ome an' be free".

In the case of four of the six unemployed participants still living at home, absentee fathers ensured the traditional breadwinning role fell to the sons, and also that father-son conflicts were avoided. In the two other cases, paternal unemployment was also a factor delaying residential mobility. Periodic success in subculturally conceived alternative careers (as well as access to goods and services in the informal peer group network) enabled these participants to offer significant contributions to the household economy, a point similarly made by Banks *et al* (1992 : 85) and Riseborough (1993 : 172-173). The necessity of such contributions to family living standards ensured that parental pressure to move out was non-existent and that conflict over life styles was minimal. Within the families, there was a great deal of acceptance, even tacit (and sometimes active)

encouragement of adolescent law-breaking, which was also reflected in the general tolerance of such behaviour within their estates. On one occasion, for example, Dilly pointed to various flats within the square where he lived itemising a 'roll-call' of the degrees of illegality to be found in his immediate locality:

> "Number seven - she's tottin' from the social an' 'e's in Strangeways [prison].
> Number nine - she's doin' part-time [fiddle work] an' 'e's graftin'.
> Number eleven - she's on the game an' 'e's a 'beer monster' (laughs).
> Number thirteen - she's fucked off with the kids 'cause 'e' was banged up [in jail], now 'e's workin' for Pat Donaghue.
> Number fifteen - 'e's puntin' bent vids [stolen video recorders].
> Number seventeen ... "
>
> **S.C.**: "That's Maz's house, you'd better watch what you say!"
> **Dilly**: "Yeah ... anyway you get the picture."

There is historical evidence to suggest that, despite its illegality, acquisitive social crime has been tolerated for generations and even "condoned as legitimate" within lower working class communities (Humphries 1981 : 151; Rule 1979). In Inner City Liverpool, for example, as Gill (1977), Mays (1954; 1972), and Parker (1974) have illustrated, juvenile law-breaking is part of an identifiable lower working class pattern of behaviour and one to which the majority of young people within their study groups conformed. Acquisitive crime and routinised employee theft, 'lifting', has also been identified as an accepted pattern of behaviour in certain communities, towards which is displayed a high degree of local tolerance (Downes 1966 : 204; Hobbs 1988 : 140-182; Mays 1954 : 117; Willmott 1966 : 148). Other research has investigated the ecological factors involved in the creation of an ethos of, and tolerance towards, law-breaking in so-called "delinquent areas" (see for example Baldwin and Bottoms 1976; Ferguson 1952; Gill 1977; Hobbs 1988; Jones 1958; Mannheim 1948, Morris 1957; Spencer 1964). Some of this research has indicated the significance of declining inner city council estates as a generating milieu for social/acquisitive crime, especially those estates which, like the Chicken Lane estate, had been utilised to rehouse 'slum-dwellers' (see especially Ferguson 1952 : 17; Gill 1977 : 16-41). In the light of such research, it may be argued that juvenile law-breaking and the tolerance shown towards social/acquisitive crime is best understood

as a combination of social ecology and the subcultural ethos generated within lower working class areas, particularly within the subcultures of male adolescents (Downes 1966; Willmott 1966). As I argued in an earlier section (8.4.5), such an ethos is part of an inherited cultural tradition with extensive historical antecedents (Humphries 1981; Hobbs 1988; Pearson 1983).

The significant degree of parental acceptance of their adolescent criminality partially explained participants' reluctance to undertake residential mobility. As Dilly's mother put it on one occasion after visiting her son in the cells at Manchester's Central Detention Centre: "'E's not a bad lad, none of 'em are 'round 'ere ... gettin' done't's part o' growin' up ... Next time 'e'll be more careful." Moreover, the feelings of security participants derived from the general tolerance shown in their immediate localities towards social/acquisitive crime provided further insight into their reluctance to leave. As J.W. put it: "Everyone's the same round 'ere, fuckin' bent, no snobs, no 'assles, no grasses ... it couldn't be sweeter."

Such factors, when combined with the willingness of parents to allow their sons relatively unconstrained movement, plus freedom from day-to-day domestic responsibility, ensured that the six participants did not undertake early moves towards residential independence. As J.W. proclaimed:

> "Leave 'ome, no fuckin' chance, why should ah? ... It's fuckin' 'top' round 'ere ... sorted ... why should ah leave?"

Or, as Dilly put it in response to the question:

> **S.C.** : "Why don't you move out and get a gaff on your own, just for a change of scene?"
> **Dilly**: "You're fuckin' jokin' ... leave 'round 'ere ... naaw, I couldn't. Anyway what's the point ... ah've got everythin' I want at 'ome ... 'Round 'ere yer can do yer biz, no bother ... all me mates are 'ere, naaw ... move out? ... naaw, maybe sometime but not now ..."

It is inadequate to suggest that the cultural constraints engendered by the long-term effects of high unemployment prevent movement towards residential autonomy for <u>all</u> young people (Hudson and Jenkins 1989). Certainly for the remaining eight male long-

term unemployed participants, a combination of domestic disharmony within the parental home and a measure of financial independence afforded by 'successful' alternative careers, facilitated early moves towards sustained residential independence. As previously outlined (Section 8.5.2), seven participants were, by their early twenties living in privately rented flats and one was living in a council flat. Such early movement towards sustained residential independence was in contrast to the protracted transitionaries, most of whom were still resident in the natal home until their mid to late twenties.

For the eight long-term unemployed participants, sustained residential independence was achieved primarily through the income derived from fiddle jobs or acquisitive crime. Summers and Barlow, for example, who both left home for the first time in their late 'teens undertook privately rented flats within walking distance of each other on the strength of the proceeds of a post office robbery. The money generated from this anti-employment career enabled them to pay the substantial deposits that were required and also allowed them to internally decorate and equip their new homes. At the age of eighteen, Willie was similarly able to undertake the rental of a flat in Collington on the income he had derived from 'hustling draw'. Residential mobility also enabled Willie to get 'off the streets' in terms of his alternative career. Residential independence allowed him to move up the informal career structure from street level, relatively unorganised, hustling of cannabis into the more organised dealing of larger quantities to fewer punters (see Chapter Four, Section 4.8.6).

Of the eight participants who had effected early moves towards sustained residential independence, only one had secured local authority rented accommodation. In 1984, Digger, together with his girlfriend Stella, who was also a member of my study group, managed to acquire tenancy of a council flat on Hartingleigh's Marton estate as a result of "pullin' a nine-ball on t'Council" (that is, deceiving the Council). Stella and Digger had secured local authority rented accommodation as a result of Stella's older sister moving out of the flat in order to get married. Neither Stella nor her sister sought to inform the

Council of the change of tenancy. It was unlikely that the Housing Department would have approved the move as neither Stella or Digger were on the council house waiting list. As a childless couple attempting to gain council accommodation, the couple would probably have encountered the prolonged three year wait which Russell Robinson and his partner experienced (Chapter Seven, Section 7.7.3). Stella and Digger were able to circumvent the formal procedures by simply occupying the flat and taking over the rent book and rent payments.

8.5.5 Residential Mobility, Partnerships, Family Formation

Thus, up to 1986, there were two groups within the fourteen long-term unemployed males, eight participants who had sought and sustained residential independence, and six who had not. Within the group of eight who had effected early movement towards residential independence, four were cohabiting with young women; the remaining ten participants were not sustaining 'serious' heterosexual relationships (Section 8.5.2). For the six participants who were resident in the parental home, living at home also partly accounted for their limited movement into sustained heterosexual relationships. Commitment to the masculine codes of their peer group, when combined with the inevitable limitations on courtship rituals imposed by residence in the parental home, ensured that contacts with young women were typically conducted in terms of an adolescent, predatory sexuality. Their contacts ranged from what J.W. described as "one night bangs" to a series of 'dates', which in Jimmy Bee's words "soon fizzled out". However, 1986-1990, the years of the fourth phase of my study, saw a considerable amount of complex movement within the domestic career trajectories of the long-term unemployed males as a whole (see table 13).

TABLE 13: Unemployed Males by Domestic Career and Housing Tenure (1990)

Domestic Career	*Housing Tenure*			
	Owner Occupied	**Public Rented**	**Private Rented**	**Total**
Unattached at home		3		3
Unattached not at home	1		4	5
Childless (couple) not at home	1	1		2
Childrearing (couple) not at home		3	1	4
				14

These cross-sectional snapshots of male study participants as they were entering their late twenties do little justice to the complexity of the 'process' of domestic transitions. There were a number of intervening stages between family of origin and that of destination. These occurred at different times and in different orders. Some participants moved directly from home to family of destination, some cohabited and remained childless, some cohabited or married and had children, some preferred to live alone, some lived with friends, and several lived alone after partnership/childrearing relationships had broken down. There was more complex variation among the group of unemployed males than was displayed in the domestic career transitions of either the traditional or protracted transitionaries.

Of the six participants who were in 1986 resident in the natal home, four undertook residential mobility as a consequence of forming relationships with young women, and two continued to live within the family home. Of the four participants who developed partnerships, two of these couples moved into privately rented accommodation, and two into council accommodation. All four partnerships produced one or more children. However, by 1990, when my research terminated, three of these relationships had not endured and the couples had separated. By the end of my study, two of the male participants who moved with their partners into council flats had abandoned their relationships, leaving their partners and child(ren) in council accommodation; one

returned to the natal home on the Chicken Lane estate, and the other bought a flat in Newmarch Heath. In the third case, when the couple decided to separate, the partner of the unemployed male returned with her child to the home of her parents, leaving him alone in privately rented accommodation. Thus, by 1990, of the six unemployed participants who in 1986 were living in the natal home, only three had sustained residential independence, and only one of these participants had established an enduring, childrearing, relationship.

Four of the eight males who had achieved residential independence in 1986, but who were not at that time cohabiting, displayed similar complex domestic transitions. In the period 1986-1990, all four formed child-rearing partnerships. However, by 1990, only two of these relationships had endured. In the two cases where the couples sustained their partnerships, both had married and were living in council accommodation. In the two cases where the relationships had broken down, both male participants abandoned the homes they had established with their partners (one in the public sector, one in the private sector). In one case, the male participant left to live with another woman and her children in a council flat on the Marton estate and, in the second case, the male participant left to live in a shared house with other unattached male friends from the informal peer group network.

Of the four unemployed participants who in 1986 had sustained residential independence and who were at that time cohabiting with young women, only one couple, Stella and Digger, maintained their relationship throughout the fourth and final phase of my study. The couple remained childless and continued to live in the council flat they had secured in 1984.

In 1986, Willie was also cohabiting with his girlfriend in a privately rented flat in Collington. However, in 1987, during the fourth phase of my study, the couple separated. They had lived together for almost four years but the lack of stable routine associated with

a dope-dealer's life style, together with the pressure engendered by the gradual expansion of his alternative career, took its toll on the relationship. After a prolonged series of heated rows, Willie's girlfriend left the flat to return to her parents' home. Willie lived alone until 1988. During that year, he gradually developed a relationship with a young woman from nearby Moat Pitton, a woman who had formerly been the girlfriend of one of his 'punters'. In the same year, the profits from his alternative career allowed Willie to purchase a ground floor flat in Newmarch Heath. Willie's new girlfriend quickly moved in with him and the couple were still living together when my research terminated in 1990.

The couple had no plans to start a family, although rather than shared, the decision appeared to have been one Willie had made and was, as he later explained, connected to the instability and dangers of his dope-dealing life style:

> **Willie**: "I told 'er before she moved in that kids was out ..."
> **S.C.**: "Why Willie - don't you fancy being a dad?"
> **Willie**: "It's not that, it's the [drugs] scene man, 'ow can yer bring a kid up with all that goin' on ... I could be 'banged up' [in jail] next week, or some nutters could [decide to] blag [rob] us with an Uzi [sub-machine gun] ... Kids 'ud cramp me style."

To the neutral observer, unfamiliar with the social milieu of the Inner City, the concerns Willie expressed to me in 1989 may seem fanciful and over-exaggerated. However, his alarm was realistic and partly fuelled by a spate of predatory robberies on dope-dealers in North Manchester. These appeared to have been carried out by armed groups of young men seeking a short-cut to profit or may have been part of a wider campaign conducted by certain groups who were seeking to establish territorial dominance in the City's drugs trade. Predatory robberies were usually conducted on the homes of established dealers and money and/or drugs would be taken. Such robberies were generally carried out with a high degree of violence, which sometimes resulted in serious injury to the dealer or members of the dealer's household. Because of the illegality of the dealer's occupation, predatory robberies were generally not reported to the police and went unrecorded. During the ten year period of my research, I personally encountered three such robberies and as one victim told me: "'ow could I go to the Bizzies [police] ... (mimics in sarcastic

tone) ... 'scuse me officer, someone's shot me wife in the leg an' blagged two grand an' 'alf a weight [half pound of cannabis] out me 'ouse ... There's nowt yer can do" However, such robberies and an escalating climate of fear within the drug-dealing community had led some to invest in guns for self-protection. As the above dealer angrily proclaimed: "If the fuckers cum again, they'll get this (brandishes a 'sawn-off' shot-gun)".

According to recent reports in the national media, certain of Manchester's Inner City estates are "overwhelmed by drug wars ... enforced by teenage hitmen armed with Uzi sub-machine guns and sawn-off shotguns" (*The Guardian*, 8.7.92 : 23). A local detective in one of these areas explained that within the drug-dealing milieu a new younger element had sought to enter the trade and gain monopoly over the dealing networks: "The younger kids coming through seem far more ruthless than the 25-year-old 'veterans' of the streets" (*Manchester Evening News* 24.11.92). In part, these developments reflected the changed nature of the drugs scene, changes which coincided with the most severe period of the mid-eighties recession. Until the mid-eighties, Manchester's drug trade was largely focused on 'soft' drugs, such as cannabis in its various forms (hash - cannabis resin; grass - the dried cannabis plant; hash oil - tincture of cannabis). Since 1986, younger dealers in 'heavier' and more profitable drugs (such as cocaine; and its smoking derivative 'crack'; the 'party-drug' Ecstasy; LSD or acid; and smack or heroin) have increasingly sought to colonise and dominate the informal networks of the drugs trade. Heavier drugs, bigger rewards, and younger, more "ruthless" dealers, have 'upped the stakes' for established dealers like Willie, operating in Manchester's most deprived Inner City areas. These developments have added an extra dimension of danger to what was already an insecure occupation. Such insecurity and danger, generally associated with the dealer's life style, provided part of the explanation for the break-up of Willie's first relationship and his decision not to pursue parenthood in his second relationship.

Like Willie's original relationship, the partnerships developed by Summers and Barlow similarly did not endure. In 1986, both participants were cohabiting with young women.

However, Barlow's girlfriend was compelled to leave when he discovered that she had become pregnant as a result of a relationship with another man which had begun whilst he was in prison:

> "I kicked 'er out fuckin' slag ... She'd bin screwin' some fuckin' nigger 'adn't she ... Ah give 'er a slap an' fucked 'er off".

Beneath the coarse and sexist rhetoric of justification, however, lay a considerable amount of regret. In coming to terms with the separation, Barlow highlighted the unstable routines associated with his alternative career and life style as being partially responsible:

> "Ahm to blame if ahm honest ... I was never in, out 'n' about all the time ... She was always moanin' but I never listened ... Tell yer the truth, ah miss 'er bein' 'bout the gaff, yer know ... 's funny never thought I would."

In contrast, Summers sustained his relationship until 1989, a partnership which had by then produced two children. However, the demands of rearing two small children in conjunction with the instability of his lifestyle produced a fundamental breakdown in his commitment to the relationship. Overcrowding in his flat, which, since the birth of the children had become a cramped environment, formed part of the explanation for the withdrawal of his emotional commitment. In 1989, his partner returned to live with her parents, taking the two children with her. Unlike Barlow (above), Summers expressed few regrets; in fact, the reverse. He was "glad to see the back of 'em". As he explained:

> "The first 'un [child] was all right, I could 'andle that ... Our Sammy [the first child] 'ud sleep through [the night] no prob [problem]. Ah wus gettin' into it, no joke, then ah turns me fuckin' back an' there's another 'skrikin' [crying] bleeder ... Fuck me, one minute it was 'Cock o' the bleedin' Walk' [Jack the Lad] ... next 'un I was up ter me bleedin' eye-balls in nappies an' shit ... Ah couldn't 'andle it ... Rachel [the second child] was up all night bleedin' skrikin' ... yud 'ave yer mates 'round an' it'd be skrikin' kids all bleedin' night ... Ah wus goin' off me 'ead ... At the death [in the end] I told 'er ter do one [leave] an' take the kids with 'er ... Ah wus glad to see the back of 'em."

The domestic constraints of childrearing were also at odds with Summers's carefully cultivated image of hardness ('Cock o' the Walk') and he was subjected to taunts by his peers which cast aspersions on his image and reputation within the group. As a result of turning down the opportunity to participate in an armed raid on the payroll of a large supermarket, for example, he was accused of "goin' soft":

> "Ah blanked it [turned down the robbery] 'cos it was 'on top' [too dangerous] ... too much front [too public] ... 'fuckin' Joe's [members of the public], security [guards] an' [supermarket] trollies, ah told 'em no chance. [They] ... said I'd nonced out [gone soft]. [They said] ... stay at 'ome with the 'missus an' wipe yer kids arse ... It made me think ... was ah goin' soft?"

Towards the end of my research, both Summers and Barlow readopted their adolescent patterns of uncommitted, spontaneous, sexual liaisons. Often these encounters were with young women who worked in the sauna clubs the pair 'managed' on behalf of the Hatton family. Summers considered such sexual favours a 'perk' of the job.

By 1990, the following overall picture of the domestic career transitions of the fourteen long-term unemployed males could be discerned. Three participants were resident in the natal home and unattached, although one participant had separated from his partner and child. Five participants had effected residential independence and were unattached, although four of these participants had separated from childrearing relationships with young women. Four participants had effected residential independence and were sustaining ongoing childrearing relationships, although one participant had separated from his original partner and their child in order to establish a second relationship with a young woman and her two children. Two participants had effected residential independence and were cohabiting and childless, although one of the participants had formerly cohabited with another young woman.

The complex variation in domestic career transitions and the lack of success among participants in generally sustaining ongoing relationships may be attributed to various factors. The pressure, insecurity, lack of stable routine and sometimes danger associated with the lifestyle of participants' alternative careers militated against stability or emotional commitment in partnership/family formation. Sometimes, continuity in the establishment of relationships and families was broken by male participants' conflicts with the law which occasionally resulted in periods of absence spent on remand or in prison. Although the majority of participants had undertaken childrearing relationships and fathered one or more children, only three managed to sustain relationships with their original partners. The

masculine 'code of honour' and the exaggerated subcultural emphasis on hardness, emotional detachment, and perceived machismo, also inhibited the development of a durable intimacy with women.

There was a general pattern among the separated male participants of absentee parenthood, of visiting their former partners periodically, ostensibly to "see the kids". Sometimes, these 'visits' would last for several weeks until participants were called by a combination of financial necessity and the demands of 'the street' and its networks to resume their status-roles within them. Others were less ambiguous about their "droppin' in, droppin' out" of the lives of their former partners. As one participant put it: "Ah go 'round once a week, ah can't stand 'er but ah gets me 'ole [has intercourse] so it's orright ferra night".

Some lived semi-nomadic lives moving between their own flats, the homes of their friends and girlfriends, their parental home and the homes of their former partners. The restless instability was fuelled by drug-taking and the lack of routine associated with a fundamental detachment from the disciplines of full-time employment. Such instability was also reflected in the 'booms and slumps' of their anti-employment, sub-employment careers. When participants had successfully 'done-one' and money was available, often it would be conspicuously consumed in extravagant purchases of clothes, drugs and drink. At these times, their former partners and offspring would also be the recipients of a frenetic burst of indulgence. As Summers recalled after one successful robbery:

> "We took the kids to Blackpool, fuckin' top ... 'otel with swimmin' pool an' sauna ... spent 'undreds man, it was fuckin' sound ... took 'em on every ride on t'golden mile, fuckin' all of 'em ... new clothes, pushchair, gold fer Julie-Anne [his partner], fuckin' champagne, the lot ... When I got 'ome I only 'ad three quid in me bin [wallet] ... but we'd 'ad a fuckin' time an' 'alf."

For the unemployed women of my study, who generally inherited the inevitable responsibility of home and childcare, such a life style was generally out of the question.

8.6 Domestic Careers, Cyclical Transitions : Femininity

8.6.1 Introduction

Studies of the transition from school to work have been criticised for failing to adequately acknowledge the distinct nature of young women's experiences. Most studies until recent years have either explicitly excluded girls or assumed that young women's experiences were the same as young men's (see Section 8.4.3 and Chapter Four, Section 4.7). Willis (1977), for example, excluded girls from his analysis whilst Ashton and Field (1976) described "young workers" in an ungendered way. Feminist critics on the other hand have maintained that the post-school transitions of young women are structured by patriarchy as well as class. They argue that young women's experiences and transitions in the labour market are different from those of young men and require a separate understanding and explanation (Griffin 1985; Griffiths 1986; Wallace 1987).

The distinct yet intertwined threads of influence of class and gender are manifested in the different processes of socialisation between working class boys and girls. Throughout my study I have pointed to the gendered differences in cultural expectations circumscribing the domestic 'apprenticeships' experienced by boys and girls in the home, and on the street. In education too, as many researchers have revealed, girls are encouraged to undertake 'feminine' subjects, and to generally subordinate career ambitions in favour of marriage and motherhood (Deem 1978; Griffin 1985; Sharpe 1976; Spender and Sarah 1980). Some of the processes involved are extremely subtle. Some research has shown for example that teachers have stereotyped attitudes to boys and girls and that experiences within the school reinforce rather than challenge gender divisions (Wolpe 1977; Stanworth 1983). Although schools are often co-educational, gender differentiation is nevertheless reflected in the organisation of the school curriculum; because classroom control is a key issue for teachers, materials for lessons that gain the attention of boys, when combined with more frequent teacher contact with boys, reinforces a common recognition that certain subjects are "boys' things' and others girls'" (Clarricoates 1980). Subject differentiation is further

reflected in parental and teacher expectations (Kelly 1982) and the ways in which the timetable and subject choices are organised (Pratt *et al* 1984). These choices prepare girls for domesticity and also to some degree determine the occupations which are open to them (Abbott and Wallace 1990).

Once they leave school, girls' opportunities are further circumscribed by patriarchal assumptions in the labour market (see below) and sexism in employment scheme allocation procedures (Cockburn 1986; 1987). In a declining local labour market like Hartingleigh, informal processes of gender differentiation based on untested assumptions may further inhibit young women's work experience and employment aspirations. As one local careers officer confessed:

> "To be honest, there is discrimination in the system [of Careers Guidance]. We know that most of them [unqualified girls] are going to end up pregnant ... employers also recognise it ... there's an inbuilt tendency not to take them quite so seriously."

The ideology of men as breadwinners and women as childrearers and domestic carers is so pervasive that it is, moreover, part of women's own taken-for-granted common sense and is rarely challenged or questioned (Wallace 1987; Edgell 1981)). This ideology is reflected in employers' views of what is appropriate work for women, and women generally share these views (Yeandle 1984). Obviously, in the light of the recent restructuring of the labour market, which is often dependent upon women with domestic responsibilities to undertake full or part-time employment, such an ideology is anachronistic. The 1991 Labour Force Survey, for example, revealed that over 70% of women of working age were economically active. Women accounted for 43% of employed people of working age, of whom just over two-fifths worked part-time. 1.89 million women worked usual hours of 15 or less per week (*Employment Gazette*, Sept. 1992 : 433). Projected trends in the labour force (between 1992-2001) further indicate that almost all of the projected net increase in the labour force will be among women, who are expected to make up 45% of the labour force by 2001 (*Employment Gazette*, Sept. 1992 : 173). Moreover, not <u>all</u> women marry. Many, including those that do marry,

have a life-long commitment to the labour market (Dex 1987). Many of these women seek employment not for 'extras' or 'pin-money' but out of profound economic necessity (Land 1981; 1982; 1987).

Because employers (and careers officers) believe that girls' lives will be dominated by domestic responsibility, they are considered not worth training. When training is semi-compulsory, undertaken through (un)employment training schemes, it is usually on the inferior sink schemes which do not produce jobs. When employment is secured, they generally get lower-paid employment, in part-time or low-status occupations, where working conditions are frequently poor (Land 1982; Beechey and Perkins 1986). Patriarchal assumptions in the labour market, including indirect as well as overt sexism, are reflected in girls' own preoccupations with romance and motherhood (Deem 1978; McRobbie 1978; McRobbie and Garber 1976; McRobbie 1982; Sharpe 1976 : see also Section 8.4.3). With this general picture in mind, how was the transition from school to work experienced by the young long-term unemployed women in my study group?

8.6.2 Femininity : The Cultural Context

It has generally been argued that, whereas male youth subcultures have taken visible forms, working class girls adopt a more invisible and passive consumer subculture (McRobbie and Garber 1976; McRobbie 1982). Within the group of eleven long-term unemployed women of my study, it would be true to argue that their activities were circumscribed, both culturally by the 'domestic apprenticeship' inherited by working class girls generally, and also in an ideological sense in terms of the ideology of romance (concerned with clothes, make-up, finding a boyfriend, marriage and eventually motherhood). However, there was some evidence of contestation and resistance. In Chapter Seven (Section 7.7.2) I illustrated how economic insecurity prompted by protracted unemployment limited some participants' leisure mobility. I also argued that the sexual division of labour and power within the home further restricted leisure mobility, particularly for unemployed women, but that there was significant contestation over

traditional domestic duties and roles. Moreover, in the same Chapter (Section 7.8.5), I highlighted the significance of the Youth Project's Girls Night and the Girls' Night Out as important resources for the creation of an autonomous girls' culture of resistance and solidarity - particularly in their early post-school years (see also Chapter Four, Section 4.2.2). Thus, aside from resistance articulated within the parental home over the traditional assignment of domestic duties and roles and the feelings of solidarity provided by the resources of the Girls' Night and Girls' Night Out, a third discernible mode of resistance was articulated through the very medium of sexuality and the ideology of romance.

In Chapter Three (Section 3.4.5), I examined the tradition of androcentric bias in he earlier 'New Wave' explorations of youth subcultures and in Chapter Four (Section 4.7) I argued that such bias had been reproduced in some studies examining the experiences of transition of young people in the labour market. Jenkins (1983), for example, argued that girls were almost entirely absent from the 'rough' street culture of the 'lads' and were more often found amongst the more conformist and respectable 'citizens'. Despite the force of his arguments and their basis in empirical research, his work represents girls as passive and retreatist. Other studies provide a different picture; in Griffin (1985), Davies (1983) and Wallace (1987), for example, girls can be seen to resist pressures to conformity imposed by structural/cultural factors or by institutions such as the school. However such resistance, because it is often articulated through the medium of sexuality, utilising clothes, cosmetics, and flirtatious behaviour, may be misrecognised as conformity. In their early teenage years, individual biographies of the unemployed women revealed time after time how boys had been "wound up", or "chucked"; sexual advances had been encouraged, manipulated, resisted or even caricatured (see Chapter Four, Section 4.2.1 for two classic examples of the latter).

Often, as teenagers, these young women would utilise their sexual attractiveness to gain power over a boy, or mastery in a difficult situation. Sexual attractiveness was also a

resource employed to win material rewards or favours such as free drinks and/or the price of admission to places of entertainment. Tricia Hartley, for example, recalled how, "when money was short" during her early post-school periods of unemployment, she would "pick up some dork" in order to "get paid in" to a club or disco. Once inside the place of entertainment, Tricia would "scrounge a few drinks" from the unfortunate young man before abandoning him in favour of someone more attractive. She would then explain to the unwitting "dork" that her new partner on the dance floor or at the bar was in fact her "husband, older brother, fiancée, my Dad's partner, whatever it took to get rid o' the dork".

The pervasive feelings of solidarity engendered by a "good Girls Night Out" also often provided the basis for resistance among the unemployed women. After the Girls Night Out to Foo Foo's Palace for example (outlined in Chapter Four, Section 4.2.2), double-entendre based on the phallic imagery of vegetables and the wider connotations of greengrocers, vegetarianism and so on - for a while at least - provided a humorous basis for in-group solidarity and resistance. Because the men of the local community had been excluded from the visit to Foo Foo's, they were not privy to the in-group 'code'; as such it provided an exclusive private language for the articulation of men-demeaning humour, as well as significant ammunition in the girls' resistance to unwanted advances. On one occasion, for example, Dilly and Poolie were left feeling distinctly uncomfortable and more than a little confused after approaching two of the girls in the Centre for a 'date'; in reply the pair were told "we'd rather have a marrow". The girls were convulsed with laughter, the volume and intensity of which increased when Poolie's response was to wonder aloud "what did I say?".

In the long-term, however, despite such instances of solidarity and resistance, the girls had tacit recognition of the roles they would come to occupy in the future and, moreover, saw these as natural and inevitable. As Janet Wallace put it: "[As a teenager] I was just

out fer a good time, I wanted it all ... but even then I knew I'd get married an 'ave kids one day".

Some women sought and effected early moves towards geographical mobility and residential independence "in order to see the world 'an live a bit" (Maggie). But, as Maggie's written testimony illustrated (Chapter Four, Section 4.7), subsequent cohabitation, parenthood, and the overwhelming domestic constraints of home and childcare, curtailed and diminished her adolescent aspirations. In the short-term, several women, certainly in the early periods of their post-school transitions, were critical of traditional domestic roles and sought to resist them (Chapter Seven, Sections 7.7.2; 7.8.5). As Tracy Smith put it: "I wasn't gonna end up like Ma, runnin' 'round after that lot all day". Indeed, some women participants were very critical of the domestic roles which awaited them, including motherhood. As Amanda Gardiner put it: "There's too many kids in the world". Nevertheless, lack of realistic alternatives combined with the disillusionment that typically accompanied post-school cyclical transitions ensured that the majority of unemployed women found themselves in childrearing relationships. By 1990, of the eleven long-term unemployed women, eight were responsible for the care of two or more children and ten of the eleven were either married or cohabiting with male partners (Section 8.4.3). In contrast, two of the women who had effected protracted transitions to primary employment succeeded in resisting the pressures to conform to the traditional roles of motherhood and heterosexual monogamy and, partly through the economic independence generated by full-time jobs, created alternative life styles for themselves (see Chapter Seven, Sections 7.8.6 and 7.8.7).

Despite the pervasiveness of the ideology of romance, girls' own experiences with predatory male sexuality ensured that some participants had very prosaic expectations for married life. Sometimes expectations for marriage were conditioned by experiences of domestic violence within the parental home. Four of the eleven women had encountered repeated instances of paternal violence directed either towards themselves or their mothers. Tracy Smith, who was unemployed until August 1986 when she secured

employment within the Hartingleigh Project, was one study participant who had suffered violence both at the hands of her alcoholic father and later in an early relationship with a boy who was addicted to heroin. Only after therapeutic counselling was she able to disentangle the complex web of violent influences. Tracy's therapy enabled her to establish a link between childhood experience and her early adult disposition towards heterosexual relationships that mirrored her past (Chapter Seven, Section 7.8.5).

Research has pointed to the role of romantic escapism for young women (McRobbie and Garber 1976; Pollert 1981; McRobbie 1982). However, the ways in which romance operated in the lives of the unemployed women was often complex. Their own experiences would not allow them to fully accept the ideology of romance and heterosexual monogamous love. As Stella once put it:

> "Love, white weddings, tinkly bells, happy babies, smiling faces, nice houses, nice men ... SHOW IT TO ME THEN I'LL BELIEVE IT!" (original spoken emphasis)

Nevertheless, romance did constitute a terrain of meaning which helped women structure an identity in what was frequently a difficult and oppressive domestic situation. In some cases, it enabled them to constitute an "imaginary reality" (Cohen and Taylor 1976) through which situations were made bearable. Moreover, falling 'in love' was the necessary precursor to the desired adult status of 'going steady' or being involved in 'a serious relationship', and also provided a rhetoric of justification for early pregnancy. Romance thus provided an "escape attempt" in the face of diminished opportunity. Yet such an escape route often had 'real' consequences and for several participants their romantic involvements had resulted in early pregnancies and lone parenthood. Yet, even in the midst of being 'in love', participants were sometimes able to recognise the 'imaginary reality' that was being constructed: "'E told me 'e loved me ... 'ah knew really ... 'e jus' wanted sex - but I let meself believe 'im ... I wanted too really" (Heather Lawley).

The ideology of romance also served the instrumental function of allowing sexually active women a rhetoric of justification for resisting negative labelling. The sexual

behaviour of young women is locally circumscribed by the risk of sexual labelling, especially the distinction made between "nice girls" and "slags" (Cowie and Lees 1981) or, in its local manifestation, girls who are "sorted" and "tarts". 'Sorted' girls were those who were usually somebody's girlfriend, 'tarts' were potentially anybody's. Certainly as far as the lads were concerned, and it must be said, also those young women committed to monogamous relationships with young men, sexually active unattached women (tarts) were 'fair game' for the men and therefore potential rivals as far as the women were concerned. As such, negative labelling was a process engendered by both sexes and it served to prescribe sexual behaviour for young women. One means for avoiding such negative labelling was through 'serial' monogamous romantic relationships. To be too sexually available was to risk status loss through labelling, but to be 'in love' allowed for sexual involvement which, to some extent, was tolerated socially. Indeed to be 'in love' was among the young women a status role, especially if connected to the possibility of engagement and future marriage. If these latter options were unavailable due to the unwillingness of the male partner to undertake the necessary commitment, then to be 'in love' was the next best thing. Being 'in love' and sexually involved often preceded single parenthood and provided the necessary justification to offset the stigma of pregnancy outside marriage. However, sometimes even the most inappropriate relationships were 'glossed' with the rhetoric of 'love', and 'being in love' behaviour. Tricia Hartley, for example, was forced into prostitution after threats and violence from her boyfriend, who also subsequently became the father of her child. Indeed, it was as a consequence of pregnancy that she was able to separate herself from the relationship after her boyfriend had insisted that she should have an abortion. Nevertheless, even after she had made her escape and had her baby, and even in the face of subsequent threats of violence from her former boyfriend, she still maintained he loved her and that moreover, she loved him. The ideology of romantic love thus served to sustain fantasised relationships and identities.

Romantic love was also used instrumentally by young women as a source of power within relationships in order to exert proprietorial rights. Under the guise of romantic

love, sexual favours were granted within a steady relationship to maintain a boy's interest, or to prevent him seeking sexual relationships elsewhere. Partly, such behaviour was necessary because of the loss of status to a young woman if her partner was seen to be sexually active elsewhere. Romantic love was therefore strategically employed by young women to maintain a measure of control within a relationship. Julie Birchall lived alone as a lone parent for four years before she eventually developed an ongoing relationship with a young man who eventually took on parental responsibility for Julie's first child from a former relationship. Julie confessed to utilising her sexuality under the guise of romantic love to win the man away from a relationship he was already involved in. As she put it:

> "I was ruthless, he didn't know what 'it 'im. Honest, I can really turn it on ... Two nights with me an' he though he was Rambo ... But I knew I wanted 'im an' I also knew there was someone else an' I'd have to move quick - so I did."

On other occasions, the strategy took different forms such as exaggerated public displays of sorrow (when a relationship was threatening to 'break up') or jealousy (if a male partner was threatening to become involved with someone else). At other times, romantic love provided a language for expressing sexual desire (Lees 1986) or complicated emotions hinged on the need to belong to, or be part of, a relationship. In contrast to the typical portrayal of girls within subcultures as passive and subordinated, the unemployed women in my study were also occasionally prepared to assert themselves physically with young men or with other women deemed rivals or outsiders (see for example Chapter Six, Section 6.6.2). Examples of forceful femininity, resistance, solidarity, and manipulation of the codes of romantic love can be gleaned from the biographies of women research participants. This is in contrast to the passive retreat into romance, domesticity and motherhood described in other studies. Nevertheless, the powerlessness and subordination of the unemployed women was ultimately reinforced. In the case of romantic love and romance, for example, resistance was articulated through the local manipulation of an ideology which nevertheless often placed the young women in positions of domestic and economic subordination. In those cases where, for example, an

unemployed woman in receipt of benefits married or cohabited with an employed man, she automatically lost her individual right to supplementary benefit (or income support as it is now known). Because a male partner's income is taken into account when entitlement is assessed, the male partner's income from employment usually precluded entitlement. Moreover, means-tested benefits also treat cohabitees as 'couples'; single claims for benefit are disallowed when a young woman enters into a relationship and lives with or marries a young man. In cases where both partners are unemployed, benefit claims for the couple are typically registered by the male partner on behalf of the family. Thus, whenever an unemployed woman entered a relationship with a man, she generally forfeited her right to the marginal economic independence afforded by non-contributory benefits, even in those situations where her male partner was also unemployed.

Women in childrearing relationships were doubly disadvantaged. Not only did they forfeit marginal economic independence (by losing benefit entitlement when entering a live-in relationship) but they also generally found themselves undertaking the bulk of the responsibility for domestic work and for rearing dependent children. Of the eleven unemployed women, eight had two or more dependent children. Mothers of young children were generally unable to compete in both the formal and informal labour markets, and, when work was obtained, as was the case for another four women in my study group (who were not classed as long-term unemployed but who also had children), it was part-time, low-skilled, and low-paid. However, even such part-time employment was generally beyond the scope of most of the unemployed women, as such income would affect benefit entitlement. The four who had negotiated part-time work were all married to employed partners and were not therefore benefit-dependent. In such cases, part-time work was a realistic option as it generated extra income for the family budget, provided the women with a measure of financial independence, and also allowed them a respite from domestic and childcare routines. For the eleven unemployed women, such part-time work could only be undertaken 'off the books' as any income generated from legitimate 'cards in' part-time work would be immediately cancelled out by deductions from benefit. In some

cases, participants would have actually been worse off for undertaking lowly paid part-time employment in terms of the negative impact on benefit entitlements. As Heather Lawley explained:

> "I was offered a job about four months ago ... They wanted to pay me £60 for twenty hours and there was tax and insurance out of that. I worked it all out, by the time we'd paid the rent and the other bills, we'd have been worse off than we are now. The Social's paying the rent, and there's money for the bills and everything. So if I had to pay my own rent, which is £40 odd, we'd be worse off ... Anything you earn they take out of your benefit so there's not a lot of point is there?"

Aside from the negative impact on benefit entitlement, full-time or part-time was also ruled out because of lack of childcare provision. Thus, early domestic careers of pregnancy, childrearing, and home-caring, often undertaken under the ideology of romance and romantic love, served ultimately to fix women into situations of economic and domestic subordination. The four exceptions to this general picture among the eleven unemployed women were Susan Hargreaves, Lynda Willcox, Wendy Fisher and Tricia Hartley. Whilst still maintaining benefit entitlement and claims, all four had created independent means of acquiring extra (undeclared) income (see Section 8.4.3). However, despite a measure of economic independence generated by their fiddle jobs, two of the four, who were both married, still had the main responsibility for domestic and childcare routines. Even Wendy Fisher and Tricia Hartley, who both remained unattached throughout the fourth and final phase of my research, were not entirely independent. Tricia was a lone parent and undertook sole responsibility for the upbringing of her child and Wendy Fisher, who was unattached and childless, had not sought residential independence and was still resident in the natal home when my research terminated in 1990. Thus, despite these exceptions, the general picture remained of post-school cyclical transitions, combined with the economic constraints of differentiation (and discrimination) in the job and employment training markets, producing early domestic career moves often undertaken under the ideology of romance and romantic love. Such domestic career moves were informed by the cultural traditions of domesticity and childcare which working class girls inherit as a 'domestic apprenticeship' within the natal home. However, early

domestic careers, of pregnancy, childrearing and home-caring, served generally to locate women in situations of economic and domestic subordination, where the hope for independent opportunity was increasingly diminished. In such situations, there was a fundamental withdrawal from labour market commitment and aspirations, into a fatalistic acceptance of the taken-for-granted roles of domestic and childcare responsibility (Section 8.4.3).

8.6.3 Domestic Labour and Caring Work

The view that domestic labour is the responsibility of women is widely held (*Social Trends* 16 : 1986 : 36). In a national survey in 1984, women were found to be almost solely responsible for domestic tasks: 88% for washing and ironing, 77% for providing an evening meal, 72% for house cleaning, and 63% for care of dependent children (*ibid* : Table 2.12 : 36). According to Oakley (1974), 93% of non-employed women classified themselves as "housewives". Among study participants generally, housework was viewed as women's work and it was assumed that women would take responsibility for it within a household. The general assumption was that women could do domestic tasks naturally and men could not. Oakley (1974) has argued that housework is unrecognised, unpaid work, not regarded as 'real' work because it is unwaged. However, her study also revealed that women on average undertook 77 hours housework per week.

The unemployed women in my study got little pleasure from a realigned commitment to the domestic realm. Although they invested time, energy and identity in the housewife role, they derived little satisfaction from it. The commonest complaints were tedium and loneliness. As Lynda Willcox put it: "Sometimes I feel like I don't live anymore. I get so down ... I'd love a little job ... it'd be nice just to get out of the flat sometimes". However control over domestic tasks and childcare routines provided some participants with a sense of autonomy. Control over the pace and order of tasks and the routines and goals women set themselves within the home ensured a method for emphasising autonomy and, moreover, provided psychological benefits if 'high standards' were achieved. As

Heather Lawley maintained: "When it's done an' all sorted out I sit back an' feel nice ... You could eat yer dinner off the floor, it's so clean".

Domestic labour is seen by feminists as real work. It reproduces labour-power both in terms of the bearing and rearing of future workers and also in terms of the mental and physical servicing of the existing labour force (Beechey 1977; Barrett 1980). However, the demands of housework, and the economic and personal circumstances under which it was often performed, mitigated against the formation of an enduring sense of solidarity among the unemployed women. Domestic labour is a solitary activity and women become bound to housework by ties of love and identification. Generally women participants sought to feel good about their domestic labour. In the absence of other ways of structuring identity, for example, though employment, "keeping a tidy home and the kids decent" became a method for assessing self-worth, a way of signalling moral standing or respectability, both to oneself and to the wider community. As Maggie put it: "We might be stuck on the dole but me 'ouse an' me kids are spotless, no-one can say anythin' against me for that".

Housework and the isolation of domestic labour tended to divide rather than unite women. In the absence of clearly defined domestic standards, women tended to use other women as the competitive standard against which to measure performance. Generally, the divisions were demarcated along the rough/respectable continuum. Rough women were identified as follows: "[She] ... never cleans, the place is filthy ... 'er kids 'ave got their arses 'angin' out their trousers ... They live like pigs, it's not right an' it's not decent" (Janet Wallace). Respectable women, on the other hand, sought to keep their homes "decent" and their kids "clean".

Women's unpaid labour extended beyond what is generally viewed as housework. Women were expected to care not only for their male partners and their children but also for other family dependants. Sometimes this would involve care of a sister's children or

older/younger siblings who had been ejected from the parental home. In the case of John Conleigh, for example, such a care-role extended to looking after his handicapped mother. However, it was John's sister who was eventually allocated the full-time primary role of caring for their mother, and it was she, rather than John, who gave up her full-time job in order to do so (Chapter Six, Section 6.5.4). Women could also be seen as necessary to their male partner's work role even if this was supportive of illegal work undertaken through crime or the informal economy. Goffee and Scase (1985) have suggested that wives play an important role in assisting self-employed husbands in their businesses. Self-employed men are often dependent upon unpaid clerical and administrative duties undertaken by their wives. Similarly, the unemployed males involved in alternative careers depended upon their wives and girlfriends to at least 'know the score' and be tactful about what they said and to whom. Moreover, the men also occasionally relied on their partners to conduct deals in their absence, accurately relay messages or information, and sometimes provide alibis when they became embroiled with the law. Women were also expected to remain loyal and faithful when their partners were arrested and jailed. They were, moreover, expected to visit their male partners in jail and provide access to supplies of prohibited drugs and money. On a typical prison visit, drugs and money would be orally passed from visitor to inmate during a passionate kiss. Often the tightly folded banknote or piece of cannabis was sealed in plastic or in a condom. These could then be swallowed if it became necessary and retrieved once the inmate had returned to the safety of his cell. Such tasks were willingly undertaken by some women on behalf of their menfolk despite the dangers and risk of prosecution to themselves.

Domestic labour and supportive work were often an extension of the 'mothering option'. It is here that the distinct yet intertwined threads of influence of class and gender were most visible.

8.6.4 The Mothering Option

The long-term unemployed women study participants shared the same background of social disadvantage as the men. However, they were subject to even more structural limitations because they had to contend with patriarchy as a mode of domination, as well as class. The socially disadvantaged women of my study faced a future that held little real promise. The structural constraints of class and gender were radically different for the women as compared with the men. Certainly sustaining commitment to childrearing relationships (either through marriage or cohabitation) marked a fundamental difference between the genders. As I outlined earlier (Section 8.5.5), only three of the nine unemployed male participants who had entered childrearing partnerships sustained their original relationships and were taking an active part in the upbringing of their children. In contrast, all the unemployed women with children, whether or not they had separated from their male partners, retained the bulk of childrearing responsibilities.

Cyclical transitions, limited opportunities and long-term unemployment were the structural forces acting upon the disadvantaged young women of my study. However, resolution of these forces for the women was radically different than for the men because, among other things, the young women were able to realise a sanctioned goal that appeared to promise freedom from the forces by which they, like the Northside males, felt themselves to be trapped. It was at this juncture that the mothering option often appeared.

As teenagers, the young unemployed women underwent the same hardships and lived the same stigma as their male counterparts. They understood that their families were relatively poor, living in rough districts, and that they were living different lives than the ones depicted on television or in other media. However, the girls, through the ideology of romance and romantic love, could react to these pressures and construct an 'imaginary reality' (Section 8.6.2) to escape them in ways that boys could not. Within mainstream culture a clearly defined and lauded path existed for the girls to follow. No matter how

educationally unqualified they were, or how hopeless their future in the job market appeared to be, they had a route to adult status. The importance the aspiration to motherhood had in their lives cannot be overestimated. In the midst of what were often tumultuous childhoods, it gave them something concrete to hang identity upon. Unlike the status roles which had to be negotiated through a differentiated job market, motherhood was something that could not be denied to them. A baby was something that could not be taken away or removed in the way that the other opportunities for realising adult status had been. Unlike their fathers, brothers and boyfriends, for a while they believed themselves headed for a future they desired, one of which society generally approved. They could be mothers, and, for some who undertook early childrearing, nothing and no-one could keep them from realising their goal. As Tricia Hartley put it: "This was something for me, no-one was gonna talk me out of it". As young mothers, some women were seeking to demonstrate their adulthood, independence and maturity through having a recognised status role: "Before [I had the baby] I was always bored ... nothin' to do, d'ya know, but now it's like there isn't enough hours in the day" (Spider). Motherhood was also undertaken as a route towards residential independence: "I knew they'd give me a [council] flat an' anyway there was no work ... nothin' else in my life" (Lynda Willcox).

Of all research participants, the long-term unemployed women were those who had most successfully undertaken early movement towards sustained residential mobility. In 1985-86, ten of the eleven unemployed women had effected sustained residential independence, seven in public rented accommodation and three in private rented accommodation. In general terms, whilst the Northside Crew looked towards the self-protecting milieu of their peer group network with its celebration of masculinity, the young women sought parenthood and maternity as the only viable option for displaying adult status and residential independence.

However, the relief from status frustration and thwarted aspirations that motherhood held out was largely illusory. Although none of the women regretted having children, they came to quickly realise that poverty and parenthood, especially lone parenthood, is fraught with inestimable difficulties. As Susan Hargreaves confessed: "After six months I though oh no! I've shit it, fuckin' broken nights, breastfeeding ... Then it was teethin' an' more broken nights ... I was really really sorry then". Four of the unemployed women were in 1986 coping on their own rearing one or more dependent children. In these cases, the 'celebration of motherhood' took on a different hue:

> "I was sick of it ... sick o' 'im bein' around the 'ouse, money always short, ah just got sick of it ... Then I started takin' it out on 'im and the baby an' the rows started, that's when we split up" (Julie Birchall).

Julie lived alone with her baby for almost four years before she eventually married, a relationship which produced a second child. After the birth of her second child in 1988, Julie became depressed. She felt "let down": "I'd done the mother bit, made nice babies but there was only struggle and debt. I felt let down somehow". Or, as Linda Willcox put it: "It's not all love an' roses. I've learnt that much". What Julie and other participants experienced was the denial of status that poverty brings, when they had fulfilled the traditional role allocated to them. Poverty and benefit dependence were a sign that the wider society was reneging on its part of the deal. They had done what they understood they were supposed to do and were subsequently "let down".

If motherhood, in spite of its promise, offered no relief from the structural forces impinging on lower working class girls, neither could participants expect consolation from a supportive peer group subculture. Whereas the boys constructed a subculture offering alternative ways of maintaining some self-respect and dignity, the girls had no such avenue open to them. As Campbell has similarly argued in respect of the lives of girls in New York street gangs:

> "For these girls, there was no escape in the gang from the problems they faced: their female role could not be circumvented ... in the end, gang or no gang, the girls remained alone with their children, still trapped in poverty and in a cultural dictate of womanhood from which there was no escape" (1984 : 226).

Generally denied the camaraderie and solidarity that male bonding affords, the long-term unemployed women fulfilled the roles that patriarchal society had defined for them. Such roles effectively kept them divided, dependent and subordinate. In contrast, Amanda Gardiner and Cathy Tittle whose nonconformist life styles were examined in Chapter Seven (Sections 7.8.6, 7.8.7) both remained childless and free of commitment to heterosexual relationships. Nonconformist girls may well drop out of the race, but, as was revealed in both Amanda's and Cathy's post-school transitions, unconventional routes to adulthood depended on the economic independence of full-time employment and the solace of a peer group with modified definitions of success. Without such resources and in the face of the "impertinent courtesy" of the myth of equality of opportunity ("an invitation offered to unwelcome guests in the certainty that circumstances will prevent them from accepting it"(Tawney 1938 : 110)), the sole option remaining to the long-term unemployed women seeking to effect a transition to adulthood was that of the mothering option.

8 .7 Summary and Conclusions

The journey of this Chapter began with a short trip on the Black Magic Roundabout, a "member-identified-category" (Lofland 1976) of personal and collective experience. For study participants, the Black Magic Roundabout of post-school cyclical transitions was a (not so) merry-go-round into adulthood; a roundabout of diminished opportunity and thwarted ambition which frequently resulted in massive disillusionment, smouldering resentment, long-term unemployment, and labour market withdrawal. The career components of the cyclical transition typically involved protracted periods of post-school unemployment interspersed with participation in one or more varieties of (un)employment training schemes, underemployment in casual or part-time employment, work in the informal economy, and routinised theft or other illegal modes of income acquisition.

The cyclical movement into and out of government schemes and special programmes produced reactions to scheme participation that were ranged on a continuum from

unfavourable to bitterly hostile. Government Scheming served to contain participants' unemployment whilst preserving their labour power and deflating aspirations and job/wage expectations in line with their limited future prospects. Government Scheming can be understood within a context of historical fears concerning the young unemployed working class. As a consequence of such 'respectable' fears, the young unemployed working class have found themselves increasingly conscripted onto schemes under the direct or implied threat of benefit withdrawal. Scheme participation served to remove participants from the street; the provision of training for jobs ensured an initial compliance. Social control was imposed through time and work discipline and containment secured through regulation, surveillance, and 'schooling for the social order'. Despite amassing a total of over ninety training schemes and special programmes of different styles and varieties, representing a total of over sixty years of participants' lives, in only one case had scheme participation provided direct access to primary employment. I have argued that Government Scheming amounted to a 'national youth policy' concerned with the containment of the young working class. The policy interventions have been based on an ideological smokescreen located in a pedagogical model of rectifying so-called 'skill deficiencies' in the labour force. Government Scheming has substantially transformed post-sixteen transitions and firmly established vocational training as a central state strategy for youth containment. An embittered and fundamental cynicism was typically the consequence of cyclical transitions through Government Scheming. Such disillusionment preceded the slide into long-term unemployment and labour-market withdrawal.

Study participants who entered the ranks of the long-term unemployed could be distinguished by a background of social disadvantages such as stigmatised residential location, absentee fathers, or inter-generational unemployment. Such cumulative social disadvantage typically produced a response of labour market withdrawal. Labour market withdrawal took three forms, a return to full-time education, a retreat into home-based domestic careers, and the proactive development of alternative careers within Hartingleigh's burgeoning sub- and anti-employment subcultures. For many long-term

unemployed participants, a reduction in personal commitment to the orthodox labour market and the effort put into the search for proper jobs had positive psychological benefits and allowed participants to "reject the official authorised interpretation of their social situation" (MacLeod 1987 : 150). In seeking to explicate labour market withdrawal, I utilised Bourdieu's concept of habitus to explore how habitus engendered a reduction in work commitment and aspiration formation, which reflected objective probabilities. However, the concept of the internalisation of objective probabilities limited the scope for creative human agency, and so I also argued that peer group affiliations, whilst providing participants with economic and psychological benefits, at the same time supplied an arena for the articulation of resistance (Giroux 1983) and proactivity (Fryer 1986a). Subcultural resistance and proactivity were, for example, given voice through the magically appropriated symbolism of the Black Magic Roundabout.

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 withdrawal 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 came to build on a common sense of identity constructed out of an exaggerated valuation of working class male machismo. Group bonding, loyalty, and solidarity remained a central feature of male participants' lives. The peer group affiliations fostered in participants' 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 transitions into adulthood. The Vic as a 'hard pub in a hard area' occupied a central role in the network of sociability. It provided a bastion of male values and focal concerns, a generating milieu for social and acquisitive crime, a place where deals were struck, information exchanged, 'scams' worked out, and a context where status and identity were expressed. The Vic also provided access to the informal

alternative career structure, for example as a recruiting ground for the alternative entrepreneurial activities of the Donaghue and Hatton families.

Once embarked on alternative careers, male participants' commitment to the generating milieu of their localities and peer groups inhibited the evolution of heterosexual relationships. For six participants, this resulted in delayed residential mobility, which also partly reflected the differential pattern of parental freedom allocated to unemployed males as compared to unemployed females within the parental home. For eight male participants, however, early sustained residential independence was secured primarily through the income derived from fiddle jobs or acquisitive crime. 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 the life style of participants' alternative careers militated against stability or emotional commitment in partnership/family formation.

The domestic career transitions of long term unemployed women participants were circumscribed by the cultural emphasis on a domestic apprenticeship of home-care and childrearing. Aspirations and opportunities were further circumscribed by patriarchal assumptions in the labour market and sexism in scheme allocation procedures. Resistance was articulated within the home in terms of contestation over the traditional assignment of domestic tasks, within the solidarity engendered by the Hartingleigh Project's Girls Nights and Girls' Night Out, and through manipulation of sexuality and the codes of romance and romantic love. Nevertheless, 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 and childcare responsibility. The mothering option provided a socially acceptable alternative

to unemployment; lack of other viable options, such as the possibility for a good job or an independent life style, made the mothering option a higher status occupation than long-term unemployment. Generally the unemployed women fell back into a domestic version of working class femininity, whilst the unemployed men fell into an exaggerated and predominantly aggressive version of masculinity.

In attempting to explicate the impact of cumulative social disadvantage, family and locality influences, and labour market experiences, on participants' employment commitment, the significance of protracted unemployment and cyclical transitions on the Black Magic Roundabout cannot be overstated. Cyclical transitions engendered a fundamental cynicism which fuelled participants' withdrawal from the limited opportunities which were available in the orthodox labour market. Such cynicism preceded the slide into the sub-economy, long-term benefit dependence, and the proactive creation of alternative career options.

Of all the post-school transition routes, the slide into the sub-economy and acquisitive criminality is the most under-researched. This glaring gap in the recent youth research literature may be partially explained by the potentially controversial nature of studies in this area; the ethical and political implications are formidable. Nevertheless, in the following Chapter, I will seek to draw together a typology of the locally constructed alternative career options, supported by case studies and other ethnographic material, which detail the progressive development of such strategies by research participants. Inevitably, this will be a partial and fragmented glimpse of study participants' endeavours to create meaning and sustain identities from the inconsistencies and contradictions they encountered. Detailed exploration of these non-conventional routes to meaning, status, income, and adult identity will, I hope, provide some contribution towards a more comprehensive knowledge of the critical 'career' points through which this progression occurs and lend greater overall understanding of the 'choices' made by the young adult long-term unemployed within my study group.

CHAPTER NINE

ALTERNATIVE TRANSITIONS

"The City has a million faces and no man ever knows just what another means when he tells about the city he sees. For the city that he sees is just the city that he brings with him, that he has within his heart ... made out of sense but coloured and unalterable from all that he has felt and thought and dreamed about before" (Thomas Wolfe (1939 : 223)

9.1 Introduction

In Chapter Eight I argued that, economically disadvantaged and therefore culturally distinct, high unemployment areas like Hartingleigh have developed a marginalised and stigmatised position in relation to the City as a whole. The traditional sites for local employment, which included engineering and manufacturing industry, have been decimated, particularly during the past fifteen years of economic restructuring. Within the cultural ecology of Hartingleigh, and exacerbated by the processes of local economic decline, Hartingleigh, and the Chicken Lane Estate in particular, developed the negative reputation as the 'roughest' areas in North Manchester.

The estate's high levels of poor, undermaintained housing stock, trans-generational unemployment, delinquency, acquisitive and, more recently, violent crime, are not discrete areas of disadvantage, but a product of inter-connected and cumulative forms of inequality. It is from this interlocking network of inequalities that the local subcultures have revived the traditional survival scripts of social and acquisitive crime. These subcultures illustrate how poverty, inferior education, the lack of even minimum opportunities, a steadily deteriorating economic situation, and the cumulative impact of government policy interventions in employment, benefits, housing, and training, have all combined to produce feelings of cynicism, bitterness and alienation.

Some writers have described the social trends of the past decade, or more, in terms of a process of "marketisation" (Hutton 1992). Elliot Currie has similarly argued that Britain

has been transmuted from a market economy to a market society and that the pursuit of private gain has become the organising principle not only within the economic sphere but also all areas of social life:

> "In the market society, all other principles of social organisation become subordinated to the over-reaching one of private gain" (*The Guardian*, 30.8.93 : 9).

The growth of inequality is strongly correlated both with the processes of marketisation and with the growth of crime. Britain in the 1980s had the most rapid crime growth in Europe and it was also a country where the top 20% had six times the disposable income of the bottom 20% at the beginning of the decade. By the 1990s, the top 20% had nine times the disposable income (Hutton 1992). According to a survey by Young (1992), recorded crime under the present government has risen twice as fast as under any other government, Conservative or Labour, in the past 40 years. Figures from the government publication, *Social Trends*, show that there were 1.7 million reported offences in 1971; by 1991 this figure had risen more than threefold to 5.3 million. All statistics have to be interpreted with care and one of many problems with data on crime is that the increased willingness to report offences may have fuelled some of the increases in reported crime and exaggerated the rise. Nevertheless, evidence from the British Crime Survey suggests that crime has increased by at least 50% over the past decade, with burglaries and thefts doubling (cited in *The Guardian*, 30.8.93 : 9). The "invisible hand" of marketisation behind the inexorable increase in the rate of crime is, according to Currie, linked to economic inequality and recent figures indicate that the real incomes of the poorest 10% of society have fallen by 14% since 1979 (*The Guardian*, 30.8.93 : 9). However, despite the rise in recession-crime, it is worth briefly emphasising that the physical, economic and social costs of corporate crime far outstrip comparable costs of 'conventional' crime (see Box 1983 : 25-34 for examples of research in this area).

Within a cultural ecology circumscribed by the cumulative social and economic disadvantages of stigmatised residential location, contracting adult and youth labour markets, high levels of trans-generational long-term unemployment, and the profound

cynicism engendered by their labour market experiences (particular on the 'Black Magic Roundabout' described in the previous Chapter), the Northside typically made early movements into the bottom rungs of the local alternative career structure. In attempting to present the full richness, texture and variation of alternative economic possibilities available to, or proactively constructed by, study participants, I have constructed a typology of alternative careers which follows the one outlined in Chapter Four (Section 4.8). Here I will sketch out the typology of alternative economic options, supported by brief ethnographic references and case studies. However, for the obvious reasons of confidentiality and also to protect both study participants and myself from retrospective police investigation, the issues dealt with are addressed in the broadest possible terms. I have taken quite complex steps to alter names, dates, locations, settings and, where necessary, identities whilst at the same time seeking to maintain the veracity of the material presented. The ethical and methodological issues, implications, and ramifications are addressed in Chapter Five (see Section 5.3).

The categories utilised in the following sections are not exhaustive and in a sense are a series of snapshots in time which only partially capture the movement of participants between and within categories. Nevertheless, the typology does focus on typical behaviours in what Lofland (1976) has described at "member-identified-categories".

9.2 Early Careers

One important organising concept which provides understanding of the evolution of participants' alternative modes of income acquisition is that of 'career'. The concept as I utilise it is concerned with a notion of "status sequences which involve choice patterns" (Coles, forthcoming). The concept of career allows for an examination of the interplay between what Giddens has termed "structuration and agency" - the relationship between institutional and structural development and participants as proactive agents, responding to changes rather than being simply driven along by them (*cf* Coles, forthcoming). However, the phrase 'career choice' conjures up a picture of the individual distinguishing between a

number of alternatives; in reality there are a limited number of options which change over time. Moreover, 'choices' are seldom immediately recognisable as such and are influenced by others who share the career option.

I have previously indicated that alternative careers were evolved within, and circumscribed by, a cultural ecology of alternative enterprise that was, to some degree, tolerant of acquisitive criminality as a domain for the articulation of a traditional cultural oppositionality or resistance (Chapter Eight, Sections 8.4.4; 8.4.5; 8.5.2; 8.5.3; 8.5.4). For the long-term unemployed males, alternative careers were sustained by the inherited focal concerns of the parent culture which found form and articulation within the sub- and anti-employment subcultures. Moreover, these subcultural formations were generated within a cultural ecology of alternative enterprise partially sponsored by the Hatton and Donaghue families. As was revealed by Dilly's recollections of his initial encounter with members of the Hatton family in 'the Vic' (Chapter Eight, Section 8.5.3), sometimes such early career moves were initiated and encouraged even before school-leaving.

For Becker and Strauss (1956), the first step is the most important in commissioning a new career. Becker (1963) also notes that the most significant component in the development of a non-conformist career is the initial 'deviance'. There is, moreover, considerable research evidence which indicates that it is common for a majority of young people to contravene societal laws (eg. Osborne and West 1978), and that, in certain lower class communities, a high degree of local tolerance is displayed towards law-breaking behaviour (Downes 1966; Hobbs 1988; Mays 1954; Willmott 1966). In terms of the generating milieu of the Chicken Lane estate in Hartingleigh, social ecology (*cf* Baldwin and Bottoms 1976; Gill 1977; Hobbs 1988) and an inherited subcultural ethos of law-breaking behaviour among the informal male network may also be considered significant factors circumscribing early career 'choices' (see Chapter Eight, Sections 8.5.2; 8.5.4).

In a conversation recorded during my preliminary fieldwork, Davvo provided the following account of the inter-generational transmission of subcultural norms and values:

> "We was all brought up 'round 'ere ... all we seen is our [older] brothers and their mates gettin' done, pullin' stunts an' goin' ter jail, y'know ... just seein' people 'ustlin' like, makin' out one way or another ... You seen all the dope man ... It's always bin that way 'round 'ere ... all the fuckin' tokin' [smoking cannabis], robbin', graftin' ... pure crime, it's 'ow we grew up ... It was me dad, then our kid [older brother] an' 'is mates, Northside ... the first Northside, an' then it was us, an' now the kids are comin' through ... It's the same scene ... Just survivin' ... Ya grow up an' they're all pullin' stunts, sometimes it's their ol' man ..., y'know graftin' .. or like our kid .... an' ya look up to 'em ... they're makin' out, not givin' a fuck y'know ... An' 'e's doin' this an' that, rippin' off, tottin', 'avin' a draw, listenin' ta sounds, goin' ta Town, goin' tat' Match ... pure Northside y'know ... An' 'e's doin' good, gotta motor an' a nice gaff ... So now it's up to us y'know, our turn, this 'is where we are ... an' y'know there's fuck all in yer 'ands an' if ya wannit yer gonna 'ave ter tek it, an 'yer do. That's it ... yer 'ave ter do it so yer work summat owt wi' yer mates, bit o' this, sum o' that ... a few quid 'ere, sell a bit o' that over there ... 'ustlin, tottin' like ... An' the kids're lookin' up ter ya ' cos they know it'll be them next."

By providing a domain in which to be respected, or successful, is to be 'bad' in societal terms, the subcultural context reverses or inverts conventional cultural norms. In terms of the development and progression of law-breaking careers, Sutherland and Cressey (1970) have indicated that law-breaking seldom begins as a solitary activity, but is rather initiated by groups utilising codes which supersede those of the dominant culture. There are many empirical studies which indicate that law-breaking acts are committed in association with others (see for example West and Farrington 1973; West 1967, 1982). Moreover, evidence from social psychological studies have been utilised to explain the dynamics of small groups contravening the dominant moral order, occasionally leading to crime (see, for example, Little 1990 : 36-37). Matza and Sykes (1957) have similarly found that, through "techniques of neutralisation", groups of delinquents cancel out the disapproval of the wider society towards law-breaking activities. This may be demonstrated through reference to specific utterances gleaned from my fieldwork. For example: "It's just what you did there" may be translated as a denial of responsibility, and "I didn't mean ta damage 'im" is a re-interpretation of injury. Other examples include: "Rich bastards ... they deserved what they got" (denial of the victim); "I don't think it's wrong, it's them that's wrong" (condemning the condemners); "When it's on top like, it's down to yer pals coverin' yer back" (appeals to higher loyalties).

The disillusionment and embittered cynicism which often characterised cyclical transitions and labour market withdrawal also informed techniques of neutralisation and allowed participants to reinterpret their situation in order to take what Box (1981) has described as a "moral holiday". Matza (1969) has also shown that there can be a whole-scale reinterpretation of particular acts, or actions, in order to render them acceptable within the alternative moral framework. The ability to negate and invert societal disdain in order to view law-breaking in a positive light provides an explanation for the persistence of law-breaking behaviour and the evolution of subcultural status-systems, which accord prestige to law-breaking endeavours.

Initial 'deviance' among study participants consisted of the whole panoply of adolescent law-breaking, the most serious of which included TDA (taking and driving away), GBH (grievous bodily harm), ABH (aggravated bodily harm), burglary, petty theft, unorganised drug-dealing, unorganised shoplifting, and receiving stolen goods. The majority of unemployed male study participants had appeared before the juvenile courts for one, or more, of these offences in their teenage years and had, between them, received the range of sentencing options available, from absolute or conditional discharges, through to ACs (Attendance Centres), DCs (Detention Centres) and YCs (Youth Custody or Borstal). However, the juvenile justice system, rather than undermining early careers, actually reinforced the criminal identity by unwittingly supplying the young offender with a source of status within the processes of re-definition and re-evaluation of the subcultural context. As Charlie put it after his experiences of Borstal training:

> "When I came out I felt like fuckin' Pop-Eye; ah'd bin doin' circuits [circuit training] an' weights [weight training] every day ... Ah wus 'pumped up' ... Ah'd done me 'bird' [successfully completed his sentence] ... ah knew ah could 'andle it. There's nowt they could do ter me ... ah wus ready ter take on the fuckin' world."

Successfully doing one's 'bird' meshed neatly with the subcultural focal concerns which emphasised an exaggerated masculinity. Status was derived from the act of emerging from the periods of incarceration physically and emotionally stronger. As Little has

argued: "The young offender incorporates limiting life experiences as positive, necessary components of his chosen career" (1990 : 8). Moreover, although the justice system aims to 'reform' criminals and deter potential law-breakers, it can be counter-productive in placing those who have committed relatively trivial initial offences in with more serious 'career' criminals. The milieu of Attendance Centres, Detention Centres, and Borstals, brings together young people with law-breaking experiences and provides a context within which those experiences are reinforced (Little 1990).

Within Hartingleigh's cultural ecology, other types of career options were available to study participants who were unsuccessful in their attempts to gain legitimate waged employment. These alternative career options were sometimes self-created; as with Davvo's proactively constructed movement into a life-style of sub-employment (see Chapter Four, Section 4.8.3), such careers provided alternative routes to income, status, identity and meaning. Other career options were also available which provided movement into a more organised alternative career structure. Aside from the 'bagging up' of horse manure ('shit-shovelling') for resale as garden compost - undertaken by Dilly, Poolie, Maz, Digger and Davvo, in their early teenage years - other participants sought out, or were recruited by, the Hatton and Donaghue families for a variety of legal, semi-legal and illegal tasks.

9.2.1 Market Trading

In Chapter Seven (Sections 7.3.3 and 7.8.3) I revealed how Tracy Smith and Jimmy Bee, during the course of their protracted transitions to formal employment, both sought and secured fiddle jobs on the market stalls owned by the Donaghues. Similarly, other participants, including Wendy Fisher and J.W., who, as a result of being distantly related to the Donaghue family, were both recruited to work on the family's market stalls. Both J.W. and Wendy undertook similar early careers. They started working for the Donaghues on a part-time basis before school-leaving and at that time worked several days in the week and on Saturdays. For Wendy, after three different varieties of training scheme in her post-

school transition, the market work eventually became more or less full-time and, though lowly paid, she supplemented her income by registering for benefits.

The strategy of working on the side whilst maintaining benefit claims and entitlement (by not declaring the income from market work to the Social Security) is extremely common amongst employees in market trading and is a strategy often actively encouraged by traders to justify wage levels below the statutory minimum. Evidence for the insecurity and marginality of such careers is provided by the fact that markets were periodically 'raided' by Social Security and Department of Employment special investigations teams, which often operated 'undercover', with a roving commission to investigate 'benefit abuse' (see, for example, *Marketeer and Discount Trader*, "Swoop on Dole Fiddlers": 1.4.88 : 1). Local knowledge about the intricacies of the benefit system within the market trading community was extensive and such understanding gleaned from 'old heads' would enable novitiates to circumvent the official harassment encountered as a consequence of long-term benefit claims. Such harassment included the periodic requirement to attend compulsory placements on schemes, etc.; Wendy, for example, after almost two years of continuous work on the markets whilst registered as unemployed, was compelled to attend a 'Restart Programme', designed, ironically, to improve her 'employability'. Local knowledge and advice enabled her to resist the requirement to attend the scheme in order to maintain her benefit entitlement. This was achieved by simply re-registering her claim for benefit on 'the sick'. The strategy necessitated periodic visits to the doctor in order to procure 'sick notes' to validate her claims for Supplementary Benefit, but, as Wendy had a minor problem with asthma, she was able to exaggerate her symptoms in order to do so. By periodic movements between signing on as unemployed and registering a claim for Supplementary Benefit as a sick person (therefore unable to attend schemes), she was able to both maintain benefit entitlement and continue her career as a market employee.

Within the social milieu of market employees, such strategies are justified on the basis of financial necessity, as market employees occupy positions within the labour market that

are generally part-time or seasonal, poorly paid and insecure. Becker (1963) has examined the various stages in the careers of 'deviant' groups and similarly notes how such groups initially adopt a self-justifying rationale or ideology. During the second stage, they acquire the knowledge to conduct themselves within the deviant context with the minimum of fuss until, finally, they become confident enough to condemn the laws they break. As was the case with other participants who skirted the boundaries of legality in their alternative careers, Wendy's post-school transition on the Black Magic Roundabout of Government Schemes and Special Programmes (see Chapter Four, Section 4.5.2) produced a self-justifying rationale which 'condemned the condemners':

> "I don't think it's wrong [claiming benefits whilst working; on the contrary] it's them that's wrong ... Everyone's gotta live ... I've got a right to a life ... Anyway I work 'ard for me money."

Aside from crossing the boundaries of illegality by registering fraudulent benefit claims, participants employed on the market stalls owned by the Donaghues were also exposed to association with further illegalities. This occurred as a result of the periodic use the Donaghues made of their legitimate business concerns in market trading to disguise other, more illegitimate, activities. As was revealed by Jimmy Bee (Chapter Seven, Section 7.8.3), the Donaghues periodically utilised the legitimate practices of market trading as a method for concealing the transportation and fencing of stolen goods and also for the movement and distribution of proscribed drugs. In fact, participants such as J.W. and Wendy Fisher were specifically recruited by the Donaghues, on the basis of their understanding and acceptance of the alternative entrepreneurial activities of the family. Though not actively involved in these additional, more illegal, activities, participants were expected to at least "know the score", "keep it buttoned", and turn the required "blind eye".

9.2.2 Barking

After they had served an early apprenticeship within the milieu of market trading and had been suitably vetted by the Donaghue family, participants such as J.W. were eventually

provided with more remunerative employment. In respect of participants' early careers, such employment included 'barking' for the Donaghues. As outlined in Chapter Four (Section 4.8.2), 'barking', also known as 'fly-pitching', is a form of unlicensed street trading, which usually takes place in the City Centre or on the fringes of legitimate market sites. After an initial period of assisting certain members of the family in the retail selling of commodities on the street, J.W. was further 'promoted' and required to, in effect, sub-contract and recruit teams of 'barkers' on those occasions when a particularly large amount of stock had been acquired. Christmas was, for example, a particularly busy time for the 'barkers' who would be mobilised by J.W. to work the City Centre streets and pubs on behalf of the Donaghues, as well as various legitimate market sites, in order to sell cut-price items to the throngs of Christmas shoppers. Particularly in their teenage years, Coggs, Maz, Dilly, Mick Kenney and Wilf had all, at one time or another, participated in the practice of 'barking' as organised by the Donaghues and co-ordinated by J.W.

To minimise apprehension and also ensure the safety of both the street traders and their goods, a method of protective organisational structure was employed. Protection and early low-status careers were provided by the role and system of 'dogs' or 'dog-outs'. These would be distanced from the 'barker's' improvised stall in order to act as lookouts and provide early warning of any approaching police (or in the case of fly-pitching on the boundaries of legitimate markets - market security staff). Early warning from the 'dogs' would enable the 'barker' to hurriedly close his stall and blend in with the crowd. As an additional safety precaution, the bulk of goods to be punted would be held in quantity elsewhere, usually in a transit van parked in the vicinity of the fly-pitchers' improvised stalls. Such a strategy ensured that, in the case of the 'barker's' apprehension, the bulk of goods being punted would avoid seizure, which allowed the team to move on and set up their stalls elsewhere. The 'dogs', apart from acting as lookouts, would also ensure a constant supply of stock for the improvised stalls from the main quantity held nearby. Though mutually interdependent, the status-role of the 'dogs' was considered lower than that of the 'barker's', reflected in the fact that 'dogs' received a flat wage of between £15

and £25 for a day's 'doggin'-out', whilst the 'barkers' were paid on a commission basis which, depending on the type of goods being punted, ensured a daily income at least double that of the 'dogs'. In their early teenage years, participants involved in 'barking' generally worked as 'dogs', followed by occasional 'promotion' to the role of 'barker'. During the Christmas period, however, participants could compete with the 'barkers' by 'punting' or 'hustling' goods supplied by the Donaghues in the pubs and wine bars filled with Christmas revellers. At such times, participants would receive the same commission as the 'barkers' (usually between 25% and 50% of the retail price).

9.2.3 Touting

Similar alternative economic options were also provided by the Hatton family. In terms of Hartingleigh's evolving sub-employment subculture, the Hattons provided both role-models and significant domains for the socialisation of participants into law-breaking values. In the late 1970s, early 1980s, the Hattons utilised 'the Vic' (Chapter Eight, Section 8.5.3), along with key figures in the community, to recruit study participants for a variety of tasks including the previously mentioned 'bagging up' of horse manure for retail sale as garden compost. After such early careers in 'shit-shovelling' and as 'compost salesmen', study participants also progressed into other careers provided by the Hattons such as 'touting', 'hustling' (proscribed drugs) and 'blags' (robbery).

'Touting', at one time or another, provided initial first steps in a more organised form of career deviance for Poolie, Mick Kent, Willie, Coggs, Maz, Dilly, Tex, Barlow, Summers, and Mick Kenney. The 'touts' operated within an informal organisational structure evolved by the Hattons which was similar to that utilised by the unlicensed street traders, examined in the previous section. 'Touting' was a locally organised form of enterprise which involved selling or 'touting' black market tickets for sports events and pop concerts, as well as unofficially printed programmes, posters and other ephemera - usually at inflated prices outside sports or pop venues. Such activities also extended to participants being recruited to queue overnight - on behalf of the Hattons - in order that large quantities of

entrance tickets could be purchased for sports and pop events (for which there was considered to be a likely popular demand). On those occasions when ticket sales were limited to a certain number per person, a measure of intimidation or force would be invoked by the family to enable participants to constantly jump the queue. The strategy allowed for two or three separate purchases of tickets to be made by each participant. Moreover, forgeries of tickets and official programmes would also be produced by the Hattons for 'touting' by study participants at major sporting or entertainment events. One example of the successful 'touting' of unofficial programmes was undertaken when the famous Olympic ice skating duo, 'Torvill and Dean', were appearing at the G-Mex Conference and Exhibition Centre in Manchester's City Centre. On this occasion, a team of participants were provided with white cotton "ice-cream men's coats" and bundles of inferior, poorly printed, unofficial programmes. The unofficial programmes were sold in huge quantities for £2 each to unwitting ice skating fans on the G-Mex Centre approach by what appeared to be official programme sellers.

As with the teams of 'barkers' recruited on behalf of the Donaghues by J.W., study participants employed for 'touting' by the Hattons would similarly operate as a team or 'crew' for 'working the punters' (pop and sports fans outside major venues). Like the teams involved in unlicensed street trading, the 'touts' also employed similar methods of protective organisation to ensure a measure of safety in what were essentially illegal street transactions. When the focus was on the retail selling of sports and pop ephemera, for example, the 'touts' would be serviced by 'runners' who supplied the 'touts' with goods held in a vehicle nearby. Like the 'barkers', the 'touts' would generally operate on a commission basis and would purchase their next supply of stock, *via* the 'runner', with the income generated from the initial supply of stock and so on. This method ensured that, if a 'tout' was arrested, only the stock and money he was 'holding' would be lost.

The organisational structure operated at its most complex when forged tickets were to be 'touted'. In such cases, 'touting' teams consisted of: a 'runner', two 'minders', and a

'holder'. The 'runner's' task was to mingle with ticketless fans outside venues, seek out potential punters and negotiate the type and quantity of ticket(s) required at the highest obtainable price. The 'runner' then contacted the 'holder' - who would generally be located within the vicinity in the company of the two 'minders' - and inform him of the punter's needs. The 'runner' would be supplied with the required tickets by the 'holder' and a 'minder' would accompany the 'runner' back to wherever the punter was waiting. The 'minder's' task was to ensure the safety of the transactions conducted by the 'runner', to ensure that there was no trouble from, or attempted 'rip-off' by, the punter(s). The 'minder' was also expected to intervene should the police attempt to interrupt a deal in progress, in order to allow the 'runner' and/or 'holder' time either to escape, or dispose of the forged tickets. As an additional precaution, the 'minder' would periodically collect from the 'holder' the money generated from ticket sales and carry it to wherever the Hatton family members were located - usually a vehicle parked nearby - and at the same time procure replacement tickets for the 'holder'. In the meantime, the 'runner' would seek out new punters.

As with J.W.'s career progression from market trading to 'barking', to the recruitment and co-ordination of a 'barking' team, so participants involved initially in 'touting' sports and pop ephemera progressed to 'touting' unofficially printed programmes and posters, and then into the more remunerative, higher status, 'touting' of legitimate and forged tickets. What partly informed the career progression was participants' association with 'significant others' (members of the Hatton and Donaghue families) who aided participants' inculcation into a particular system of law-breaking values. In respect of the influence of the Hattons and Donaghues in providing the style, argot, organisation and demeanour associated with 'successful' law-breaking careers, Sutherland's theory of differential association is instructive. The theory has included among its main propositions, the ideas that: firstly, law-breaking behaviour like any other behaviour is learned; secondly, learning is partly conditioned by the processes of association (and identification) with those who commit crimes; thirdly, career progressions are partly conditioned by the frequency and

consistency of a person's contacts with patterns of law-breaking behaviour; fourthly, the nature of such associations are such as to favour violations of the law rather than conformity to it; and fifthly, cultural conflict is the underlying cause of differential association (Sutherland and Cressey 1970). As I argued earlier, the subcultural domain provided contexts within which conventional moral norms were inverted; I also outlined how research by Sutherland and Cressey (1970) indicates that crime is initiated by groups using codes which transcend those of the dominant culture and that evidence from social psychological studies can be utilised to explain the dynamics of law-breaking behaviour in small groups. Such findings blend well with subcultural explanations of the development of alternative careers. As was outlined in Chapter Eight, subcultural explanations view law-breaking as guidelines for 'normal' behaviour shared by group members. Further evidence gleaned from Sutherland and Cressey (1970), and the experiences of study participants involved in careers of 'barking' and 'touting', indicate that differential association with 'significant others' and with law-breaking patterns, influence and sustain the development of alternative careers and identities.

9.3 Intermediate Careers

The early career moves outlined in the previous section do not exhaust the range of alternative economic activities of unemployed study participants. In their early post-school periods, participants drifted into and out of various marginal opportunities within the legal but undeclared sectors of the local informal economy. Davvo, for example, undertook various fiddle jobs including painting and decorating (with Dilly), car repairs and 'doing up' vehicles for resale. Summers and Barlow both worked as builders labourers; Julie Birchall worked occasionally distributing leaflets; Jill Souter undertook home machining for a garment manufacturer; Lynda Willcox worked as a barmaid and later also as an artists' model; Tricia Hartley as a masseuse in a sauna club; Tex worked for a few months as a part-time barman and later, with Maz and Wilf, at carpet and upholstery cleaning. Coggs worked briefly as a kitchen porter and Poolie as a gardener.

Some participants, such as Tracy Smith, developed careers of habitual but relatively unorganised shoplifting and handling stolen goods.

For the majority of male study participants who were unemployed in their post-school teenage years, movements into and out of such fiddle jobs were interspersed with work for the Hattons and Donaghues as well as other illegal modes of income acquisition. The survival strategy of relatively unorganised shoplifting was fairly common, as were other forms of opportunistic theft. Others developed intermittent early careers of 'grafting' (burglary and theft), 'blagging' (robbery), 'kiting' (cheque and credit card fraud), and 'hustling draw' (unorganised dealing of cannabis). Digger, Mick Kenney, Stella and Poolie also developed an alternative source of income and status through playing music. They utilised their talents to go "busking, begging and hustling tunes".

9.3.1 Busking, Begging and Hustling Tunes

In January 1986, the *Manchester Magazine* carried a two page celebration of the vibrancy and entertainment offered by the City Centre's street art and busking scene (1986 : 10-11). Under the heading "Street Life", the magazine proclaimed:

> "Street art and music is a sophisticated business now ... the artists are under your feet, and on the street corners and under the arcades the buskers are at work."

Stella, Digger, Mick Kenney and Poolie had evolved their own alternative enterprise from a shared enthusiasm for both listening to and playing popular music. Digger and Mick Kenney had both been enthusiastic members of a guitar workshop held every week in the Youth and Community Centre in the early 1980s and Stella was an accomplished vocalist. In her primary school days, she had sung with the junior section of the Manchester Girls' Choir and, as a schoolgirl, performed with the choir in concerts held in Manchester Cathedral and the City's Town Hall. Poolie was a competent self-taught percussionist, harmonica player and drummer. Stella and Digger were, moreover, founder members of a local band called The Refugees, who were formed in the early 1980s post-punk music movement in the north of the City. By 1982, Stella and Digger had left The Refugees and

sought to develop the music they were most interested in through impromptu 'jams' held with other local musicians at the Youth and Community Centre. Out of these sessions, Digger (guitars), Stella (vocals), Mick Kenney (bass guitar) and Poolie (drums and percussion) evolved a loosely formed band; because they could not reach agreement on the name of the group, it became known as The Band With No Name.

Aside from occasional gigs at the Youth and Community Centre, the Band With No Name also played as a support act for more distinguished local bands such as The Refugees, King of the Slums, and Slumshine. They played local gigs fairly frequently in minor venue places of entertainment such as pubs, community centres, and the local club called The Dome. Aside from these gigs, Stella, Digger, Mick Kenney and Poolie, by 1984, had developed a pattern of travelling into the City Centre and also the surrounding towns in the North West to busk on the streets. After a "good day" of playing their music, the four could earn up to £70 between them. Busking two or three days a week, plus gigs and the money derived from state benefits, enabled them to sustain a reasonable income. In 1986, the group broke up over differences in musical taste. Stella and Digger clung to a code derived from their early exposure to the ethos of punk, whilst Poolie and Mick Kenney wanted to introduce a more commercial edge to the music they played, in order to attract more gigs. As far as Digger was concerned, this would have been "selling out the spirit of the music". Shortly afterwards, Poolie moved out of the area and Mick Kenney found more remunerative alternative employment with the 'hoisting crew'. Digger and Stella continued with their music and maintained busking as a major source of their weekly income. The pair also continued to play local, minor venue gigs, utilising contemporary music technology such as a drum machine to augment their unique style. The pair also developed a system of home taping their music on cassette tapes which were reproduced for resale when busking or playing at live venues. This they described as "hustlin' tunes" (see also Chapter Ten, Section 10.3.3). 'Hustling tunes' also extended to producing other tapes comprised of compilations of music derived both from their extensive personal collection of records and tapes, a collection evolved in collaboration

with Mick Kenney, and also taping the music of other bands at live gigs for resale and distribution. The market for these home produced tapes were the growing army of subcultural devotees to the new music scene that evolved in Manchester in the mid to late 1980s. Since the early 1980s, a number of developments in domestic hi-fi and recording technology extended the creative potential of home taping. The practices of mixing, sampling, boot-legging and home recording emerged in parallel with growing trends in the City-wide music phenomenon (see Chapter Ten for details). Willis (1990) has also taken note of similar developments within "common culture":

> "With two turntables, a cassette recorder and skilful use of pause buttons, switches and faders, it is possible to mix tapes and create cut-ups for circulation amongst friends. In this process, the hardware and software of consumption have become the instruments and the raw materials of a kind of cultural production" (1990 : 77).

Most of the home-made music produced by Stella and Digger did not find its way into mainstream commercial circulation but was distributed informally through friends and associates, or sold whilst busking or at their live gigs. In the late 1980s, Digger, Stella, and Mick Kenney also helped to establish one of the earliest illegal Warehouse Parties of the evolving Acid House phenomenon and began to act as disc jockeys for the early subcultural scene (Chapter Ten, Section 10.3.4).

By the mid-1980s, neither Digger or Stella were registered as unemployed, nor were they claiming benefits. As a result of the constant hassles they encountered from the benefit agencies, the periodic requirements to register for, what Digger described as, "Mickey Mouse" (un)employment training schemes, and the futility of post-school careers on the Black Magic Roundabout, they had decided to "drop out of the system" and, in Stella's words, "try and make out on our own". Making out was achieved through 'busking, begging and hustling tunes', and also from other intermittent careers pursued by Digger such as 'hustling' (proscribed drugs) and 'hoisting' (shoplifting). Occasionally their independent modes of income acquisition brought them into conflict with the law as Digger recalled after one busking expedition to the nearby town of Oldham:

Digger: "We used to go out of Town [Manchester] to busk 'cos there was more space, fewer buskers, an' out there you're still a novelty like ... people give the sounds more time; sometimes we'd get a little crowd, y'know diggin' the tunes. Good Buzz ... This time, when we wus busted, it wus late Saturday afternoon ... 'alf four, five [4.30 - 5.00 pm] an' really we'd done enough, we wus just carryin' on 'cos we wus into it ... We'd made our money ... just catchin' the stragglers on their way 'ome from shoppin'. Then two Bizzies [policemen] came down the subway ... they was really 'eavy. Straight away they comes on 'eavy like, threatenin'. [They] said we'd ten seconds to pack up an' move on ... Pretty 'eavy vibes y'know [but] Stella gives 'em some verbal, like what's the problem? They sez, 'You're beggin' move on an' disappear, we don't want that goin' on 'ere' ... So I sez somethin' else an' that wus it. Straight away one of 'em snatches me guitar an' the other picks up the cases [guitar case containing the money derived from busking, and cassette case containing tapes for sale] ... an' they shoved us out the subway an' radio'd ferra car [to] take us to the [police] station.

S.C. : So what happened then?

Digger: They di'nt knock us about but it wus 'eavy [in the police car]. They wus tekkin' the piss, tryin' to wind us up y'know? We knew it wouldn't 'ave taken much fer 'em ter 'kick off' [become violent] ... at the Station we 'eard they'd bin at the Match [local football match] an' they wus all fuckin' wired ... wired to the moon [in an excitable state] ... They wus tekkin' the piss 'bout Stella's 'air an' clothes ... sayin' I wus a shit-stabber [homosexual] an' was she gettin' enough [sex] ... that kinda shite ... all sorts o' weird stuff .... "

Because Stella and Digger refused to make signed statements admitting to the act of begging, they were held overnight in police cells before eventually being charged with begging under the 1929 Vagrancy Act. The pair were released on bail and eventually appeared in the Magistrates' Court several months later. Despite legal representation and 'not guilty' pleas, they were found guilty of begging under the terms of the Act and fined £60 each.

Such experiences, rather than deterring their alternative enterprise, actually reinforced the ethos which sustained their desire to operate "outside the system". Later their musical talents allowed them to travel overland to Paris and Amsterdam where the pair stayed for several weeks in each city. Through busking, they earned enough money on a day-to-day basis to survive. In this sense, their chosen alternative career was self-evidently viable in that it allowed them autonomy, income and the means to travel. Although the winter months were a difficult time for busking, Digger was able to supplement the money generated from playing music by utilising contacts within the peer group subculture to get a 'lay-on of draw' (cannabis loaned for the purposes of resale), or through joining the

'hoisting crew' for an expedition organised around shoplifting activities. 'Hustling', the unorganised dealing of cannabis and other proscribed drugs, also provided alternative sources of income and status roles for other study participants. 'Hustling', along with 'totting', were careers often intermittently pursued which bridged the areas of alternative economic enterprise of the sub-employment subculture and the unambiguously illegal activities of the anti-employment subculture.

9.3.2 Hustling and Totting

Aspects of the "dole-economy", "the penny-capitalism of the poor" (Cohen 1982 : 45) may be seen to contain traces of earlier (pre-capitalist) forms of work outside the context of waged labour. As Pahl (1981) has noted:

> "The ... paradoxical point is that ... wage labour has a history of barely one hundred years as a universal phenomenon. For hundreds of years before, it was vigorously resisted. As Christopher Hill once remarked 'to lose control over one's own (and one's family's) labour was to surrender one's independence, security, liberty, one's birthright' " (1981 : 10-11).

In contrast to the notion of long-term benefit payments producing welfare-dependency which discourages initiative, job-seeking, and forces the recipients and their children into a permanent "underclass" (*cf* Murray 1989), my research indicates that benefit-dependence paradoxically promotes initiative, independence and enterprise, though not in the terms favoured by Tory ideology. Those who argue that state benefits engender passivity and dependence ignore the fact that benefit payments are set at a level which is too low to live on (HMSO 1992; Piachaud 1991). Because of this, proactive autonomy, enterprise and initiative are required simply in order to survive. The revival of older strategies, such as 'totting' metal for resale as scrap, indicate that it is not merely the language of traditional working class survival scripts that have re-emerged in the 1980s and 1990s to combat poverty.

Participants whose lives became organised around movements between total dependence on benefits and fiddle jobs on the side had taken the first steps into illegality by

not declaring the income to the Social. 'Hustling' and 'totting' were modes of income acquisition that merely extended such movements into illegal but nonetheless independent and self-sustaining activities. Thus 'hustling' and 'totting' were status roles which defined a wide range of alternative economic enterprises among participants and their peers. These included 'totting' from the Social (fraudulent benefit claims); buying and selling second hand goods and stolen property; fiddle jobs in the local informal economy, including 'barking' and 'touting' (outlined earlier); unorganised shoplifting; opportunistic theft; and unorganised drug dealing at street level.

In its most common local usage, 'hustling' refers to street level, relatively unorganised, drug dealing. In the early to mid 1980s, the most common proscribed drug to be 'hustled' was cannabis in its various forms. In their early post-school periods of unemployment, several study participants undertook early careers intermittently 'hustling draw'. Willie, Wilf, Digger, Coggs and Dilly, for example, all utilised contacts with the Donaghue and Hatton families to purchase cannabis at relatively cheap prices, in order to "do it out to punters". For Willie and Wilf, such early careers provided the financial basis for movement into the higher level, more organised, dealing of drugs in larger (wholesale) quantities to fewer punters. 'Punting draw' was a status role not only restricted to male study participants and Susan Hargreaves was also, for example, involved in the local drugs trade.

In their early careers, the 'hustlers' would usually score in quantities of between one ounce and a 'quarter-weight' (four ounces). These quantities were then divided into much smaller units for resale to punters. The most common unit for a 'deal' was a 'teenth or sixteenth of an ounce. The economics of 'hustling' were quite rewarding (although the rewards did not appear to reflect the risk of detection and prosecution). An ounce in 1985 cost approximately £80. This could be divided into sixteen or seventeen smaller units for resale as 'teenths. 'Teenths would be resold for between £7 and £10, depending on the punter. This represented a profit to the 'hustler' of between £22 and £90 per

ounce. The 'hustlers' generally competed for a small localised market in the pubs and clubs of the area, but some of the more enterprising 'hustlers' ventured into the City Centre to 'hustle' in the discos and later the Warehouse Parties of the Acid House scene. Enterprising participants also established a network of retail outlets among the City's football supporters, as drug use became increasingly associated with football culture. Others established contacts among the City's University and Polytechnic student population as a consequence of chance encounters in City Centre clubs such as The Hacienda.

From the mid 1980s onward, other drugs became commercially available to the 'hustlers' *via* wholesale dealers such as the Hatton and Donaghue families. In the period 1987 to 1990, the most common subcultural drug was MDMA or Ecstasy. The impact of the Acid House phenomenon based on the Madchester Music and Dance Scene created a massive demand for the new street drug 'E'. The widespread demand at legal and illegal venues throughout the North West, the increased levels of profit associated with Ecstasy, and the subcultural affiliations of participants to the scene, induced several to undertake the wholesale or retail selling of the drug (Chapter Ten, Section 10.3.4). By 1988, participants such as Willie, Digger, Poolie, Coggs, Maz, Dilly, J.W., and Wilf, were all making money from their involvement with Ecstasy. Willie and Wilf, because of their accumulated capital from dope dealing, were able to move into the new market at a wholesale level. Wilf was also involved in the importation of MDMA from its illegally manufactured sources in Holland. Other participants were content simply to pick up "easy quids" though 'hustling' the drug in the Warehouse Parties and Raves that mushroomed throughout the City. Often participants would operate as a team when 'hustling' E's, utilising the knowledge and experience gained from their involvement with 'touting' or 'barking' to facilitate a measure of safety in their operations. Sometimes these models of collaborative enterprise duplicated the protective organisational structures of their early careers with the Hattons and Donaghues, and, as with the 'touting' of forged

venue tickets, participants would employ a similar system of 'runners', 'holders' and 'minders'.

The routine of 'hustling' E's and the easy money associated with the enterprise removed several participants from their early careers within the sub-employment subculture, and from typical patterns of movements into and out of fiddle jobs at different levels of the alternative career structure. This career movement represented the coalescence of an anti-employment ethos and identity and finally removed such participants from any semblance of work commitment and their tentative association with the (informal) sectors of paid employment. Drugs became the dominant focus of alternative economic activity for five of the fourteen unemployed males in my study group (Wilf, Willie, Poolie, Coggs and Digger) and by the late 1980s, early 1990s, several were involved in dealing or 'hustling' a variety of drugs including 'harder' drugs such as Rocks (crack cocaine) and Smack or Brown (heroin). These drugs increased the profitability of the enterprise but introduced a harder, more ruthless edge to their alternative economic activities and carrying guns for protection when doing "serious business" in the drugs trade became a not uncommon practice.

9.4 Anti-Employment Careers

"gotta see what's in them pockets
so I can pick them pockets clean"
(HAPPY MONDAYS: Stinkin' Thinkin')

9.4.1 Introduction

Early experiences on the Black Magic Roundabout and within a contracting local labour market engendered general attitudes couched in cynicism and disillusionment. Most participants involved in the progression from early careers in sub-employment to intermediate careers such as 'hustling' believed there were no real opportunities available for them in the straight world of proper jobs. Within the collective ethos of the anti-employment subculture, "rejecting the rejecters" and scornfully criticising and devaluing

the straight world, including the conventional world of waged employment, became a self-justifying rhetoric for preserving self-esteem. As Maz put it:

> "Workin's fer them who 'aven't got the bottle to sort summat fer themselves ... Ah wouldn't work now even if they wus 'undreds o' jobs, ah wouldn't do it ... Naaw, no way, ah'd prefer ta risk what ah risk rather than be told what ter to every day ... Naaw workin's fer them that's got no bottle."

The emphasis on proactive autonomy also guided the development of an anti-employment ethos which valued independence over wage-slavery and the high rewards of alternative careers over the earnings that could be derived from unskilled work. As Tex put it: "A job!? Fuck that! I can make more in a coupla' 'ours than my ol' man used to make in a week. Fuck workin'".

The social ties which bind most young people to the wider moral order were loosened among these participants as they developed lives that were marginal to the conventional social and economic arrangements. It was within a context of culturally constrained predispositions and a narrowing range of legitimate economic options that anti-employment career 'choices' were made.

Other studies have also emphasised the ways in which the custodial experience of young adult offenders provides a context within which there is a movement "in the direction of criminal solidarity" (Hood and Sparks 1970). For some study participants, the custodial experience provided an additional impetus towards what Parker has described as the "Authority Conspiracy" (in Wiles 1976 : 207), which, in turn, informed an oppositional mode of consciousness and identity. As McVicar (1974 : 162) has argued, based on his own experiences of imprisonment: "It was the revelation of their attitudes ... which was the operative factor in my adoption of a criminal code ... The ultimate madness of all these places is that the inmates are allowed to interact with each other in accordance with the same ... values which provide the motive power for crime outside prison" (1974 : 165). Early and intermediate careers had resulted in several participants and their peers enduring periods of incarceration which varied from as little as three months to almost

three years. These periods of adult imprisonment were for a wide range of offences such as criminal damage, assault, handling stolen goods, possession of cannabis, possession with intent to supply, burglary, and robbery and theft. Wilf, for example, served almost nine months of a twelve month prison sentence for "possession and possession with intent to supply". He described his period of incarceration as:

> "Fuckin' boring, not 'eavy - yer just banged up all the time ... But [now] ah know ah can do it standing on me 'ead ... Next time ah'll just tek summat ter read."

In December 1991, the Prison Reform Trust issued a discussion document entitled "The Identikit Prisoner". The "Identikit Prisoner" drew together the most recent research on the prison population from a wide variety of sources and also included data derived from Home Office replies to questions raised in 1991 in the House of Commons by Labour MP Barry Sheerman. The document concluded:

> "In a detail never before possible, this paper has shown the degree to which imprisonment is directed against the less fortunate sections of society ... Taken as a whole, the 'Identikit Prisoner' is someone who has suffered a range of social and economic disadvantages. A key argument for reducing the use of prison is that, all too often, a period of imprisonment exacerbates those very disadvantages which have led the person into crime in the first place" (Prison Reform Trust 1991 : 6).

The document highlighted such factors as poor educational attainment, poverty, under-employment, and the high proportion (over 60%) of the prison population aged under 25.

Experiences of imprisonment did not deter participants like Wilf and such experiences were often addressed in terms of the Eleventh Commandment: "Never Get Caught" (Daniel and McGuire 1972); or, as Barlow put it, after serving eighteen months in the late 1980s for burglary and property theft: "It don't put yer off bein' in the big 'ouse, it just meks yer think 'what've ah bin doin' wrong' ... Yer've got plenty a time ter work things out an' think about what yer did wrong ... So's yer don't mek same mistake twice".

In Chapter Four (Section 4.8), I outlined the anti-employment careers as developed and pursued by study participants and their peers up to 1986. Such careers included 'grafting',

'dealing', 'blagging' and 'hoisting'. 'Grafting', for example, like 'totting', was a colloquial term appropriated from the parent culture. In the past 'grafting' referred to hard manual labour. During the past fifteen years - in its most common subcultural usage - the term has come to denote various anti-employment careers such as burglary and property theft (as pursued by, for example, Summers, Barlow and Berksy) or 'kiting', which is a form of cheque and credit card fraud (as was pursued by Susan Hargreaves among others). Such careers were not discrete areas of alternative economic activity and participants who had evolved an anti-employment mode of consciousness undertook movements between categories as opportunities to do so arose, or were made available to them. Susan Hargreaves, for example, not only undertook a career of 'kiting' by purchasing, for money and/or drugs, stolen cheque books and cheque cards (for fraudulent re-use), but was also engaged in dealing drugs more or less full-time. Summers and Barlow, aside from property theft, also engaged in the occasional 'armed blag' (robbery) and so on. The main contours of the careers of 'hoisting', 'dealing' and 'blagging' are outlined in the following sections.

9.4.2 Hoisting

> "Shoplifters of the world
> unite and take over"
> (THE SMITHS: Shoplifters of the World)

Within my study group there evolved a 'Crew' of six study participants who devised a long-term collective solution to the problems they shared in the post-school transition to adulthood. Earning a living, structuring time, forming an identity, achieving status and sharing experiences were achieved through 'hoisting'. The activities of the 'Hoisting Crew' thus provided an informal equivalent of Jahoda's latent functions of employment outlined in Chapter Four (Section 4.6.3). After early post-school careers, which involved typical movements into and out of unemployment, underemployment and training schemes, they established a self-defined alternative career and became the "Hoisting Crew".

Their story began with the strategies evolved in secondary school to deal with what they perceived as the meaninglessness of school life. Much of what they experienced has been documented by writers such as Willis (1977), Corrigan (1979), and Jenkins (1983), and needs no further elaboration here, except to say that such studies of the anti-school cultures developed by marginalised working class schoolboys, report similar examples of collectivism, group solidarity, oppositionality, daring, spontaneity, and peer group status, achieved through high profile non-conformist behaviour. Thus much of the Crew's early teenage years were spent "'avin' a laff" and playing truant at the expense of academic credential acquisition. It was during their collective bouts of school refusal that 'hoisting' or shoplifting apprenticeships were served. Much of what was to be of significance to them later was acquired as a result of their collective enterprise and explorations in the world of adult possibilities (see Chapter Two, Section 2.7).

No one knows how many children refuse school attendance. Out of a total of four million secondary school children, the Department of Education estimate that about 90,000 refuse school on any one day in England and Wales (cited in St. John-Brooks 1982 : 491). In 1989, because of the association between school-refusal and City Centre shoplifting, plain clothes 'undercover' policemen were mobilised into a 'truancy patrol' in the main shopping areas of Manchester, which resulted in a 66% reduction in City Centre shoplifting (*Manchester Evening News*, 13.9.89 : 1). Thus 'hoisters' developed their own strategies for dealing with officialdom, firstly through their interactions with teachers and social services agencies, and later with the police and probation service. According to Tex:

> "We went in to Town [Manchester City Centre] nearly every day, it was sort of bein' free like, no-one tellin' yer what to do ... We used to fuckin' piss about, messin' around, nickin' stupid things ferra laff, just pissin' around ... Yeah we got pulled [by the police] ... but we wus just kids, [we] weren't bothered, the bizzies, it was jus' like the teachers, we used ter piss 'em around jus' the same ... Didn't give a fuck, none of us did."

Such encounters and a measure of success in shoplifting enabled them to develop a belief and faith in their own abilities to 'make out', irrespective of intervention from official agencies.

At this early stage in the development of their alternative careers, like other study participants who engaged intermittently in shoplifting, the 'hoisters' generally operated within the category of 'amateur' shoplifters. Most studies of shoplifting make the distinction between amateurs and professionals. In Cameron's (1964) classic study, for example, the "boosters" are those who steal goods for resale and the "snitches" steal for their own use (1964 : 39). According to Sennewald and Christman (1992 : 7-8), amateur shoplifters steal on impulse "without a preconceived plan" whereas the professional's motive is income - "... professional shoplifters steal for a living". The term 'professional' implies "skill, expertise and rational commitment" (Walsh 1978 : 43). On the other hand, Verill (1972) divides shoplifters into a complex typology consisting of juveniles, housewives, drunkards, drug addicts and professionals (1972 : 119). Post (1972) has a similar system of classification but considers that shoplifters come from all backgrounds; however, he divides his classification into two broad categories: ordinary customers who steal and professionals who steal for a living (1972 : 56-7). Walsh provides the further reminder that the concept of professionalism has to be distinguished from "premeditated and calculating raids by those amateurs who have a clear objective" (1978 : 73). The final point made by Walsh is apposite, for, from their adolescent forays into Woolworths, etc., a pattern of collaborative enterprise was developed by the Hoisting Crew, which necessitated a measure of planning and clear objectives, particularly with the selection of certain prized items of footwear and clothing.

Initially goods were stolen for personal use. In the late 1970s, early 1980s, it was mainly clothes and sports training shoes, items which could be conspicuously displayed to enhance social standing and peer group status. Many of their early 'hoisting' targets were conditioned by the idiosyncratic fashion fads of the 'casual style' (see Chapter Ten, Section

10.2.1). The 'casuals' developed a penchant for expensive designer sportswear, clothes and training shoes, whose labels indicated finely graded degrees of 'cool' which offered a symbolic way to assert self-esteem, status and identity in a situation of profound social disadvantage. The subcultural demand for LaCoste, Tacchini, Gabbicci and Farrah sports and casual wear extended to the wider peer group and soon the 'hoisters' were obtaining goods 'to order' and supplementing post-school benefit payments from the resale of fashion-style commodities like sports training shoes. Their wider peer group network provided a ready market for goods illegitimately obtained in 'grab and run' raids on City Centre shops and stores.

Studies show that instead of being a peculiar or strange activity, amateur shoplifting is an offence committed by many people. Murphy's examination of self-report studies, for example, indicates that between 50% and 70% of selected populations have engaged in shoplifting at some time (1986 : 40-43). Studies also indicate that up to 70% of adolescent boys have engaged in shoplifting at least once (Belson 1975 : 87). What provided for an escalation from this relatively mundane level of amateur property theft among the Hartingleigh Crew was the travelling football crowd.

The huge 'away' support of Manchester United supporters provided the Crew with a measure of geographical mobility when travelling to the towns and cities of other football teams. The travelling football crowd not only provided geographical mobility but also supplied a degree of protective anonymity, both of which facilitated an expansion of 'hoisting' horizons. According to Maz: "We've done every city in England". The travelling football crowd also enabled them to undertake 'hoisting' expeditions 'abroad' and the protective anonymity of the football crowd allowed them to 'hoist' some "quality gear" (Dilly). As Tex recalled:

> "We did this jewellers in Amsterdam ... it was fuckin' sound ... there wus 'undreds o' Reds [Manchester United supporters] fuckin' out of order, y'know runnin' crazy chasin' Ajax [chasing supporters of Ajax, Dutch champions at the time, based in Amsterdam] ... me an' Dilly sussed it ... sorted a team into the shop, fuckin' loads o' us smashed over the

> stands ... It was well sound, we wus grabbin' fuckin' 'andfuls, watches, fuckin' rings, belchers [gold chains] all sorts ... fuckin' best un' we ever did".

When remembering the incident, Maz recalled that the Northside were not the only crew involved in acquisitive crime in the Dutch capital, but also teams from "Longsight, Salford and the Cockney Reds". On the ferry home, much of the talk centred around such exploits and acquisitions were compared in a context of status competitiveness:

> "They was pullin' out all this gear from the sex shops (laughter) fuckin' nutters, big rubber dicks an' all that, porno vids, all sorts o' shit. Tex just rolled up 'is sleeves, 'e had watches, not shit, y'know Omega an' that, loads on both arms. They shit out, we wus the boys an' they fuckin' knew it .... Next thing they wus buyin' us drinks."

As the above incident reveals, early techniques for 'hoisting' were relatively unsophisticated and included some of the more "predictable strategies" outlined by Sennewald and Christman (1992). Such techniques included walking out with goods exposed, walking out with goods concealed, grab and run theft, ticket switching, grazing and fraudulent returns (1992 : 13-19).

By 1984, however, at the core of the Hoisting Crew were Tex, Maz and Dilly who gradually sought to introduce a measure of professionalism into the enterprise. In part, the movement towards a more professional approach was a factor of their cultivation of various 'commercial outlets' for the goods they 'hoisted'. Thus the movement from shoplifting 'to order' to shoplifting virtually anything with potential resale value produced a significant shift in emphasis. The potential for earning a regular income from what was a relatively trivial offence, if detected, led them to upgrade and become more consistent about their approach. The fact that they had 'fences' who were prepared to provide 'ever-readys' (ready cash), up to one-third of the retail price of goods stolen, encouraged a more professional approach. Their professionalism developed in terms of organisation, technique and distribution.

During the period of my preliminary fieldwork, the Crew utilised a small tradesman's van to provide a means of transportation for 'hoisting' expeditions to towns and cities

throughout the Northwest region. At that time, the Crew were actively engaged in 'hoisting' two or three days every week and every other Saturday during the football season. They maintained their routine of travelling to watch Manchester United's away games as a means of combining both business and pleasure. The tradesman's van provided a cover for the movement of 'hoisting' personnel, or sometimes for the return journey with a particularly large amount of stolen goods. A regular routine developed whereby the core crew (Tex, Maz and Dilly), plus up to three others, would travel to the target area in the van and another vehicle early in the morning. After arriving in the target area, the day would be spent 'hoisting' as a team, sometimes in small groups of two or three, sometimes as a single large group. Stolen goods would be periodically transferred to the van for temporary storage. The storage of goods in the van ensured that, if a member of the Crew was detected and detained during a 'hoisting' expedition, the person involved would, at worst, only face a relatively minor, single shoplifting charge. The crew utilised the second vehicle for mobility in and around the target area, with the vehicle providing a ready means of escape should a particular encounter with security personnel, or retail employees, "come on top".

The Crew also devised a variety of techniques and strategies to ensure the success of a 'hoisting' expedition. Two of the commonest techniques involved collusion and/or diversion. One example of the technique of collusion involved one, or two, members of the Crew gathering up goods to be stolen and secreting, or hiding, them somewhere on the shop or store's premises - under a display fixture, in a changing room or in-store lavatory, for example. Other members of the team would then retrieve the items from their hidden location. If the original removal of goods had been detected by floor walkers or security staff, generally they would seek to follow and/or detain the Crew member(s) who had moved the merchandise from their place of sale. More often than not this left the non-involved Crew members free from surveillance.

Techniques of diversion involved a number of members of the Crew to employ various methods of distraction to divert the attention of retail employees, and/or floor walkers/security personnel, so that the Crew could operate without interference and with diminished likelihood of discovery. Techniques used to distract shop or store personnel ranged from simply seeking help in selecting goods outside the 'hoister's' target area within a shop or store, to staging loud and disturbing arguments or fights, etc.

During the course of my preliminary fieldwork, partly, I must confess, out of a voyeuristic curiosity, but also in the interests of reliability and validation of data, I accepted the invitation to attend a 'hoisting' expedition as an observer. This occurred in the pre-Christmas shopping period in the winter of 1986. It was arranged that I should take lunch in a well-known regional department store in an affluent Cheshire town. The Crew had left before me, Maz and two others in the car, Tex and Dilly in the tradesman's van. The van was equipped with the tools of a particular trade and, as an additional measure of self-protection, the occupants sought to convey the impression of tradesmen in transit. I travelled by train, arrived and went for lunch at the pre-arranged time. The store's self-service restaurant was situated on the same floor as the 'gentlemen's clothing' department, which was arranged over a large area to the left of the dining area. A low wall and trellis covered in climbing plants partially separated the dining area from the retail floor area of the store. I negotiated a table that afforded me a view of three quarters of the area of the retail floor space. As I waited, I was filled with a sudden emotional turmoil, despite my own past history of 'deviance' - I was consumed with the moral ambiguities of my position. Was this morally correct? Was I encouraging or even facilitating crime? No matter how sympathetic my attitude was towards the Crew, or how authentic I wanted my data to be - was this legitimate for a researcher? Later I read and re-read Polsky for reassurance:

> "If one is effectively to study law-breaking deviants as they engage in their deviance in its natural setting ... [one] must make the moral decision that in some ways [one] will break the law .... The investigator has to decide that when necessary [s/he] will 'obstruct' justice or be an accessory before or after the fact, in the full legal sense of those terms" (Polsky in Becker 1963 : 171 notes 7). (my inserts)

Presently the Crew arrived, not together, but singly. They were smartly dressed, conveying the appearance of civil servants or office workers on their lunch break, certainly not out of place in the rather old-fashioned, but smart and upmarket environment. Maz and Dilly were some twenty yards or so away from the others, near to a cash payment desk which was among a group of four that were centrally located. The others, I noticed, were casually browsing, slowly making their way towards a wall mounted display containing racks of men's suits. I also noticed an Exit (fire/emergency door) a little to their right, just beyond the rack of suits (I guessed that this was to be what in 'hoisters" argot is the "hoffman route", that is, the quickest escape route after a large 'hoist' has been accomplished). Suddenly there was pandemonium. Maz was pleading at the top of his voice for "help". The three floor staff who were nearest to the cash desks rushed over. Dilly seemed to have disappeared. Other people sat at the tables around me stood up. I had remained seated transfixed by what was happening. I too forced myself to stand. My attention was naturally taken by Maz who was apparently in an uncharacteristic state of panic. My first thought was that their exploits had been detected and that a fight was taking placed between Dilly and a member of the store's security personnel. Maz began shouting, almost wailing, "get a doctor - quick he's dying!". My mind was in turmoil. I had anticipated discreetly watching a skilled act which would, I had imagined, involve some form of sleight of hand, not the commotion I was witnessing. I caught sight of Dilly's legs thrashing about beneath a display rack of garments. The rack came crashing down. Everyone rushed to the aid of this unfortunate victim, seemingly gripped by some mysterious seizure. "It's epilepsy", someone at the next table muttered. "They should make sure he doesn't bite his tongue", replied her companion.

I recovered my composure. Of course, it was a distraction. I looked in the opposite direction, to where Tex and the others had been browsing on the far side of the store - naturally they had vanished. It would have been romantic to have reported the exit/fire door flapping silently in the wake of their departure, but, of course, they had been far too quick. The only visible sign that they had been there at all was the huge gap in the rack of

men's suits. Maz picked Dilly up. He appeared to have made a remarkable recovery. The pair left together down an escalator, Maz supporting Dilly with the help of one of the assistants. I finished my lunch. The suits were eventually missed - but Maz and Dilly had been gone for several minutes before they were. There was a small flurry of activity by the three male assistants. I remember one peering through the exit door as if to conjure up the image of those who had apparently vanished. Eventually, when my pulse rate returned to normal, I left the store and returned home by train.

Four hours later, I met Maz and Dilly in 'the Vic'. Maz explained that they had "sussed" the store on a previous trip to the town, but had been "saving it" for Christmas. Apart from "quality gear", the attraction of the store was its lack of internal security systems such as surveillance devices, closed circuit television, or the electronic tagging of merchandise. The store was a very traditional family concern, with a one hundred year history of trade in the town. As such, it appeared to be one of the "very few ... retailers [who] abnegated the use of conspicuous security devices in the belief that customers might find them offensive" (Murphy 1986 : 100). The total haul from the scenario I had witnessed consisted of an incredible 137 'gents suits', in various sizes, which ranged in individual retail price from £239 to £349. Dilly explained that Tex and the two other members of the expedition had, during the distraction staged by Maz and himself, lifted from the rack of suits one armload each. He demonstrated by extending his arms and bringing them together in one deft movement. The tightly bunched suits were lifted from the hanging rack with the hangers intact inside the suits. The suits were then rolled into a compressed bundle and, once the Crew member was through the exit door, placed in black plastic dustbin bags. After which, the escape was made simply by walking down two flights of stairs to the busy street filled with Christmas shoppers and the waiting vehicle parked nearby. I did a quick mental calculation of the potential return from such an enterprise - it appeared to be a better rate than my ESRC research grant.

The return journey from the Cheshire town to Manchester was taken by four of the Crew in the tradesman's van driven by Dilly. Maz returned in the second vehicle utilised for the 'hoisting' expedition, along with all the goods they had obtained that day, which included the haul of men's suits. As Maz explained: "Well that way if I gets a pull [stopped by the police] 's only me gets topped [arrested]". On the return journeys from 'hoisting' expeditions, members of the Crew took it in turns to drive the vehicle containing the 'hoisted' goods. This ensured protection for the majority. Should the vehicle be subjected to a random police stop and the goods discovered, travelling separately from the stolen merchandise assured immunity from prosecution for the majority.

Maz was not stopped. The Crew received an immediate cash payment from their 'fence' of just over £1,000 for the suits alone. As with the proceeds of all 'hoisting' expeditions, this money was shared equally among Crew members. In the pre-Christmas period, the suits were sold at up to half price throughout the area to individual punters and also on the markets (labels removed) and within the 'locker-room trade' of certain factories. The Crew went to Ibiza for two weeks holiday in the New Year and sent a postcard to me at the University. It said: "Fancy a C.D. [Christian Dior suit] for Chrissie [Christmas] Steve?"

During the fourth and final phase of my research, the Crew developed an almost detached professionalism about their enterprise. Tex, Maz and Dilly were still the core members and these participants were frequently joined by Mick Kent (see Chapter Seven, Section 7.2) whose labour market experiences had resulted in a fundamental cynicism and labour market withdrawal. Mick Kenney too became a regular member of the Crew along with Digger. Their activities were interrupted briefly by the Ecstasy dealing phenomenon which dominated the male informal networks, particularly in the period between 1988 and 1989, but, when the drug trade spiralled into recession, Crew members returned to their original enterprise.

Sutherland (1973) defines a professional thief as one who steals professionally. Stealing professionally is defined as a regular full-time activity which involves detailed planning and the exercise of special skills. Often the professional thief moves out of the home area to conduct his trade and has, in common with other professional criminals, a distinct life style and subculture (1973 : 3-40). Cameron (1964) has distinguished between "heels" and "boosters". "Heels" concentrate on shoplifting while "boosters" are often involved in other forms of criminal activity as well (1964 : 40). Gibbens and Price emphasise the role of prepared outlets for the resale of stolen property as defining professionals (1962 : 31).

The professionalism of the Crew extended to the 'pre-hoist' reconnaissance of retail premises in order to appraise blind spots, hidden corners, and what were described as "soft touches" within shops and stores. Core members took account of 'the hoffman' (easy means of escape), the number of retail employees, and the method of their deployment with a retail location, as well as security devices such as 'photo-scans' (security cameras), and electronic tagging systems and devices. The electronic tagging system operates as follows:

> "The basic principle is that store property may be 'tagged' with a substance, or circuitry, that elicits a response from a matching sensor when the two get within specified range of each other ... any individual departing such an area with store property in his or her possession will set off an alarm. When the merchandise is paid for, and is no longer the property of the store, the electronic device identifying the item by means of the alarm response is removed or deactivated" (Murphy 1986 : 103-4).

According to Tex, the recent trend for retail shops and stores to over-rely on electronic security devices in preference to the more traditional use of floor walkers and security personnel had actually made 'hoisting' easier. As he explained: "When they've got all these tags an' fuckin' bleepers they think the stuff's sorted [safe] ... 's bollocks, all yer need's a pair o' snips [wire cutters] ... snip, snip, snip, 's a doddle".

Sometimes the Crew actually utilised the tagging system in order to mask the movement of shoplifted goods. This strategy was achieved by one member of the Crew

making a small purchase from the area where 'hoisting' activity was being conducted; in a changing room, or some other blind spot on the retail premises, the purchaser would then be given, or left, a security tag snipped from an item being 'hoisted'. When the 'hoister(s)' were ready to leave the retail area, the person who had made the genuine purchase would slip the security tag into the bag containing the purchased commodity. This member of the team would then leave ahead of the others in order to deliberately set off the alarm system. The activated alarm would usually created sufficient distraction for the other members to slip away, either through another exit or through the activated departure point. When the team member who had activated the alarm was brought back, the security tag would be 'discovered' within the bag containing the genuine purchase and it would be claimed that a mistake had been made. Despite any possible suspicions, the team member would naturally have a receipt for his purchase and the store or shop would be powerless to detain him.

In respect of the increased level of professionalism of the Crew, a further strategy was also devised which allowed for a measure of self-protective cover when the 'hoister's' target was a significantly valuable single item. The tactic was known as the 'bender' and involved two or more of the Crew entering the shop or store; one of them 'hoisted' the item whilst the others watched to see if the 'hoister' was followed or detained. On rare occasions, the 'hoister' was detected and, when this occurred, the accomplices immediately purchased an item similar to the one stolen; the receipt was then used to claim that the stolen article had been purchased, but that the pair had been separated during the course of shopping. This tactic was difficult for security staff to counter and they had little option but to release the detained 'hoister'. A variation on this basic theme was for Crew members to watch for particular items being purchased at till points and to recover discarded receipts. These receipts then provided the basis for 'help yourself hoisting', as each item taken could be accounted for as legitimate in terms of being covered by a receipt of purchase. The help-yourself tactic was also used to effect a cash refund on goods that

had been 'hoisted' and was a variation on the 'fraudulent returns' strategy outlined by Sennewald and Christman (1992 : 18).

In her book, *The Organisation of Crime* (1978), Mary McIntosh describes four types of criminal organisation - the 'picaresque', 'project', 'business' and 'craft' (*ibid* 28). Many of the professional and organisational skills utilised by the Hoisting Crew echoed those acquired in early apprenticeships as 'touts' or 'barkers'. As I outlined earlier, Tex, Maz, Dilly, Mick Kent and Mick Kenney had all, at one time or another, worked as 'touts' under the tutelage of the Hatton brothers. Similarly, in their teenage years, Maz, Dilly and Mick Kenney had 'worked the punters' under the organisational structure of 'barking' as co-ordinated by J.W. and organised by the Donaghue family. The attitudes, activities and organisation as developed within these early careers were highly influential in the evolution of 'hoisting' careers and, as manifested within the structure and organisation of the Hoisting Crew, exhibited a remarkable correspondence with the "craft" model and "craft" skills outlined by McIntosh:

> "The craft organisation, typical of people performing skilled but small-scale thefts and confidence tricks, is a small, fairly permanent team, usually of two or three men, each of whom has a specific role to play in the routinised thefts in which the team specialises. It is a team of equals and the profits are shared equally at the end of each day" (1978 : 28).

9.4.3 Dealing

> "You shut your mouth how can you say
> I go about things the wrong way"
> (THE SMITHS)

Dealing (proscribed drugs) represented a step-up the alternative career structure from the more unorganised 'hustling' of drugs. The dealer tended to buy and sell in larger quantities and seldom 'worked the streets', which was a status role reserved for the 'hustlers'. Dealers usually supplied the 'hustlers'. Dealers in turn were usually supplied by 'quantity merchants' (dealers in larger wholesale quantities of drugs). Both Willie and Wilf had begun their careers as 'hustlers', but had accumulated sufficient capital from street

'hustling' to purchase larger quantities in order to begin supplying the street 'hustlers'. By the 1990s, both Willie and Wilf had extended their enterprise to include involvement in the importation of (wholesale) supplies of drugs from continental sources (usually Holland), where the wholesale price of cannabis, for example, was roughly half that of the English suppliers.

As I noted earlier with reference to the career transitions of the 'hustlers', whereas up to the mid 1980s the dominant focus for both dealers and street 'hustlers' was cannabis, from the mid 1980s onwards other more profitable drugs appeared on the scene. Wilf explained the 'logic' and economics of dealing 'Brown' and 'Rocks':

> "At one time, nobody'd touch 'em, the powders. Me ah've smoked draw since I was fourteen, but I never touched coke [cocaine] an' brown [heroin] ... I wouldn't even touch it ... I told 'em tek it away ah didn't wan' it near me. Then we 'ad a think on it. 'C'mon' [the heroin wholesaler] said, 'check out the finances' ... Ah worked it out man ... it's fuckin' easy money .... 'Class A' though, so yer lookin' at more bird [possession or supply of a Class A designated drug generally involves longer prison sentences] ... 's like this: Let's say four of yer put in five grand each ferra kilo [32 oz] o' brown. It's nineteen grand [£19,000] ... so yer've gorra grand [£1,000] ter play about with; y'know hirin' cars, makin' connections, whatever ... Then you buy a load o' 'Idashine' [commercial product used for cleaning antique violins] ... It looks like brown, man, it sticks to thu bag just like brown ... Let eight ounces [of it] dry out, put it with the kilo [of genuine heroin], eight grand up before yer've kicked off [£8,000 profit] ... Mixed yer've got forty ounces ... knock it out cheap like a grand n'ounce. Forty grand. Ten grand each, yer've doubled yer money .... Coke? It's all rocks [crack cocaine] that's where the biggest money is ... 'specially if yer do the washin' yerself [a method of D.I.Y. preparation which converts the powder into a smoking form known as crack or rocks] ... cut with bicarb or a drop o' ammonia, three to five minutes in the microwave ... If yer do the washin' yerself yer talkin' three, four times yer stake [profits of three or four times the original investment]."

Because of the increased propensity for dealers to become involved in the wholesale distribution of such profitable drugs, the stakes were far higher in terms of the potential for 'rip-offs' and the need for self-protection. As Wilf put it: "It's all about reputation ... when you're talkin' that kind o' turnover they've got to understand no-one's gonna step in your way, you're not lettin' anyone tek liberties". When bigger deals of larger quantities of drugs were undertaken, as with the 'barkers', 'touts' and 'hustlers', a similar system of protective collaborative organisation was employed. This, for example, sometimes involved the utilisation of separate vehicles for the transportation of the 'Joey', a person or

persons designated to travel with weapons, the 'holder', a person designated to travel with the drugs or money, and the 'dealer', who travelled with a 'minder' separated from any sources of potential incrimination until the actual moments of negotiation. When a transaction was completed, the drugs or money would be taken eventually to a 'stash' or safe house for storage. By the early 1990s, the dealers also utilised second, sometimes third, addresses for conducting business. These were locations away from their homes and such a strategy of business administration was undertaken in order to separate home from 'work' and, moreover, represented a response to the escalating levels of danger associated with the drugs trade (see Chapter Eight, Section 8.5.5 and Chapter Ten, Section 10.3.5 for details). Williams (1989) has described a similar organisational structure in the American cocaine trade:

> "There are 'runners' - messengers who take cocaine to buyers or let buyers know of a particular dealer ... where the drugs are sold from a fixed location there are 'lookouts' and guards, and often catchers standing by in case a police raid or other emergency means drug stocks must be moved swiftly ... At the wholesale level, 'transporters' move large amounts across state lines to prearranged locations where a 'babysitter' may keep watch over them. Import arrangements may involve 'mules' who transport (sometimes unknowingly) quantities into the country" (1989 : 9).

Among study participants involved in dealing, these protective devices and organisational structures paralleled an increased professionalism, originally inculcated during early careers in 'barking' and 'touting' where the bulk of the essential commodities were similarly also kept separated from the retail transaction. A similar organisational structure was also utilised which often separated the main dealer from actual face-to-face transactions. Thus dealers of more wholesale quantities of proscribed drugs utilised a network of 'hustlers' who 'worked the punters'. Like the system operated by 'touts' and 'barkers', 'hustlers' would similarly be provided with a 'lay-on' or loan of drugs. These would be sold through the 'hustler's' network of street connections. The 'hustler' then utilised the money from the 'lay-on' to acquire the next quantity of drugs to be 'hustled' and so on. Also, by the 1990s, the dealers and certain of their more respected 'hustlers' utilised the newer forms of communications technology, such as car phones, personal pagers and mobile phones, to maintain mobility and communication links; this system also

afforded a measure of protective cover as meetings could be arranged spontaneously and conducted at innocuous 'neutral' venues.

What Raskin-White *et al* (1985) have described as the "drugs-crime nexus" took the form of a connection between the milieu of drug 'hustlers' and dealers and a propensity towards robbery in the early 1990s. In part, the drought of "quality merchandise", after the boom in the drugs trade of the fabled "Summers of Love" of the Madchester phenomenon in 1988 and 1989, added a certain impetus to other forms of criminality, particularly 'blags'. The spiralling recession in the City-wide drugs dealing trade also accounts for the subcultural movement from the good-time atmosphere of the Madchester Acid-House Raves during the "Summers of Love", to the armed drug wars fought between groups of rival dealers in the early 1990s (see Chapter Ten, Sections 10.3.4 and 10.3.5 for details).

9.4.2 Blagging

> "It takes robbers like us
> to rob robbers like them"
> (THE REFUGEES : Robbers)

'Blagging' is an umbrella term which encompassed the most aggressive forms of robbery and theft, and practitioners generally epitomised the angry and apocalyptic separation from mainstream moral codes. The early careers of Summers and Barlow, for example, included 'ram-raids', that is driving vehicles into shop fronts in order to steal goods; 'snatches' of money from tills in shops and stores, and also from retail employees delivering money to bank night-safes; and 'armed blags', that is, armed robberies. Though a minority status role when my fieldwork began in 1985, the practice of 'doin' a blag' became steadily more prevalent among certain study participants, especially in the early 1990s.

In the early 1990s, some of those who had moved into the alternative career structure *via*, firstly, sub-employment in fiddle jobs, and who had then pursued intermediate careers

such as 'totting' and 'hustling', developed an increased propensity to subsidise other activities - such as 'hustling' drugs - with occasional 'blags'. Robbery tended to be a winter activity because of the early onset of dark. Those involved were generally informed by an ethos which emphasised "perceived machismo and toughness" (Pitts 1988 : 143), and whose source of self-esteem was derived through "achieving respect and admiration for epitomising the values of the criminal world" (McVicar 1974 : 171). Self-justificatory rhetoric was invoked to both validate violent crime and also as a denial of the victim. As an open, face-to-face encounter, robbery was regarded as a more justified and 'honest' occupation than, for example, politics. As one participant put it: "At least ah'm out front 'bout it, y'know: give us it or ah'll do yer, not that lot [points to televised party political broadcast] ... fuckin' thieves ... 'cept they don't get caught". Einstadter found similar views when he interviewed 25 convicted robbers in California. The convicted robbers viewed their activity as more honest than that of professional 'con-men':

> "Robbery is an open, direct ... encounter coupled with a non-disguised coercive demand: there is no stealth or furtiveness ... but confrontation of unabashed power. It is this quality of candour that the robber equates with honesty, an apologia which ... makes the robbery career an object of worth, if not noble" (Werner J. Einstadter in Taylor 1984 : 99).

'Blags' usually carried at the minimum an intimidatory threat of violence and, on the occasions when resistance was encountered, whether from employees or citizens attempting to prevent the robbery, then violence was ruthlessly administered:

> "It's not usually shooters [guns] ... you're just 'ittin' 'em ... in thu back, arms, legs wherever ... [using a baseball bat] ... ya deaden' 'em ... if y 'it the nerve on the arm ... they've got a dead arm ... it's just a dead arm an' ya pick up thu bag ... no problem."

Again, the self-justificatory rhetoric would be utilised to validate excessive violence and as a negation of the victim when, for example, accounting for the multiple injuries sustained by a retail employee who was 'blagged' delivering money to a bank's night-safe:

> "Fuck's sake yer'd 'ave thought it was 'is bleedin' money. Ah was fuckin' leatherin' 'im an' thu bastard wouldn't let go [of the security pouch] ... Bastard ... If it'd bin me ah'd be sayin', 'yeah c'mon, meet me 'round thu corner an ah'll give yer the bleedin' bag ferra cut' [share] ... Not that bastard ... fuckin' 'ero ... Wha' der they pay 'em? Fuckin' 'undred quid a week an' 'e's gettin' three kinds a shit kicked outta 'im ... an' still 'e fuckin' won't let go ... Fuckin' mad - bastard - fuckin' - 'eroes - ah've 'ad it wi' 'em ... 's not like it's 'is

bleedin' money .... Meks no sense ta me ... gettin' yer 'ead kicked in ... mek's no sense ... Di'n't do 'im no good ... we still got thu bag an' 'e's fucked up in 'ospital ... fuckin' stupid bastard."

When viewed from the insulated position afforded by academic or citizen 'respectability', the extremity of such actions may be interpreted as senseless and contradictory, the product of an atavistic, biological or animalistic impulse, a crude psychological dysfunction, or a propensity towards 'evil'. But such acts also involve the peculiar courage of those who have the audacity to invade public space in order to forcibly claim a share of that which has been denied them. The violence committed on such robberies is partly fuelled by the temporary thwarting of a massive energy released by their daring. As Little has similarly noted in respect of persistent property offenders: "The amount of adrenalin expended whilst breaking into the property of a stranger should not be under-estimated" (1990 : 87).

Entering the public arena in order to attempt to wrestle a night-safe bag from retail employees, who seek to consign it to the security of an aperture in the wall of a bank, is to enter the domain of what Willis (1990) has described as, "a nihilistic grounded aesthetic". "Charged up" with the release of energy that accompanies such a profound degree of rule-breaking whilst under public scrutiny - "When it's just four of you against the world for those three minutes" (Taylor 1984 : 69) - the 'blagger' generally seeks to convey an initial symbolic message - "Give us it or ah'll do yer". There is, however, no time for negotiation in these transactions. Ordinarily the desired object, the night-safe pouch, is passed over uneventfully and the 'blagger's' energy is consumed in flight and the exhilaration of an act successfully 'consummated'. However, should the energy be resisted, even momentarily, then the 'blagger' is immediately thrust into a different terrain where there is a momentary disappearance of all meaning: "The usual capacity to see events unfold is lost; there is no past, no future, only a very consuming present" (Willis 1990 : 107). At the moment of resistance, the 'blagger' is further removed from the restraining codes and conventions of citizenship. Having breached the boundaries of

convention to risk the self by entering the public domain to rob, there are no moral restraints: "There's no goin' back" and no time for protracted negotiation, not a second to waste. At such a 'moment', the energy and adrenalin of the 'blagger's' spectacular daring is released and usually (with dire consequences for victims) the violence is unrestrained:

> "The inherent risks and meanings of being outside the law make violence and its associated dramas potent symbolic materials to displace or disrupt given official or institutional meanings. These materials help in the construction and reconstruction of alternative ways of being in and seeing the world, of alternative values and ways of valuing people ... Whether we like them or not, these are some of the contradictory living arts of survival" (Willis 1990 : 107-8).

9.5 Summary and Conclusions

In this Chapter I have sought to explore the range of alternative careers available to, or proactively constructed by, long-term unemployed study participants. In Chapter Eight, I argued that the range and development of such alternative economic options represented an informal career structure. In constructing the typology of alternative careers within the informal career structure, I have attempted to focus on typical behaviour, "approaching the phenomenon principally through actors' shared abstractions" (Irwin 1970, cited in Hobbs 1988 : 141).

I argued that participants' alternative careers can best be understood as status sequences which involved "choice patterns" (*cf* Coles, forthcoming). As an organising concept, the notion of a career allows for an examination of the interplay between institutional and structural factors and participants as proactive agents. As Willis has argued: "Social actors are not passive bearers of ideology, but active appropriators who reproduce existing structures only through struggle, contestation, and a partial penetration of those structures" (1977 : 175). My research suggests that individuals intentionally pursued, and/or actively constructed, particular non-conventional careers, but that it would be a mistake to assume a clear-cut life plan with unconstrained patterns of motivation and choice. The phrases 'career' and 'career choice' present a picture of participants freely choosing from a wide range of potential alternatives; in reality, 'choices' were constrained

by a number of factors. Significant factors included a background of social and economic disadvantages such as stigmatised residential location, absentee fathers, trans-generational unemployment, the cumulative impact of policy interventions in employment, benefits, housing and training, and the cynicism and alienation engendered by post-school labour market experiences. Career choices reflected this inter-connected and cumulative network of inequalities. Moreover, alternative careers were evolved within a cultural ecology of alternative enterprise that was tolerant of acquisitive law-breaking as a domain for procreativity and resistance. For the long-term unemployed males in particular, alternative careers articulated oppositional cultural patterns which drew on elements derived from the parent working-class culture in a creative and potentially transformative fashion. Alternative careers were frequently sustained by the focal concerns of the sub- and anti-employment subcultures which, through activities such as 'totting' or 'grafting', not only appropriated the colloquialisms of the parent culture but also reinvented them, investing them with new meanings and behaviours. These subcultural formations were generated within a cultural ecology of alternative enterprise partially sponsored, or influenced by the alternative entrepreneurial activities of the Donaghue and Hatton families (Chapter Four, Section 4.8.2).

In developing their alternative economic options, participants were also involved in the self-creation of meaning and identity. However, as Little (1990) has argued: "Any identity will reflect the influences of others in an individual's social networks ... the development of an identity is a normal part of adolescence ... the development of a criminal identity is simply another manifestation of this norm" (1990 : 36). In making what Becker (1963) has indicated is the crucial "initial" career choice in the formation of a non-conformist career and identity, participants' initial decisions were again circumscribed by the trans-generational transmission of a subcultural ethos of law-breaking behaviour. As Robins (1992) has similarly argued:

> "[The] first lesson is not how to live in the family but how to negotiate the unstable society of [their] peers. And, having absorbed as a child the ... values and attitudes of

> the subculture, [they] may remain ... within it ... unable to break out, even if the opportunity were to arise" (1992 : 27). (my inserts)

The subcultural context provided a domain wherein to be respected, or 'successful', was to be 'bad' in societal terms. The ability to negate or invert societal disdain (through, for example, techniques of neutralisation) in order to view law-breaking, or negative labelling, in a positive, status-enhancing, light provided part of the explanation for the persistence of law-breaking behaviour into adulthood. Against the over-arching background of diminished legitimate opportunities for constructing or asserting adult status and identity, participants proactively evolved subcultural status systems which accorded prestige to law-breaking behaviours and endeavours. What frequently informed the subcultural status associated with different spheres of alternative economic activity were the different degrees of illegality associated with tasks within a given career. Thus within the practice of 'touting', for example, the 'tout' was accorded higher status if involved in the distribution of forged, rather than legitimate, venue tickets, because of the greater risk and higher rewards involved. The emphasis on subcultural status systems which graded prestige in terms of illegality was also a factor which contributed to the reinforcement of non-conformist careers and identities.

Initial 'deviance' was further reinforced by the experiences of some participants within the Juvenile Justice System. Experiences of incarceration provided participants with an additional source of adolescent subcultural status. Successfully doing 'bird' and emerging from the experience unscathed and physically and emotionally 'harder' meshed neatly with subcultural norms which emphasised an exaggerated working class male machismo. Persistent law-breaking behaviour received an added impetus as a consequence of the processes of differential association within the peer group network: with other offenders within the Juvenile Justice System; and with 'significant others' as a consequence of early careers sponsored by, and conducted in association with, the Hatton and Donaghue families. Early careers of 'touting' and 'barking', for example, provided significant domains for the inculcation of participants into organised patterns and systems of law-breaking

values and behaviours. The Hattons and Donaghues provided the style, argot, organisation and demeanour associated with 'successful' law-breaking' careers. The patterns of organisation associated with early careers as 'barkers' or 'touts' provided participants with an apprenticeship in alternative income acquisition. Success in such activities also resulted in an added impetus to withdraw from any remaining tentative commitment to conventional routes for defining adult status and identity, traditionally associated with progress in the formal labour market.

In Britain, the irregular economy has long been an established fact of working class life (Hobbs 1988; Foster 1990). Merchandise that falls off the back of mythical lorries is sold over a quiet drink in the pub. Fiddle jobs, on the side, cash-in-hand, are essential survival strategies for those forced to eke out a meagre existence on the income derived from state benefits. Participants whose lives became organised around moves into and out of sub-employment had already taken initial steps into illegality by not declaring the income to 'the Social'. Activities in the intermediate range of careers, such as 'hustling' or 'totting', merely extended this movement into law-breaking. However, such a movement further separated participants from the restraining codes and conventions of citizenship and pushed them further into a marginal, semi-legal, existence. The fact that 'hustling' often took the form of street level, relatively unorganised, drug trading should not, however, be taken as indicative of a new and sinister illicit drug distribution network. In constructing such career 'choices', participants rationally undertook the options for income acquisition that were locally available to them. Utilising the skills, organisation and networks that were already in place provided for the 'successful' development of the career; as Parker *et al* (1988) have similarly argued, the drug trade in disadvantaged inner city areas has not been, "a new and sinister creation set up from outside but an adaptation of long-established trading mechanisms which were already central to the irregular economy" (1988 : 107). However, the status role and routines of 'hustling' drugs, together with the easy income associated with the enterprise, served to finally remove participants from the routines of waged labour - even fiddle jobs - within the local informal economy.

The movement from early careers within the alternative enterprise of the local informal economy to intermediate careers of 'hustling' and 'totting' represented a coalescence of an anti-employment ethos and identity. The anti-employment ethos inverted conformist values such as work commitment, so that within the subcultural domain the ability to prosper without recourse to paid employment became a measure of self-worth and status - a virtue in itself. An emphasis on independence and autonomy also guided the development of an anti-employment posture, which valued proactivity over wage-slavery, and high rewards from acquisitive crime over earnings derived from paid employment. Such values were also reinforced by the adult custodial experience which, like the Juvenile Justice System, produced a further movement in the direction of criminal solidarity. Participants often viewed their experiences at the hands of the law as part of the "Authority Conspiracy" which, in turn, informed an increasingly oppositional consciousness and identity. Like the 'lads' in Willis's (1977) study, their subcultural values provided participants with partial insight into the interlocking network of disadvantage and inequality which constrained their options, chances and choices. Although they were cognizant of external barriers to legitimate status and success, the Northside were simply plagued by a sense of unfairness and the uneasy conviction that the rules of the game were biased against them and their community. Thus, there was a discrepancy between their strongly felt conviction that "there was nowt down for us" and their abilities to fully understand just how this was so. They conveniently filled this gap with anti-employment careers and identities.

Anti-employment careers took various forms but were characterised by an angry and apocalyptic viewpoint, a fundamental separation from the restraining codes of conventional citizenship. Anti-employment careers were not necessarily discrete areas of economic activity and participants undertook movement between categories as opportunities arose or became available. Thus J.W., for example, though primarily involved in a career of semi-legal activity with the Donaghues, on one occasion made extra income through joining Davvo and Summers for a burglary. A cheque book and cheque

card obtained from this exercise in 'grafting' provided for a brief flirtation with 'kiting' the stolen cheques for money and goods. The income derived from using the stolen cheques was utilised to purchase a quantity of cannabis which was passed on to the local 'hustlers' for distribution through the informal network. The income derived from dealing was then utilised to 'go halves' with Davvo on an enterprise that involved a stolen vehicle which was re-registered and sold through an advertisement placed in the regional newspaper. The income generated from the sale of the 'ringer' (stolen vehicle) was in turn utilised to purchase a quantity of counterfeit designer sports shirts which were sold over a period of time, through genuine retail market outlets, and so on.

I outlined the general contours of several of the anti-employment careers identified among the long-term unemployed males in my study group. The alternative careers of the 'blaggers' represented the final culmination of an oppositional anti-employment posture. Those involved had intrinsic belief in, and derived subcultural status from, their abilities to 'make out' in the face of a seemingly alien and hostile world. The 'blagger's' main resource was the mad courage required to undertake the most direct route to income by entering the public spaces of conventional citizens to forcibly take what they believed was simply their due. The 'blagger's' overriding concern was with an image of perceived machismo and toughness, which offered alternative routes to defining masculine psychological and economic potency. This is not to argue that if you take blocked legitimate economic opportunities and mix them with the old parent cultural values of masculinity, you end up with armed robbers. Such an analysis would make 'cultural dopes' out of participants who were constructing an emerging cultural response, entrepreneurial and creative - though not in terms prescribed by the dominant ideology of individual enterprise. Nevertheless, such a career 'choice' was circumscribed by the social and economic factors outlined earlier. Lacking nearly every social attribute that defines status or success in conventional terms, the 'blaggers' subculturally inflated the one quality they still possessed: their masculinity. This provided for solidarity in the face of disadvantage in ever other respect.

Finally, it is worth briefly reasserting that the robbery and violence of the 'corporate world' is much more destructive than any individual acts of robbery or violence. As Liazos (1972) has argued:

> "The robbery of the corporate world - through tax breaks, fixed prices, low wages, pollution of the environment ... is passed over in our fascination with 'dramatic and predatory' actions" (1972 : 107)
>
> "[If] we take the concept of violence seriously, we see that much of our political and economic system thrives on it ... a person can be violated by a system that denies ... a decent job ... Moreover, we must see that covert institutional violence is much more destructive than overt violence. We must recognise that people's lives are violated by the very normal and everyday workings of institutions ... they kill, maim, and destroy many more lives than do violent individuals" (*ibid* 111-112).

For participants involved in the alternative careers of 'hoisting' and dealing, their modes of operation frequently paralleled the self-protective organisational practices derived from early careers as 'touts' and/or 'barkers'. One of the subcultural restraints which operated to prevent the Northside from striking out in individual terms was the accumulated traditions of group loyalty and the strong affirmation of group solidarity over individual interests. Such values informed the organisational practices of anti-employment careers such as 'hoisting', which frequently depended for their success upon a collective mode of organisation and structure. The interdependent solidarity ensured that the participants involved perpetuated their roles within the group and often these represented the final coalescence of a mode of consciousness that was largely irretrievable in terms of the morality of the 'straight' world.

Participants' alternative careers were brought into being and given voice alongside the development of other subcultural concerns. Subcultural styles, for example, were often 'homologous' with alternative careers, and provided a symbolic fit between the values and life style of the group, its subjective experience, recreational use of drugs and the musical forms utilised to express or reinforce its focal concerns. In the following and final Chapter of my study, I will explore the development of innovative subcultural styles among the Northside Crew and their peers, and examine how these gave meaning to and expressed an

oppositional mode of consciousness reflected in participants' alternative careers/subcultural styles.

CHAPTER TEN

SUBCULTURAL STYLE

> "For as long as I can remember, collective expressions of disaffiliation from authority and the hegemony of the dominant classes ... have sent shivers of excitement down my spine" (McRobbie 1981 : 121).

10.1 Introduction

The concept of subculture has been increasingly questioned in recent years. As early as 1964, Burgess warned against an over-estimation of the differences between the so-called delinquent subculture and the norms and values of the wider society (in Burgess and Bordua 1964 : 595). Researchers were also warned against the "intellectual fad of attributing a subculture to almost any social category" (Valentine 1968 : 15). Jenkins (1983) explicitly rejected the concept in favour of a Weberian-derived notion of "life style":

> "In order to distance myself from the subcultural tradition, I prefer the term life-style to denote observable patterns of social practices distinguishing groups of people who may be said, on the grounds of shared language or ethnicity, for example, to belong to the same cultural group" (1983 : 41).

However, in positing life styles as the social practices of groups belonging to the same cultural group, Jenkins at the same time seeks to direct attention "away from the cultural realm". This would appear to be a case of wanting to have one's theoretical cake at the same time as eating it.

In developing my analysis of subcultures in Hartingleigh, I am informed by the theoretical work of the CCCS outlined in Chapter Three (Section 3.3), bearing in mind the deficiencies outlined and critically examined in the same Chapter (Section 3.4); particularly with reference to social determinism (Section 3.4.1), and 'ordinary kids' (see 3.4.4). I have also explored the creative and transformative aspects of local subcultural groups through the utilisation of Giroux's theory of resistance (1983) (Chapter Three, Section 3.5) and the proactive potential of such subcultural groups through Fryer's (1986a)

theory of agency (Chapter Four, Section 4.6.3). Resistance was often articulated in terms of withdrawal from the formal labour market (Chapter Eight, Section 8.4), proactivity in terms of the development of an alternative career structure and alternative careers (Chapter Eight, Sections 8.4.4 and 8.4.5).

Subcultures take shape around the distinctive activities and focal concerns of groups. The sub- and anti-employment subcultures of Hartingleigh have cohered around particular activities, focal concerns and territorial spaces. Such social formations cohere on the terrain of cultural life. Yet it is important to reassert that subcultures exist within and coexist with the more inclusive culture of the class from which they spring:

> "Members of a subculture may walk, talk, act, look 'different' from their parents and from some of their peers: but they belong to the same families, go to the same schools ... live down the same 'mean streets' as their peers and parents. In certain crucial respects, they share the same position (vis-à-vis the dominant culture) ... as the parent culture from which they derive. Through dress, activities, leisure pursuits and life-style, they may project a different cultural response or 'solution' to the problems posed for them by their material and social class position and experience ... [Nevertheless] they experience and respond to the same problematic as other members of their class who are not so differentiated and distinctive in a 'subcultural' sense. Especially in relation to the dominant culture, their subculture remains like other elements in their class culture - subordinate and subordinated" (Hall and Jefferson 1976 : 14-15).

Since the 1950s, the succession of spectacular working class youth subcultures has shown particular, conspicuous, symbolic creativity in style. There is now a long and extensively documented list of youth subcultural styles, from the Teds of the 1950s, the Mods of the 1960s to the Skins and Punks of the 1970s and the Ravers of the 1980s and 1990s Acid House and Rave scenes. Such subcultural styles have occupied the attention of sociologists, journalists and fashion commentators alike. However, in recent years, there has been a general movement of interest away from youth culture and subculture as style. The work produced in the 1970s, including the semiotically inclined analyses of Hebdige and Willis, has been replaced by a new generation of youth research. The new generation has revived a tradition which slipped from view with the advent of the cultural studies tradition of the 1970s (Chisholm 1990 : 35). Like studies that were conducted in the 1950s and 1960s on the transition from school to work, the new generation

concentrated on post-school transitions, but also had to deal with an exploration of the cumulative impact of unemployment and changes in the structure of opportunity which included the recent policy-directed changes in education and vocational training. My own study reflects these newer emphases in the literature of youth research; nevertheless among the participants in my study, style still existed as a significant symbol of rebellion, "a benchmark of the ritual of resistance" (Brake 1990 : 222).

Clothes, style and fashion have long been recognised as key elements in young people's expression and articulation and in the construction of personal as well as collective identities. Style, as Brake (above) has recently noted, remains amongst the most noticeable form of symbolic creativity among the young working class and often articulates a procreative resistance to the official authorised interpretation of their social situations. Among study participants, the development of innovative subcultural styles were frequently linked to the evolution of the alternative economic options that were being developed and pursued. Style was also often linked to other focal concerns, such as football or music, and the emphasis on proscribed recreational drug taking. Such styles were not based on passive, uncritical consumption. There was frequently evidence of what Willis (1990) has described as a "specific grounded aesthetic dynamic" as participants appropriated and recontextualised goods available within the dominant culture's fashion-wear, sports-wear, and leisure-wear industries. Such appropriation entailed a form of symbolic work and creativity as participants broke the ordered categories of clothing, footwear, and the suggested matches and ideas promoted by the mass market. Participants sought to bring their own specific "grounded aesthetics" to bear on their selection of colours and matches of juxtaposed items. New local meanings were evolved and generated from differently combined elements of clothing, footwear, jewellery, accessories and hairstyles. They adopted and adapted clothing items drawn from army surplus stores, or sports, camping, fashion, and leisure wear shops. In so doing, they sought to evolve distinctive styles to communicate a symbolic discourse of status and opposition. Often this involved a rejection of "the normative definitions and categories of

'fashion' promoted by the clothing industry" (Willis 1990 : 85). Such choices were often 'homologous' and provided a symbolic fit between the values and life style of the group, its subjective experience, use of proscribed drugs, and the musical forms used to express or reinforce its focal concerns.

In *Profane Culture* (1978), Willis referred to the concept 'Homology', a concept originally employed by the French structuralist anthropologist, Claude Levi-Strauss. Willis illustrated how the internal structure of subcultures were characterised by an orderliness comprised of the systematically compatible elements mapped out by anthropologists such as Levi-Strauss. Willis showed how each part of the internal structure of the hippy and motor-bike subcultures he examined, contrary to the popular myth of disorderliness, were organically related to other parts and, through the symbiotic fit between constituent elements, the subcultural members made sense of the world. Such an approach was also utilised by Hebdidge (1979) in his treatment of the punk subculture:

> "The subculture was nothing if not consistent. There was a homological relation between the trashy cut-up clothes and spiky hair, the pogo and amphetamines, the spitting, the vomiting, the format of the fanzines, the insurrectionary poses and the 'soulless', frantically driven music. The punks wore clothes which were the sartorial equivalent of swear-words ... beneath the clownish make-up, there lurked the unaccepted and disfigured face of capitalism ... beyond the horror circus antics, a divided and unequal society was being eloquently condemned" (1979 : 114-115).

Through the appropriation and recontextualisation of goods and objects, subcultural ensembles were made to "reflect, express and resonate aspects of group life" (Clarke *et al* 1976 : 56). In my own study, the 'social hieroglyphs' of the Black Magic Roundabout, examined in Chapter Eight (Section 8.1), for example, involved a form of cultural construction which subverted and transformed a conventional cultural artefact, to invest it with a new coded subcultural oppositionality. It provided a "secret language or code, to which only members of the group possessed the key" (Clarke *et al* 1976 : 56). The significant objects or coded symbols chosen were, either intrinsically or in their adapted forms, "homologous with the focal concerns, activities, group structure and collective self-image of the subculture. They were 'objects' in which (the subcultural members) could see their central values held and reflected" (Hebdidge 1979 : 114).

10.2 From Casual to Mad : Subcultural Style in Hartingleigh 1980-1986

10.2.1 The Northside Casuals

Subcultural style in Hartingleigh from the late 1970s to the early 1980s was reflected in a preponderance of items selected from sportswear ranges. Such ensembles were frequently juxtaposed with denim jeans and jackets. The dominant fashion item in the late 1970s was sports training shoes or 'trainers'. In their selection of trainers, participants were involved in a bewilderingly accelerated succession of 'in' and 'out' items located in group affiliation to particular manufacturers, and to their labels and logos. In the late 1970s, Puma were the dominant 'in' manufacturers among study participants of both sexes, followed by Adidas. At this stage, trainers were partially selected for their utility. Not only did they constitute a desired fashion item, but they also served as practical footwear for leisure activity, which included playground and other informally constituted football games. The footwear was also adopted to signal oppositionality to dress codes and standards imposed in school, particularly when trainers were adopted by teenage schoolgirls. The growing trend met with an initial measure of teacher-initiated opposition and conflict. As Stella recalled:

> "We was all into Puma's [trainers] everyone; an' we started wearin' 'em to school like, will you was a 'Div', like, if you didn't, so it caught on ... Anyway they [the teaching staff] said they weren't proper fer girls ... [but] we took no notice ... We went in [to school] an' [the School Head] 'ad us all lined up in assembly an' sent us 'ome with a note ... What a laff, we all went into Town, it was well - sound - like an extra 'oliday ... My mam said no way, was she gonna stand for it an' wrote back sayin' she'd keep me off 'til they changed the [clothing] rules ... 'Ow could she afford shoes an' all that when there was no money ... Some of 'em [the other girls] ... didn't tell their mams but jibbed off [played truant] 'til it [had all] blown over. [One girl's father] ... went up there [to the school] rantin' and ravin' an' 'ad 'Farter' [Mr. Carter: Deputy Head] by the throat ... said 'e'd bin out o' work two years an' couldn't afford new shoes fer t'kids ... Nice one! .. they 'ad to back down ... Couple o' years later, no one wus wearin' shoes ... it's all Nike's an' Reeboks [types of trainers] ... No one was wearin' shoes".

According to Peter Hooton, editor of the early football fanzine, *The End*, and vocalist for the Liverpool group, The Farm: "The obsession with training shoes began in the late seventies. It came from the football terraces and council estates of big cities" (quoted in *The Guardian*, 9.8.91). Participants who were 'in' wore Puma or Adidas trainers; 'divs',

'mongs', 'shirtlifters', 'snobs' and 'dorks' wore inferior and less expensive brand names such as Dunlop, Sprint, Nicks, Hi-Tech and Pony.

Manufacturers were not slow to expand on and diversify the variety of accessories available within the sportswear range and both Puma and Adidas began to manufacture and market T-shirts, sweatshirts, tracksuits, sports holdalls and shell suits carrying their culturally desired logos and labels. As the "Cult of the Casual" (Allen 1984) gathered momentum in the early 1980s, other sportswear manufacturers entered the teenage market producing trainers and similar sportswear accessories. Participants frequently engaged in a competitive rivalry over the exclusivity of their trainers and sportswear. The dominance of Puma and Adidas waned and was replaced by harder to obtain and more expensive trainers produced by smaller manufacturers including Nike, Reebok, Fila, Ellese, Converse, New Balance and Sergio Tacchini. The cost of maintaining local 'cred' became steadily more prohibitive. The average cost of a pair of Nike, Reebok or Fila trainers in the early 1980s was between £60 and £100. Some study participants began early apprenticeships in 'hoisting' by jibbing school and going in search of "a decent knock-off". As Tex and Maz demonstrated, early shoplifting expeditions were conducted primarily to maintain fashion status and were orchestrated with the minimum of sophistication:

> "**Maz:** In them days it wus all about fuckin' trainers ...
> **Tex:** Yea trainers an' trackies [tracksuits] ... no teamwork or 'owt, jus' grab n' run.
> **Maz:** Yea put 'em on an' leg it ...
> **Tex:** Fuckin' buzz though wannit? (laughs)
> **Maz:** Top! (laughs)"

According to Sennewald and Christman (1992 : 15), the grab-and-run technique is the most "unsophisticated and brazen of all shoplifting techniques". The most vulnerable sports shops, or sports departments in chain stores, were usually selected, particularly those with entrances, or fire exits, that led directly onto busy streets.

Such early careers not only provided local 'cred', or status, in terms of the acquisition of desired status items such as expensive trainers, but also sartorially demonstrated 'success'

in terms of the values of the peer group. To own a pair of 'Reebok Graphlites' or 'Nike Air Max', both of which, in the early 1980s, retailed at over £100 a pair, was to conspicuously demonstrate one's subcultural success as a 'hoister' or 'scally' (scallywag).

The ideosyncratic and self-defining sartorial style of the 'casuals' developed to include designer clothes by upmarket designers. These included Pringle and Pierre Cardin sweaters, LaCoste French polo shirts, Farrah slacks, Gabicci cardigans, and Sergio Tacchini tracksuits. What distinguished the 'casuals' was the fact that, excluding the price of other necessary accoutrements - gold jewellery, highlighted 'wedge' haircuts and 12 inch singles by esoteric house and jazz-funk bands - the cost of individual items of clothing far exceeded the spending power of all but the wealthiest British teenager. In the early 1980s, for example, the original pastel-coloured LaCoste polo shirt cost between £60 and £80 in the more upmarket shops and stores. The 1950s provided some sort of subcultural precedent when the extravagant Edwardian dress style of rich 'men about town' was taken up by young working class Londoners, the first 'Teddy Boys' (Jefferson 1973). Then, however, the styles were tailored to meet the economic demands of the time. The 'casuals' by contrast were required to not simply ape fashion, but to possess the genuine articles with the significant iconography of their all-important designer labels and logos. The label, or logo, verified both their authenticity and enormously high price. As Dilly once remarked of his Tacchini tracksuit (retail price £238): "sharp as a bleedin' Stanley [knife] an' cool as fuck".

The emphasis on presenting a cool image, of being "cool as fuck", was intimately connected to the subcultural concerns of the Northside Crew and their peers. Designer clothes were a sartorial demonstration of subcultural status and defined success in one's alternative career. As Summers revealed (Chapter Four, Section 4.8.6), buying a designer suit was the first thing he did after completing a robbery in order to emphasise his status within the subcultural context of 'the Vic'. As Jefferson has similarly argued:

> "Deprived of what little they possessed, a reference to the declining social situation ... there remained only the self, the cultural extension of the self (dress, personal appearance) and the social extension of the self (the group)" (1976 : 82). (brackets in original)

In some respects, 'quality' also defined self-esteem and psychological well-being. Like the fifteen year old office boy in Wolfe's essay, "The Noonday Underground" (1969), whose clothes were more exquisitely tailored than the bosses', the casual stylist was determined to compensate for a low status position (of being typically unemployed, living at home and 'hustling quids' wherever they could be hustled from within a declining economic environment) by exercising dominion over a 'private estate' of appearance and (unlimited) leisure (*cf* Hebdige 1976 : 91). As Barlow explained it:

> "I'd rather 'ave things that are quality like - proper merchandise not 'snide' [counterfeit] or Woolies [Woolworths] specials - I feel better in meself ... if I've got summat on like me speedmaster [Omega Speedmaster watch, retail value £520] or ahm Armani'd up [wearing a suit by Georgio Armani, retail value £650] ... ahm as good as anyone ... I know I've got summat on like expensive instead of cheap ... not a snob but ... it's like ahm a top boy or summat."

The 'casuals' fostered an image of prosperity in a climate of economic stringency, against a background of social disadvantage. In some respects, the cult of the casual operated as a parody of dominant values in the early 1980s. According to Allen (1984 : 13), for example, the 'casuals' "far from opposing or rejecting societal values ... laud them". Impressions of such a neo-conservatism in youth culture were, nevertheless, dangerously ambiguous. According to Redhead and McLaughlin (1985), the 'soccer casuals' partly subverted the uneven regional recession effects of Thatcherism by parading the appearance of wealth on match days. Such subcultural practices constituted a kind of "off the peg respectability" (Redhead 1990 : 33), and were - and indeed still are - frequently sustained by acquisitive crime.

The expenditure necessary to uphold the casual style was often met illegally through 'hoisting' goods directly, or purchasing them at a cut price rate from someone who had 'hoisted' them 'to order'. Indeed, the ideosyncratic fashion style of the 'casuals' provided the impetus for the coalescence of the Hoisting Crew (see Chapter Nine, Section 9.4.2).

Sometimes, shoplifting expeditions were justified in terms of 'needing' such clothes, "seeing the regular acquisition of fashionable clothes as an essential prerequisite of everyday life" (Allen 1984 : 13). As Campbell has similarly argued, "teenagers whose style and self-concept have come to depend on buying power and subcultural knowledge of the right thing to buy will be driven to theft when economic circumstances demand it" (1981 : 120).

A final point with reference to the casual style of the Hartingleigh Crew in the early 1980s has been noted by Redhead (1987 : 102): "Casuals on soccer terraces and stands have added a whole new look to football fashions". The casual style on the soccer terraces involved a strong element of sartorial competitiveness, or "style wars" (Redhead and McLaughlin 1985). According to Kevin Sampson, manager of Liverpool band, The Farm:

> "Every team in the country boasts a collection of match dudes, each trying to outdo the next city in terms of cool. There are few finer moments in life when you step into an alien city *en masse*, all dressed up, ruthless, and watch those people stare (quoted in *The Guardian*, 9.8.91).

Moreover, like the Mods of the 1960s, the 'casual's' appearance of 'respectability' seemed to consciously invert the values associated with smart dress, to deliberately challenge the assumptions and falsify expectations. "They looked alright but there was something in the way they moved" (Laing 1969, cited in Hebdige 1976 : 88). They were all the more disturbing by the impression they gave of "actors who are not quite in their places" (Cohen 1973). In fact, the impression management of innocuous respectability, "more like the boy next door than soccer hooligans" (*Daily Mirror*, quoted in Redhead 1987 : 102), provided perfect cover for criminal activities in the towns and cities visited by the travelling Northside football supporters. Geographical mobility was sometimes facilitated by cars stolen on the Friday night before a big game. The anonymity of the travelling football crowd also ensured a self protective licence to exploit potentialities for "easy quids" in the neighbourhoods of one's footballing rivals. As Maz put it: "We've

done every city in Britain". And, according to Tex (mimics London accent): "Cockneys, ah've shit 'em, but they've got some sweet shops, on my life, silk shirts the business ... ah love it goin' to London". The very respectability of the casual style ensured that they did not approximate to the traditional hooligan stereotype of the tabloid newspapers (*cf* Porteous and Colston 1980).

> "The casual style has emphasised respectability and apparently mainstream look, not marking out the [casuals] as hooligans for the police, observers and stewards. An undifferentiated mass - unless you know what to look for, and even then it will have changed around again" (Redhead 1987 : 104).

10.2.2 Mad Anti-Fashion

By the mid 1980s, something happened to the casual style which had dominated Hartingleigh's subcultural scene. It was a gradual process rather than a sudden shift in sartorial emphasis. First trainers were relegated to a secondary subcultural position in favour of the old skinhead standard, the Doctor Marten boot. Then the Doc Marten shoe appeared with its waxy leather upper and "original oil, fat, acid, petrol, alkali resistant, air cushion sole". The obscure Jazz-Funk and Chicago House 12 inch singles from Frankie Knuckles' Chicago 'Warehouse' Club were gradually replaced by a new, rawer, home-grown Northern 'folk' music, featuring, at first, such bands as The Fall, Chameleons and The Mekons; then local bands such as The Refugees, King of the Slums, Slumshine, and Northside, captured subcultural attention. This new sound combined the street energy of Punk with a psychedelic edge that nodded in the direction of 1960s American 'acid' bands, such as The Doors, or British hippy psychedelic music as produced by Pink Floyd and their progeny. Clothing became much looser and less formalised. Johnny Behan, an old friend who ran a second hand clothes stall on one of Hartingleigh's outdoor market sites, pointed out the change of emphasis in 1984. Johnny had developed a lucrative sideline in 'snide' designer clothes, cheap counterfeit imitations of designer originals. In the Summer, he had taken delivery of "'alf the van load" of tracksuits - a little "quid winner" - featuring various famous logos and labels. After three months of hard sell, instead of the anticipated success, he had only "shifted an 'andfull". He was in his own words "lumbered

with a bin-load o' nine-bob notes" [hard to shift stock]. Johnny complained that his usual customers were asking him for 'hippy' clothes such as, "Afghan coats!! Afghan coats an' fuckin' flares, they're all goin' mad Steve".

The sixties psychedelic drug 'Acid' (LSD) also reappeared on the streets at roughly the same time, and the most creative exponents of local subcultural style began to so fragment the code for deciphering its oppositionality that 'reading' the local style became steadily more incomprehensible. What, for example, was I to understand by people who were formerly sporting gold chains, visiting the hairdresser for wedge haircuts every fortnight, and wearing the most exclusive designer labels, suddenly, or so it seemed, growing their hair and plundering charity shops for the "grottiest, most off the bean an' mad" clothing items. Morrissey, vocalist with the Manchester band, The Smiths, was the new sartorial hero; sporting 'Oxfam' jackets, two sizes too big, he provided the anthems for the young unemployed: "Strangeways here we come", and "I've never had a job because I've never wanted one", and "Work is a four letter word". The Smiths reclaimed ordinary concerns and ordinary language for popular music, and struck an immediate chord with the young population of North Manchester's housing estates.

The band came to national prominence early in 1983. Both lyrically and musically they seemed to have come from nowhere. When they appeared on Top of the Pops, bemused presenters looked on as lead singer, Morrissey, danced around the floor with gladioli protruding from his back pocket. In a period of popular music dominated by the ponderous pretentiousness of 'New Romantic' bands like Spandeau Ballet, Duran Duran, Orchestral Manoeuvres in the Dark, and the recycled 'rebellious' youth styles that were incorporated into advertising campaigns - The Smiths provided stark contrast. During this period, for example, the National Westminster Bank sponsored an advertising campaign featuring spectacular youth stylists as potential customers. Under a sub-heading, "The Docile Generation", Laurie Taylor offered the following observations on the music and style of the period:

> "In place of all the simple rough disturbing amateurism of the original punk music, there is a new, controlled, self-preening professionalism. The soft punks and the new romantics and the posers (names for the new culture rise and fall with the alacrity of chart entries) are massaged by music which depends for its impact as much upon the producer as upon the artist. It is what one influential critic has described as the 'call of the mild' - the music made by Duran Duran, Boy George and Culture Club, and Spandeau Ballet (now renamed by cynics, Spandeau Wallet) ... An equal concern with preening and individual self-image can be found among the followers" ('The Skin-Deep Revolution', *The Times*, 31.7.84).

In a period dominated by the New Romantics' "call of the mild", and the ever present recycled Sixties dinosaurs, such as The Rolling Stones, Bob Dylan, Eric Clapton, Neil Young, and so on, the subject matter of The Smiths' songs, like the group's name, was defiantly mundane. Morrissey publicly proclaimed his contempt for the dominance of Sixties rock music within popular culture (*The Face*, No.18, March 1990 : 50-57):

> "There's a song on this album that has The Rolling Stones in mind because we're so sickened, disgusted by their recent 'comeback' ... an exercise in pop-hype and media manipulation ... I no longer find it sad or pitiful ... I just feel immense anger that they don't just get out of the way ... There's so much talent, so many voices that deserve to be heard ... but you open the papers in this country, and every day there's the obligatory picture of y'know Mick-with-bags-at-the-airport, or Keith saying he's completely normal now. They just won't get out of the way! The song is called 'Get Off the Stage'" (personal interview : April 1990).

The group acquired an obsessive following and was especially appreciated by those -

> "... residents of Northern industrial towns who found that the singer's graveyard humour offered an intelligent alternative to the counterfeit bonhomie of daytime Radio One: Morrissey was inspired to write 'Panic', The Smiths' 1986 single whose chorus encouraged listeners to 'Hang the DJ', after he heard a Newsbeat item on the Chernobyl disaster which was immediately followed by Wham's 'I'm your man'" (*Observer Magazine*, 6.12.92 : 24).

Morrissey offered a dark sanity for study participants who were, by the mid 1980s, enduring the severest period of the locally felt economic contraction. At the time his songs took on a polemical edge, aimed both at Thatcher ("Bigmouth strikes again") and, seemingly, at the locally generated subcultures ("Shoplifters of the World - Unite and take over"; and "Strangeways here we come"):

> "The way I see it is people just breaking out and saying, 'No more depression, no more repression. I'm not going to stay in the dole queue. I'm going to go out and dance and meet people'. It's very much a seizing the opportunity, doing it now, forgetting the future" (*The Face*, No.18, March 1990 : 57).

The dominant fashion mode by the mid 1980s was, in Manchester at least, defiantly "Mad". As someone who had been actively involved in the sartorial signification of the 1960s Mod aesthetic, I found the delight in Mad clothes utterly incomprehensible. Mad was flares or polyester trews for girls, or Mad 1970s jackets plundered from Oxfam and Save-the-Children charity shops. Mad was just about anything but anything goes, just as long as it was mad. Mad also found its way onto the football terraces signalling a significant sartorial divide between the North and the South. In the 1984-1985 season, for example, Redhead pointed out that: "The Cockneys are still trying to buy the most expensive clothes available, while the North is wearing 21" flares with an untucked Ben Sherman shirt. Knowing the Cockneys, they'll now be scouring Bond Street for Gucci flares" (1987 : 107).

On the terraces at Anfield, the home of Liverpool Football Club, something even stranger was apparently happening in terms of pastiche - a post-modernist terrace style?

> "Past and present concocted together in a bizarre mish-mash. What else can we make of Merseyside scallies, wearing Pink Floyd and Bob Dylan T-shirts, stoned out of their brains, on the Anfield Kop? Born-again hippies, a psychedelic revival pure and simple? Or another crazy twist in the regional post-modern condition of soccer which has flourished since the demise of punk?" (Redhead 1987 : 104).

In 1982, style magazines, such as *The Face*, discovered the 'casuals' which they took to be a London dominated phenomenon. But, by this time, Manchester had, on the football terraces at least, begun to shake off the carefully contrived exclusivity of the casual style:

> "Mancs had forgotten all about Fila, LaCoste, Ellese and all that pseudo-sophisticated leisure wear. The casual shop Hurleys [in Manchester] watched its trade vanish as the new Manc look consisted of 22-inch frayed flares, battered Gazette trainers, cord shoes, plain crewneck sweaters, blue snorkel parkas, lumberjack coats, ski hats and walking with a limp. Yes, from '83 to '85 Mancs out-tramped the world. Cockneys didn't understand. They thought it was still cool to look like Ronnie Corbett on Pro-Celebrity Golf" (*The Face*, No.18, March 1990 : 69).

The general ethos of collectivism and anti-elitism, which characterised the new Mad fashion style and music scene in Manchester, began to invade the clubs and fashion houses. A movement off the terraces and into the high street stores followed, as the look of

studied abandon was aped by Manchester's student population. Extra baggy T-shirts, 'knackered' footwear, army surplus kagoules, and a hedonistic, irreverent attitude became 'hip'. The Happy Mondays epitomised this look and their influence gained mainstream acceptability when Orange Juice Clothing absorbed the Mondays "Wrote for Luck" logo as their own. Similarly, the anti-fashion flares revival, originally spawned by Manchester's football fans in the 1984-85 season, as a concerted rebellion against the 'Pro-Celebrity Golf' look of the Cockney supporters, eventually engendered the 'Joe Bloggs' fashion house. Situated near to Strangeways Prison on Cheetham Hill Road, Joe Bloggs began to market custom-made flared jeans in 1986, just as the Madchester music scene began to gain commercial pop success. According to Shami Ahmed, owner of the self-proclaimed "Legendary Joe Bloggs Incorporated Company": "I came up with Joe Bloggs because it was very British ... it was anti-fashion and anti-snobbery, that's why I thought it would work" (*The Guardian*, 15.6.91 : 6). In the mid to late 1980s, the Joe Bloggs Company marketed commercial versions of many of the street styles that had become prominent in the Mad movement of the mid 1980s. Such is the measure of the success of the company that Joe Bloggs hoardings are now to be seen on the perimeter of most televised football matches.

Among study participants in North Manchester, Mad in its initial innovative subcultural moment, was anti-fashion. The aesthetic opposed the carefully contrived 'cool' of the 'casuals', just as it rebelled against the carefully constructed high street chic of the advertisers' notion of what it meant to be young. Here lay a key to unlocking the code of Mad-fashion, Mad-style.

If there is a single theme which encompasses the grounded aesthetics of youth culture in recent years, it is 'street cred' (street credibility). But style has so often been expropriated and commodified by bourgeois commercial interests. 'Retrostyle' is one contemporary manifestation of this process. As Willis has noted:

> "Retrostyle is part of a general trend in contemporary culture which ransacks various historical moments for their key stylistic expressions and reinserts ... them in current fashion ... these references to past stylistic forms have taken on a kind of iconographic status in pop culture, evoking whole periods of social history, and have been used extensively in popular music and advertising" (1990 : 88).

The cultural group which, in recent years, has received most media attention is that of the young upwardly mobile adult, the 'yuppie' of Thatcher's market-led, deregulated, privatised, post-Keynesian bourgeois individualism. The advertisers' acronyms abound, covering the range of their transitions into adulthood (e.g. 'Dinks' - double income, no kids). All have been related to the enterprise culture and, moreover, specifically targeted for advertising campaigns during the Thatcher decade. Though hardly street credible, yuppies became significant targets for youthful style commodity advertising. The advertisers clearly understood that this group were affluent, but not 'young', subculturally affiliated, street-wise or credible in the ways that working class youth, for their very survival, had to be. Nevertheless, advertisers attempted to market an image which implied access to a romanticised authenticity, youthful oppositionality, and street wisdom through the correct commodity purchases. The 'affluent' young working class consumer of the post-war economic consensus was out of favour, partly because s/he was on the dole and no longer in a position to purchase pre-packaged commodities from the style industry. Style marks off the 'street wise' from the 'dork' and some of the mid 1980s advertising suggested that a piece of authentic street cred was available to anyone with the power to purchase the 'correct' style commodity. As Brake has similarly noted in a recent 'semiotic muse':

> "It is fruitful and indeed symbolic of the current style consumption to turn to the image of youth in current television advertisements. These nearly always focus on the individual. In particular favour ... is the lone male youth wearing Levis (Levi 501s had their highest sales ever in 1988), emphasising the individual - the cowboy, the rebel without a cause. We see an allegorical symbol used by capital to deal with both the terrains of the legitimate market and the hidden economy. The (perhaps unemployed) loner is transposed into the consumer. Armed only with 'street cred', s/he is making it in the dark empty urban streets, which are both symbolically and realistically dangerous ... Another lager ad. shows a grainily shot young busker (again 501s and hair gel) playing a saxophone, trying to get close to his ... black sax hero. A can is thrown from the fridge ... the youth gets through the commodity purchase. He is then seen on stage throwing full arm punches. As in the first ad. all you have to do is win. This in a society where a local neighbourhood can have four-fifths of its youth unemployed.

> Unemployed youth are ignored, they are losers, poor, perhaps with a whiff of violence, but not glamorous like the successful" (1990 : 223; brackets in original).

In the 1980s, the creative and innovative elements of street style were reduced to a marketing strategy imbued with ideological connotations which concentrated on images of individual status and success. Within the marketing strategy, style separated the street wise and the 'hip' from the straight or 'unhip'. Advertising suggested that the yuppie executive could purchase from the style merchants a sense of being intimately connected to the invisible community of the 'in-group'. In part, the commodification of style explained the revival of an authentic, self-determined and group-created Mad anti-fashion in Hartingleigh. The strict stylistic formality of the 'casuals' and its dependence on exclusivity for status, broke up into a much looser, more fragmented subcultural code. Aside from the reaction against an attempted imposition of implicit stylistic rules purveyed by the market, other elements supplied by the new music and recreational drugs lent weight to this relaxation of the 'casuals" stylistic code. Of significance for the local subcultural style developments of the mid 1980s was the music being generated by the local bands referred to earlier, allied to a renewed sense of local pride and community identity fostered by the growing commercial success and cultural prominence of the 'Madchester Scene' of music and style. At the same time, a new recreational drug found its way onto the streets. This was MDMA, the drug of the Rave Culture - Ecstasy, the ultimate good-time party drug.

10.3 From Madchester to Gunchester: Subcultural Style in Hartingleigh 1986-1990

10.3.1 Madchester

> "But then they danced down the street like dinglebodies and I shambled after as I've been doing all my life after people who interest me, because the only people for me are the mad ones, the ones who are mad to live, mad to talk, mad to be saved, desirous of everything at the same time, the ones who never yawn or say a common-place thing, but burn, burn, burn, like fabulous yellow roman candles exploding like spiders across the stars" (Jack Kerouac 1957).

The surest sign of the life and veracity of any supposed subcultural style movement is when the tabloid newspapers sit up and take notice before getting round to hastily

assembling one of their 'special guides'. The *Daily Mirror* (30.1.90 : 9) provided the classic example with its outline of "Scallidelic" clothing styles, "Manspeak", and the crass proclamation that "MADchester" was "the city where it's all happening ... The whole world is raving at a new hot spot ... It's Manchester the hottest place in Britain", and so on. The 'quality' press quickly followed suit. *The Weekend Guardian* (20.4.90: 24-25) devoted several pages to the "Madchester Guardians" who were "at the hub of the British pop experience and the youth culture capital of the UK". *The Sunday Observer* (24.5.92 : 53) featured a ten year history of the City Centre club, The Hacienda, co-owned by TV broadcaster and Factory Records founder, Tony Wilson, and the commercially successful Manchester band, New Order. Wilson provided some insight into the role of the club in terms of the City's musical scene: "Cultures need places and The Hacienda has supplied a continuous space ... a blank canvas on which successive waves of pop culture have been able to scrawl their graffiti". Indeed, The Hacienda provided a commercial focus for much of the locally generated music and style, and in the ten years of its history, up to 1992, generated a succession of major pop-industry successes, including New Order, The Smiths, James, The Stone Roses, and Happy Mondays.

In the late 1980s, early 1990s, the *Manchester Evening News* ran a series of "lifestyle and leisure" supplements, some of which were devoted to exploring different aspects of the "new cultural phenomenon". One edition declared the subcultural affiliates "hardcore hedonists", and revealed a rundown of the City Centre clubs that offered a Friday to Sunday weekend devoted to the "new" Rave scene; these included The Brickhouse, The Venue, Precinct 13, Shenza's, and The State. The well-informed piece also revealed how "young entrepreneurs" were hiring DJs to give established commercial venues a once-a-week name and musical identity to cater for the overflow in subcultural interest among the young. One example was 'The Circus' who took over The State disco on Saturday night to create an impromptu moveable house party, based on the theme of a big-top circus, complete with top-hatted custom-made ringmaster's outfits for the main organiser, Elton McManus, and 'top-name' DJs, Greg Fenton, Justin Robertson and Jon da Silva

(*Manchester Evening News*, 14.12.91 : 26-27). In the March 1990 'Style Bible', *The Face* devoted sixteen pages to a "London vs. Manchester" regional assessment of the relative cool and style of the nation's capital versus its Northern counterpart. In all areas, football, clubs, fashion, television, radio, and above all music, Manchester was declared "hands down winners" (*The Face*, No.18, March 1990 : 60-76).

Madchester, as the rather tackily self-mythologising Happy Mondays E.P. title would have it, was at the centre of a media-hyped pop-cultural phenomenon that attracted national and then international attention; the leader of the Labour-dominant Manchester City Council, Graham Stringer, for example, reported that coach parties of young people from Paris were venturing into the City to sample the night life (*Daily Mirror*, 30.6.93 : 6). Moreover, every weekend in the late 80s, it was reported that "coachloads of kids from the South spend Friday nights speeding North on the motorway heading for what is now the trendiest spot in Britain" (*Daily Mirror* 30.1.90 : 9). Evidence also suggested that "bright young things" from the young international "jet-set" were flying into Manchester to partake of the subcultural ambience:

> "Bee Humphries and Andi Doc Tong from New York had just flown in from Bangkok where they had been buying up designer fashion at rock bottom prices to sell in Manchester ... 'We've never been here before', said Bee, 'but apart from Bangkok, this is the place to be. It's brilliant'" (quoted in *Manchester Evening News*, 14.12.91 : 26).

In the late 1980s, 'Madchester' even made the front covers of *Newsweek*, and *Time*; *Newsweek* described the Manchester scene as "Britain's feelgood music movement".

Such was the significance of Manchester's music and clubland scene that, in 1992, internationally renowned 'Chicago House' disc jockey, Frankie Knuckles, paid his own expenses to fly into Manchester in order to participate in the two weeks of celebrations for the tenth birthday of The Hacienda (reported in *The Sunday Observer* 24.5.92 : 53). In 1990, the international significance of the Manchester Music scene was also highlighted at the eleventh New Music Seminar in New York, "the biggest global event on the record industry calendar, attracting 7,000 music label representatives ... for five days of unceasing

business brunches and wheeler-dealing". The seminar panel was headed by Factory Records owner, Tony Wilson, and Happy Mondays manager, Nathan McGough. Under the banner, "Wake up America You're Dead!", Wilson and McGough provided "an oasis of northern bluntness in ... [the] ... desert of good-mannered goings on". The live gigs were also dominated by Manchester's music which included Northside's first American gig and music from the Happy Mondays and the techno-funk of 808 State. As Wilson proclaimed, "You used to know how to fucking dance in America, God knows how you fucking forgot!" (*New Musical Express*, 4.8.90 : 17-19).

The cocksure self-assertive belligerence engendered by the City's international cultural prominence was infectious. As Graham Stringer, Labour Council leader, asserted: "We lead the UK in everything from pop music to fashion to football" (*Daily Mirror*, 30.6.93 : 6); and prominent Hacienda disc jockey, Dave Haslam, declared Manchester, "the world's first industrial city, home to Manchester United, a mecca for popular music - all these things have ensured the City's global significance" (*The Observer*, 27.6.93). Such civic pride and local identity also fostered two audacious bids to host the Olympic Games in the City. This culminated in a concerted, but unsuccessful, bid for Olympia 2000, after the City had beaten off a rival bid from London to represent the UK in the Olympic Committee's deliberations (*The Guardian*, 14.6.93 : 2-3; *The Guardian*, 'Olympics 2000', 6.9.93).

10.3.2 Football

The football-music-subcultural style crossover, under the new looser, less formal, Manchester style, fostered a new subcultural label, the 'scallies' (from scallywags). Sara Champion in *The Guardian* (9.8.91) pronounced that "these are the baggy brigade who are at the core of the football-music crossover, lads who came of age with Acid-House and Manchester pop". In the 1980s, the music press and independent record charts were riddled with football references. John Peel, for example, promoted football linked records from everyone, from Manchester band The Wedding Present's obsession with ex-

Manchester United favourite, Georgie Best, to The Fall, and The Real Sounds of Africa; while producer, Adrian Sherood, turned his football fixation into Tackhead's 'The Game', 'The Barmy Army' and 'The English Disease' compilation. These recordings combined disembodied samples of community singing on the terraces and various football chants with an insistent technologised Acid-House beat. There were at the same time a spate of novelty football-theme singles by various artists, including I Ludicrous, who developed an idiosyncratic style of ironic commentary on popular culture through soccer songs such as 'Three English Football Grounds' and well signposted references to television sports commentators like David Coleman in 'Quite Extraordinary' and 'At the End of the Day'. Frank Sidebottom, the independent comedy eccentric from Timperley in Greater Manchester, performed a similar role in celebrating non-league side, Altrincham, with 'The Robbins aren't Bobbins' and, more generally, 'All Time Great Footballing Chants'. The indie band, Half Man Half Biscuit, came up with the classic football novelty song, 'All I Want For Christmas Is A Dukla Prague Away Kit'.

The thuggery, violence and regional rivalries which became known as the 'English Disease' were lessened by the explosion of the Acid House phenomenon. The 1988-89 season was marked by a football supporters 'Summer of Love' which in part reflected the musical and subcultural 'Summer of Love' of the Rave scene. Surreal inflatables appeared on the football terraces, from Stoke's pink panthers, Manchester City's banana inflatables, to Bury's black puddings. According to Tony Wilson: "The hooligan element has ceased to be the hooligan element and have become the new hippies. They're doing soft drugs and dancing and still going to football" (cited in 'Hooligans and Hippies', *The Guardian*, 9.8.91).

In 1989-90, at a time when English football teams, in the wake of the Heysel Stadium disaster, had been banned from playing in Europe, Paris and Amsterdam were invaded, not by marauding football hooligans, but coach parties of Manchester and Liverpool Ravers - including study participants - looking for a "decent night out" beyond the constraints of

British clubs' licensing and entertainment laws. After the ban on English football teams had been lifted, the 1990-91 football season provided additional impetus to the soft drug, Rave Music, football crossovers as the Northside Crew of Manchester United supporters ventured into Europe with the team in pursuit of the European Cup Winners Cup. This culminated in a memorable Final in Rotterdam in May 1991 and a 2-0 victory over Spanish club, Barcelona. After the game, United supporters began a week-long party of celebration in the soft drug capital of Europe: "Thousands of Manchester United fans celebrated their club's victorious return to Europe with copious amounts of cannabis in Amsterdam" (*The Guardian*, 10.1.92 : 3).

Similarly, the end of the International European Championships, Italia '91, culminated when football-Rave fans finished the season with a twenty-four hour nightclub celebration in Rimini. In June of the same year, Leeds United's Elland Road ground hosted a day-long gig by Liverpool favourites, The Farm, and archetypal Manchester scallies, Happy Mondays. Rave-football fans from Merseyside, Manchester, and Leeds, gathered in their thousands to watch and dance to their respective musical favourites. Where once there would have been violent clashes, based on regional rivalries, according to Redhead (1991), a sense of "togetherness" ruled. The cultural cross-fertilisation of football and popular music was provided with a gloss of respectability when Granada TV Sport used Northside's LSD song, 'Shall We Take A Trip", as its theme tune; while England's 1990 World Cup Theme was supplied by New Order's "World in Motion" which became the best selling football record of all time.

10.3.3 Music

> "We must force the frozen circumstances to dance by singing to them their own melody"
> (Karl Marx, cited in Willis 1984d : 17).

The various facets of pop culture, football culture, fashion and subcultural style, explored in this section so far, represent the elements of subcultural energy and creative innovativeness which, in the late 1980s, early 1990s, captured national and international

media attention. But the well-springs of these cultural forces had their origins among the young working class, many of whom lived in the most disadvantaged housing estates ranged throughout the City. The 'Mad' clothing style originally developed among study participants from the mid 1980s onwards, for example, provided much of the impetus for what subsequently became known as the Madchester scally-style phenomenon. However, even before the City Centre clubs had begun to feature the bands of the Manchester scene, and before the Joe Bloggs Company had marketed it's first pair of custom-made flared jeans in 1986, the energy and impetus for the subcultural scene was already manifested among study participants.

Aside from the change in sartorial emphasis provided by the movement from the designer clothes of the 'casuals' to the hedonistic abandon of the Mad anti-fashion, locally generated music also gave voice to the diverse elements of the Madchester scene that was slowly evolving. By 1985, for example, there was in North Manchester a well established gig circuit for newly formed bands to plug into. The usual contexts for live music in the early period of the evolving scene were the pubs, community centres, and clubs that existed outside of the City Centre. In their early days, Northside, Slumshine, and The Refugees, all played 'expenses only' gigs, both at the Youth and Community Centre in Hartingleigh and also the Summer Festival organised by the Community Project. The Summer Festival usually culminated in a minor outdoor 'Rock Festival' organised within the confines of the Adventure Playground. In 1984 and 1985, all three bands played live sets at the Hartingleigh Summer Festival and, in 1986, a twelve band itinerary culminated in a 'jam' with members of Northside, King of the Slums, The Refugees and Slumshine constituting an impromptu local 'supergroup'. As a result of the informal word-of-mouth information network, such gigs were enormously popular, not only among young people from the immediate area but also those from other parts of the City. At the time, none of the bands had recording contracts; nor were they registered with any record label. Thus, reputations were largely established by word of mouth, and music was distributed and exchanged among affiliates and enthusiasts in the form of cassette tapes recorded at live

gigs, or produced and marketed by the bands themselves. When bands had evolved sufficient local and City-wide support, they would generally attract sponsorship, minor recording contracts, and gigs on minor venue national tours. Both Northside and King of the Slums eventually secured record deals in this way after generating popularity among a dedicated group of local supporters. One of the minor venue gigs available to the new bands in the North of Manchester was The Dome in nearby Moat Pitton. In an earlier Chapter (Chapter Eight, Section 8.1), I outlined the significance and impact of a gig played by local band, Slumshine, who frequently played at The Dome in the mid 1980s.

Aside from the energy of the locally produced live music, DJs too held a certain subcultural significance for the evolution of the Manchester scene. There is a long tradition of subcultural appreciation of black music within the peer group networks of Manchester's young working class. In the 1960s, for example, the Mod scene spawned a profound reverence for obscure urban American Rhythm and Blues artists. This particular subculture eventually coalesced into what became known as the 'Northern Soul' phenomenon. The main focus and centre for Northern Soul was an all-night City Centre club called The Twisted Wheel. The Wheel was a flourishing source of subcultural energy until the early 1970s when the City Council forced the closure of the club amid rumours of organised crime and allegations of excessive drug taking at its legendary Saturday 'all-nighters'. Like the 'casual' stylists of the late 1970s, early 1980s, the culture of Northern Soul was about dressing up, looking cool, and dancing all night to the rhythms of black American singers and musicians from Detroit, Chicago and Philadelphia. The dominant subcultural drug was 'mother's little helper', the readily available slimming pills known as 'speed' (amphetamines).

By the mid 1970s, the Northern Soul scene had diversified and transmuted into a wider audience appreciation of urban funk and other forms of largely Rhythm and Blues based idioms; and by the 1980s, this had expanded to include 'spaced out jazz', jazz-funk and Chicago House music. These latter musical forms, though ultimately derived from

original roots in Rhythm and Blues, also utilised and incorporated innovative music technology such as phasers, synthesisers, drum-machines and samplers; electronic and computer gadgetry, which, along with an insistent R 'n' B derived back-beat, was to provide the foundations for the Acid House sound of the late 1980s Madchester Rave scene.

Of significance in the development of these new dance floor idioms were the disc jockeys. Colin Curtis, for example, forever linked with the legendary Northern Soul all-nighters at The Twisted Wheel and later The Berlin Club, was one such dance floor innovator. After the closure of The Twisted Wheel, Curtis eventually secured a long-standing residency at the popular City Centre venue, The Berlin Club. Here, under the dominance of his influence, a variety of younger DJs and musicians received a wide-ranging musical education in the ground breaking disco and house tracks which provided the experimental impetus for the creation of Acid House. Curtis's music selection remains as ideosyncratic as ever and he can be currently heard hosting an excellent jazz show for Manchester's 'Sunset Radio' (102 FM) - Britain's first legal black music and community radio station.

The most respected disc jockeys, such as Colin Curtis, Hacienda DJs, Mike Pickering, Dave Haslam, and Greg Wilson, or Martin ('Milo') Capaldi and 'Toto' Weller at The Dome, utilise a whole range of sounds or 'tunes' drawn from the subcultural inheritance of Northern Soul, alongside the more recent musical inputs from the three generations of Manchester Music which have evolved since the impact of punk in the mid 1970s. Dave Haslam's Thursday night gigs at The Hacienda, for example, are generally recognised as the root of the national fascination with all things Mancunian. Before it was 'hip', and before anyone really cared, Haslam was pleasing himself playing music from early post-punk Manchester bands such as Pete Shelley's Buzzcocks and the urban-angst of the doom-laden Joy Division, who eventually metamorphosed into New Order after the untimely suicide of lead singer, Ian Curtis. Such music would be juxtaposed with

electronic Chicago sounds and early music from such bands as Velvet Underground. The ideosyncratic cross currents are clearly audible in the music of contemporary Manchester bands, Stone Roses and Happy Mondays, who were both originally part of Haslam's Hacienda dance floor crowd and therefore graduates of his crossover musical madness.

Outside the City Centre, a similar dance floor energy and reputation was being established by Milo and Toto at The Dome. Here, in the mid 1980s, participants were exposed to the early Motown and Stax singles of the Northern Soul scene, the urban funk of the 1970s, the new-wave post-punk of the Buzzcocks and Joy Division, as well as later tracks from the second wave of Manchester music including The Smiths and New Order. By the late 1980s, the dance floor scene at The Dome reflected music from the Madchester groups like Happy Mondays, The Stone Roses and Inspiral Carpets. The Rhythm and Blues rooted idioms of Chicago House had also, by the late 1980s, expanded to include the 'home-made' technological rhythms of 808 State and A Guy Called Gerald. By the mid 1980s, The Dome enjoyed a mass popularity among young people throughout the North of the City. The Dome's reputation developed on the strength of its live music policy, which responded to the musical tastes and affiliations of its clientele in promoting gigs by locally generated bands. The quality of the sound system and its DJs, plus an 'open' dress-door policy, which, unlike some City Centre clubs, did not discriminate against the scally-look of the Mad anti-fashion style, ensured The Dome's popularity among study participants and their peers from the mid-1980s onwards.

Not only for the disc jockeys, but study participants also, the search for and acquisition of obscure records and tapes constituted an important sphere of subcultural activity in itself. It was an activity that could range in intensity from casual browsing to earnest searching for particularly obscure 'tunes'. It was a process that involved clear symbolic work, and one that was usually connected to participants' subcultural affiliations. What was frequently involved were careful exercises of choice form the point of initial listening to seeking out, handling, and scrutinising records and tapes for their meanings and

significances. For study participants, such as Digger and Stella, who had originally been members of the local band, The Refugees, and who, along with Mick Kenney and Poolie, had also evolved alternative careers from busking, begging, and playing their music, wherever they could, much of their free time was concerned with the acquisition, playing, and discussion of, music. This included amateur 'archeologies' of popular music history, and involved carefully excavating the origins of particular sounds and idioms. They would trace the genealogies of particular styles from films, videos, TV programmes, magazines, or in their 're-issued' forms, from record companies. Some of the dance music played at The Dome by Milo and Toto, which included the reappropriated dance sounds of Rhythm and Blues and Northern Soul, were supplied by Digger, Stella and Mick Kenney from their extensive shared collection. Amongst these participants, music was not just a "noise on the radio", but was, rather, a focus for their lives:

"Digger:	It's life innit?
Stella:	rhythm 'n' life.
Digger:	sex 'n' drugs 'n' rock' 'n' roll!
Mick Kenney:	It's important music, crucial like.
S.C.:	Can you say why?
Digger:	You're not listenin' ... it's life ...
Mick Kenney:	Like heart-beats ...
Stella:	The noise of the world goin' round!"

Amongst these participants, enthusiasm for music extended to avid collecting, and scouring secondhand shops, for records and tapes that could be sold, swapped, or used for the purposes of 'mixing' live in clubs such as The Dome, or for compiling personal tapes. There was a high exchange rate of records and tapes between study participants with albums, singles, and cassette tapes being swapped and borrowed regularly.

The massive growth in home-taping reflected something of the impoverishing effects of unemployment but was also connected to a 'hands on' personal involvement by participants in the consumption and distribution of the music they cared for. Home-taping proved to be a practical, cheap and flexible method for both storing and distributing music. New and unavailable or expensive (import) records - particularly off pirate radio stations - by

skilful use of the pause button on a cassette recorder, could be obtained without the spoken interruptions of DJs or pop jingles and commercials:

> "If we haven't gorra tune that's tasty, we'll track it on the radio an' before the DJ starts, we fade it down like ... New tunes 're on [Radio] Piccadilly Sunset, or New Beat [Pirate Radio] ... 's just what we do" (Mick Kenney).

With cheap 'tape-to-tape' cassette recorders widely available, duplicate copies of tapes could also be made for informal distribution amongst friends or for resale. When 'busking', the trio would also offer various tapes of their own music for sale to passing punters as well as compilations of "rare House and Acid grooves". Other participants frequently relied on people such as Digger, Stella and Mick Kenney to make tapes for them. Here there was something of an informal hierarchy of taste, with the trio used as trusted and accepted consumer guides. This process was demonstrated by Willie and Poolie who secured much of their own music collections from Digger and Stella's home-taping:

> "If I wanna tape, say rare house or white labels [pre-released records for distribution amongst DJs] all I do is give 'em [Digger and Stella] a shout an' tell 'em what I want. They sort it an' I bung a 'teenth [sixteenth of an ounce of cannabis] for the 'assle. It's a nice vibe, they gerra draw an' I gerra tape .... sorted" (Willie)

> "Yeah, they've [Stella and Digger] got all the tunes ... Soul, House ... whatever ... if it's forra party an' that, you can ask 'em an' they'll sort the tunes ... ah usually pay 'em summat or sort 'em some blank tapes, it works out one way or another" (Poolie).

According to Willis (1990) many young people have a strong investment in the lyrical themes, imagery and symbolism of popular music. In Chapter Eight (Section 8.1), I provided a closely detailed examination of the significance of the lyrics of Slumshine's song "Black Magic Roundabout" for unemployed study participants. Some participants, such as Digger and Stella and Mick Kenney, acquired an intimate knowledge of the semantic complexities and nuances of song lyrics, gleaned from close listening and scrutiny of lyrics printed on album or cassette covers. Such lyrics, examples of which were supplied to me by research participants throughout my study, provided participants with -

> "... a set of public discourses ... which both play back to people their own situations and experiences and provide a means of interpreting those experiences. Young people use song narratives to make sense of their everyday conditions of existence" (Willis 1990 : 69).

The life style aesthetics projected by scally bands like Happy Mondays and the lyrical content of certain songs of the Madcheser scene provided mutually reinforcing feedback to study participants. Songs like New Order's 'Thieves Like Us', or Happy Monday's 'Stinkin' Thinkin' with the lines, "I've gotta see what's in them pockets, so I can pick them pockets clean", or The Smith's 'Shoplifters of the World, Unite and Take Over', and so on, provided a scally-validation for participants' alternative careers and modes of oppositional consciousness. Another example was the immensely popular single, 'No Sell Out' by Halalim X which featured a vocal sample of a speech by Malcolm X. In the music, the syncopated phrase 'No Sell Out' meshes with the insistent cross-rhythms of a techno-beat over which Malcom X proclaims:

> "I've got a plate in front of me but nothing is on it. Because all of us are sitting at the same table are all of us diners? I'm not a diner until you let me dine."

However, such a radical analysis could be undercut by sardonic Mancunian humour which implicitly stressed proactive assertiveness:

> "**Willie:** I'm not a diner 'til you let me dine ...
> **Maz:** Fuck that, I'd nick some other bastard's dinner ...
> **Coggs:** Tex 'u'd 'ave the fuckin' table away (laughter)".

Nevertheless, such dance music, a product of the growing popularity of house styles, provided a new dance medium. The highly syncopated electronic beat of Chicago House, in the hands of gifted disc jockeys like Milo and Toto at The Dome, was 're-mixed' and over-dubbed with poly-rhythms, cross-rhythms, sampled vocal lines, or even political speeches and other effects. Such music, by 1986, provided the focus for dancing which added an extra dimension to the lyrical content of 'tunes' within which aural rhythms, textures and forms became realised in physical movement. Experimental dance styles involved their own characteristic forms of subcultural work and, within the generalised hedonistic abandon of the scally ethos, epitomised by a looser unencumbered approach to clothing styles, there was also reflected an informal, almost anything goes, dance style. By 1986-1987, such dance music, the precursor of Acid House enjoyed mass popularity in the North of the City and Saturday night 'meltdowns' at the re-named 'Pleasure-Dome' saw 'serious' dancers beginning to break the unwritten, informal dancing codes of the more

conventional or 'straight' ('beer-monster') discotheques in the City Centre. Within the club a frantic, almost compulsory, insistence on dancing became the norm. The live music policy began to take a secondary role and the significance of the DJ's 'mix' became elevated in importance. There evolved a strict dance emphasis to the exclusion of drinking or even the traditional disco courtship rituals. Of prime significance in the evolution of the new dance and music trends of the Madchester scene as a whole was the widespread availability of a new street drug. This was MDMA or Ecstasy.

10.3.4 Northside Rave, Nice Vibe in the Area

Ecstasy is not a new drug, but an old-style amphetamine-based compound originally developed in 1913 by the German company, Merck, and patented in 1913 as an appetite suppressant, but never marketed as such. In California, in 1965, Alexander Shuglin, a research chemist employed by the ironically named chemical company, Dole, rediscovered the drug while conducting private research into the manufacture of psychedelic drugs. In his autobiography, *Penethylamines I Have Known And Loved - A Chemical Love story*, Shuglin recalled his first experiences with the drug:

> "I made it in my lab and nibbled ... It gave me a pleasant lightness of spirit. That's all. No psychedelic effects whatsoever ... Just a distinct lightness of mood. And an indication to get busy and do things that needed doing" (cited in *Education Guardian*, 7.9.93 : 2).

When MDMA's 'feelgood' qualities were recognised, it was at first welcomed and prescribed by American psychiatrists and marriage guidance counsellors, particularly in California, but its potential for abuse was recognised and it was subsequently banned on both sides of the Atlantic. Since 1987, when firstly House, then Acid House, then Rave culture, took hold, Ecstasy became the recreational drug of choice. Six years later, the Rave culture shows few indications of losing its grip and, alongside the commercial growth in the music and style associated with Rave, has developed the biggest wave of recreational drug use since the hyped-up psychedelia of the late 1960s. According to figures released by the Customs and Excise in 1992, for example, seizure of synthetic drugs rose by 478% between 1990 and 1991. The biggest part of the increase was in the

seizure of the so-called 'designer drugs', MDA and MDMA, both known as Ecstasy. The percentage increase in Ecstasy seizures was estimated at a massive 3,500% (Customs and Excise figures, cited by Duncan Campbell, *The Guardian*, 10.1.92 : 3).

The MDMA form of Ecstasy works by encouraging the brain to release its own supplies of the naturally occurring neuro-chemical serotobin, which creates temporary feelings of well-being and euphoria (Smith, *New Statesman and Society*, 11.9.92 : 31). Ecstasy became as emblematic of the Madchester Rave scene in the late 1980s as LSD was of the psychedelic hippy era. Nicholas Saunders, author of the cult classic guide to *Alternative London* (1974) and self-confessed "ageing hippy", has produced a painstakingly researched exploration of the psychoactive substance. In his book entitled *E for Ecstasy* (1993), Saunders is generally enthusiastic about the drug and, among other things, explores the potential of Ecstasy for psychotherapeutic use, drawing on the testimony of psychotherapists in Switzerland where the drug is currently licensed for therapeutic use.

In North Manchester, the first wave of Es hit the streets around 1987. According to Willie:

> "The first Es wus brought in by DJs from America, the West Coast, it was the Music that made it 'appen ... They was over 'ere fer raves 'cept they weren't called raves then but they did a little fuckin' number with the Es ... It caught on good dinnit? ... Then guys sussed 'em in the 'Dam [Amsterdam] ... an' pound fer pound it was a better deal than draw ... smaller like ... easier to bring in ... an' early on they was £20 quid a tab ... so it was better biz than the draw."

The significance of Amsterdam as the main European source for the illicit manufacture and supply of Ecstasy was also revealed in 1992 by a single Customs and Excise seizure of 281 kilos of MDA tablets, worth an estimated £24 million, discovered at Sheerness, Kent, in an imported settee (*The Guardian*, 10.1.92 : 3).

Like the 'blues', 'black-bombers' and 'dexies' (amphetamines) of the Northern Soul subculture, and the Acid (LSD) of the hippy counterculture, Es provided the 'feelgood'

energy to sustain subcultural focal concerns such as 'trance-dancing' at the twenty-four hour Raves that gradually developed. As Cathy Tittle revealed (Chapter Seven, Section 7.8.6), the clarion call of the Rave subculture was the hedonistic escapism of 'The Right to Party'. When participants were "on one", or "E'd up", sleep was out of the question. The restless energy induced by Ecstasy, along with an increased propensity to do an E in combination with other proscribed drugs such as 'speed' or 'whizz' (amphetamine sulphate powder), LSD, and 'coke', as well as the obligatory 'draw', provided for a long weekend of twenty-four hour partying. Out of such energy evolved the unofficial warehouse parties late in 1987.

For study participants and their peers in North Manchester, the Warehouse parties, which accompanied the popularity of Acid House music and Ecstasy use, were an extension of the normal patterns of 'after hours' weekend sociability. Even before Es had hit the scene, study participants had evolved a pattern of informal sociability which involved "going back" to someone's flat, or house, to continue the party mood after licensed premises had closed and "chucked out". After a Saturday night gig at The Dome, for example, a group of participants and their peers would often maintain the energy and atmosphere generated in the club by walking, as a group, the two miles from the club to the house shared by Coggs, Wilf and Mick Kent in Hartingleigh. Here the party would continue until dawn. In their teenage years, participants had also staged impromptu parties in the Adventure Playground during the summer months and also in the unoccupied flats on the Chicken Lane estate. The flat shared by Digger and Stella on the Marton estate was also a venue for after hours sociability, as were the flats occupied at that time by Willie and Tex in Collington. Generally, arrangements would be made spontaneously, towards the end of the evening, as participants were preparing to leave formal places of entertainment such as 'the Vic', or The Dome, or occasionally City Centre venues like The Hacienda and The Berlin. Later, such informal patterns of after hours sociability engendered semi-organised house parties in warehouses and empty properties on the

largely defunct Industrial Estate of East Manchester. One of the earliest was organised ('sorted') by Digger and Mick Kenney:

> "**Digger:** Coggs an' Maz sussed the gaff, they'd bin tourin', tottin' an' that ... [stealing scrap metal].
> **Mick Kenney:** D'ya remember?
> **Digger:** Yeah man ...
> **Mick Kenney:** They 'ad tons [of scrap metal] out, fuckin' all sorts.
> **Digger:** Coggsie nearly broke 'is fuckin' neck gettin' in ... (laughter)
> **Mick Kenney:** Through the roof, thu window, wha'd'ya call 'em?
> **S.C.:** The skylight?
> **Mick Kenney:** That's it! ... was all rotten, nearly killed 'isself ...
> **Digger:** 's where they used to make cables, [Acme] Cable Company ... big fuckin' gaff.
> **Mick Kenney:** That's it, they 'ad all this copper away di'nt they?
> **Digger:** Fuckin' tons.
> **S.C.:** So that was the place where they had the first Rave. I thought they'd been sorted before that?
> **Mick Kenney:** Yeah? Well no, it was that gaff ya know, inside the walls ...? It's the first 'un we did.
> **Digger:** There was a courtyard an' Maz sussed this little place ...
> **Mick Kenney:** It was fer storin' stuff ... completely empty like, perfect gaff.
> **Digger:** Ya remember? Ya did the fuckin' flyers!

The location of the first warehouse party organised by Digger and Mick was situated within the confines of a large cable manufacturers which had closed in the late 1970s. This was one of many industrial concerns on the East Manchester Industrial Estate which had gone bankrupt in the late 1970s. Enclosed within a high-walled courtyard, and obscured from view from the roadside, was a large storage building. The storage warehouse was a functional building and appeared to have been designed to house the cable produced by the manufacturing section of the company in a factory divided into two larger buildings nearby. The actual factory buildings constituted two sides of the courtyard area. The storage building was almost completely empty and comprised an internal floor area divided into eight sections by waist-high breeze-block walls, with access channels running down the centre and along each of the walls. At one end was a defunct office area with glass panelling which afforded a view of the total floor space of the building. Digger and Mick Kenney were eventually contacted by Maz and Coggs, and Wilf and Willie tagged along when an initial reconnaissance of the location was arranged.

The situation was viewed and favourably vetted as a suitable location for a party and Digger and Mick Kenney assembled a sounds-system and supplied the necessary music. 'Flyers', or leaflets, advertising the party were designed and photocopied at the Centre, and eventually distributed among participants' peer group network and also at The Dome. The 'flyer' not only provided information about the location of the party, but also constituted an unofficial pass, or membership card, which was collected at the door of the warehouse by Barlow and Summers, who were also drafted into the scheme to act as doormen or bouncers.

There were initial problems securing an electricity supply to power the lighting and sound system, but this was eventually resolved by Dilly's cousin who was paid £20 to re-establish an unofficial supply from the storage warehouse's disconnected meter points. Multi-coloured lightbulbs were eventually installed at strategic points, old chairs and mattresses placed in one of the divided areas of floor space, and the sound system set up, with the mixing desk located behind the glass in the defunct office space. Within a month of the original discovery of the building, the first of several warehouse parties was established. Stella, Digger and Mick Kenney supplied and played the 'tunes', Willie and Wilf supplied the drugs, Barlow and Summers ensured there "was no 'assles", and an estimated six hundred young people, drawn from participants, their peers, and the regular clientele from The Dome, attended the first all-night Rave, which lasted from midnight on Saturday night until eight a.m. on Sunday morning. The venue was used on a fortnightly basis almost continuously for several months afterwards, during which the party increased in sophistication and organisation. A primitive 'light show' was established by Coggs who also decorated some of the internal walls of the warehouse with hastily improvised 'pieces', one of which, beneath the 1960s hippy-inspired 'Smiley' emblem, loudly proclaimed "Northside Rave, Nice Vibe In The Area!". Davvo supplied a 'strobe-light' system which had been 'lifted' from a vehicle used by a mobile disc jockey who operated from one of the commercial City Centre "beer-monster" clubs. Various multi-coloured drapes were also installed to obscure the windows and walls. By Autumn 1988, the warehouse parties

were attracting crowds of several thousand young people as the whole phenomenon of Acid House became a City-wide institution. Additional impetus was also provided by the growing commercial success of the Manchester Music scene and the 'Summer of Love' phenomenon of 1988 at The Hacienda where 'Northside Rave' flyers were also distributed.

It was at this time that the Donaghues began to take notice of the subcultural phenomenon. The family sought to commandeer the organisation of the Hartingleigh Rave as well as control over the supply of drugs. Study participants who had established and energised the locally defined phenomenon were powerless to resist the overtures made by the Donaghues, who eventually installed a more professional lighting and sound system, replaced Digger, Stella and Mick Kenney with 'proper DJs', and took over the wholesale supply of drugs within the warehouse. Study participants retained only a minor role as distributors of 'flyers' and as 'hustlers' of drugs supplied by the Donaghues. The most significant aspect of the changes brought about by the gradual monopolisation of the Rave by the Donaghues was its transformation from a free party to a fee-paying gig. At first, a nominal amount was insisted upon (£2), justified in terms of the costs involved in the new lighting and sound-system which had been installed. Later, 'flyers' were being sold as entrance tickets for anything up to £15 each. Most study participants who were known to the Donaghues, or who were more or less informally employed by the family, had little problem in securing free admission and drugs. Nevertheless, there was a profound, though largely unexpressed, sense of outrage at the way in which what had been a collectively engineered 'Nice Vibe' had been highjacked by the family's crass commercial 'muscle' - often imposed under the direct or implied threat of violence.

After the warehouse had attracted police attention in the wake of a growing media instituted moral panic over the Acid House scene, the Rave was raided and several people were arrested and subsequently charged with various public order and drugs offences. The lights and sound equipment were also seized and the warehouse made secure to prevent further entry. Nevertheless, the local scene was by 1989 a national and

international phenomenon and legal and illegal Raves, gigs, and warehouse parties mushroomed, not only in the North West but throughout the United Kingdom.

The expanding Rave scene also provided a boom time for participants involved in the City's drug trade. The fabled 'Summers of Love' of 1988 and 1989, when Madchester, according to cover stories in *Newsweek* and *Time*, was at the centre of the worldwide "youth-quake" (examined earlier), provided rapid turnover of the party drug, Ecstasy. Wholesale supplies were readily available within the community and study participants were "puntin' Es" as a normal part of their own evening's entertainment. In 1988, a hundred Ecstasy tablets could be bought for as little as £800, to be resold for between £12 and £20 each. On a good night, at a well attended Rave, street hustlers could punt a hundred tablets in a couple of hours. This sort of business, at its best, represented a profit of £1,200 for a night's work that was considered not so much work as an extension of the subcultural norm. Some participants also utilised the anonymity provided by Manchester United's crowd of travelling football supporters to travel to other towns and cities throughout England to visit Raves and "do the biz". Some particularly utilised the European Cup Winners Cup Final played in Rotterdam in 1991 as a cover for the importation both of draw and Es obtained cheaply in Amsterdam, where wholesale drug prices were roughly half those of the UK. Such opportunities offered by the drug trade drew participants into a life style totally disassociated from the conventional world of waged labour.

Although the 'Summer of Love' of 1988 was initially welcomed, even by *The Sun*, who signalled the dawn of Acid House as "cool and groovy" (*The Sun*, 1.10.88), there was a concerted and inevitably tabloid-led backlash. Just as swiftly as it had welcomed the new subcultural phenomenon, *The Sun* took an about-turn and 'championed' a moral onslaught of 'panic' proportions, indicated by headlines like: THE EVIL OF ECSTASY (*The Sun*, 19.10.88); BAN THIS KILLER MUSIC (*The Post*, 24.10.88); ACID HOUSE HORROR (*The Sun*, 25.10.88); DRUG CRAZED ACID HOUSE FANS (*The Sun*,

28.10.88); GIRL 21 DROPS DEAD AT ACID DISCO (*The Sun*, 31.10.88); ACID KIDS LURED TO HOLLAND (*Daily Mirror*, 14.11.88); and so on. A chorus of media celebrities were called upon to comment on the state of the nation's youth. Sir Alastair Burnet, for example, gravely presented 'evidence' gleaned from a *News at Ten* enquiry, which revealed the use of illegal drugs at warehouse parties. The Rave Culture retorted by sampling his *News at Ten* broadcast for a limited edition record. This strategy echoed Renegade Sound Wave's earlier use of the programme's theme music and Big Ben chimes. In the media backlash, leading figures in the new scene, such as disc jockey, Gary Haisman from D-Mob, found themselves the target for a chorus of ill-informed media outrage. Haisman found that his popularity and chart success with the single, "We Call It Acieed", rebounded on him when the tabloid papers' exposé of the connection between drugs and Acid House led to a cancellation of bookings all over the country.

Conservative 'fears' were paraded by government representatives including Margaret Thatcher, Norman Tebbit, Douglas Hurd and John Patten, who all regurgitated an earlier moral right-wing line that invoked the negative implications of the 1960s legacy of 'permissiveness' (see Chapter Two, Section 2.6). By March 1990, Tory MP, Graham Bright, with the support of the government, ushered a private member's bill through Parliament to deal with the huge commercial outdoor Raves, some of which were catering for upwards of 20,000 punters. The Pay Parties (Increased Penalties) Act was a classic piece of Conservative legislation. It sought to deal with the perceived 'problem' by stamping on its symptoms. In theory, local authorities could still grant licences for Raves to take place at approved sites, but, in practice, they were both hard to come by and expensive to obtain legally. The result was an escalation in the admission price of both legal and illegal Raves. In economic terms, supply had been choked off while demand was at its strongest.

In Manchester, the City Council evolved an enlightened 'Safer Dancing Campaign' which operated to reduce harm from Ecstasy use by requiring clubs to conform to

minimum safety standards. Informed by Lifeline, the City's drugs information agency, the City Council prioritised harm reduction rather than an unrealistic policy of control or enforced abstention. Instead of closing down the mushrooming clubs and discos of the City-wide Rave culture where the drug is used (and simply driving Ravers elsewhere), the Council required clubs to provide adequate ventilation and water supplies to minimise the principal risks of heatstroke and dehydration which are associated with prolonged dancing and Ecstasy use.

Saunders (1993) has examined the facts behind the Ecstasy scare stories purveyed in the tabloid press. He quotes figures from the National Poisons Unit which puts the number of known Ecstasy-related deaths at 14 from the period January 1988 to July 1992. Of these, 13 were attributed to heatstroke, the other to asthma. Saunders calculates the risk of death from Ecstasy at 1 in 3.6 million compared with the risk of death per fun-fair ride at 1 in 3.2 million. However, Alan Haughton of Lifeline is not so wholeheartedly enthusiastic about the drugs:

> "We know from police seizures that at least two-thirds of what is sold as MDMA is not. All kinds of things are sold as Ecstasy and most people are taking MDA [the 'parent' compound of Ecstasy-type drugs] which appears to be more toxic" (quoted in *The Guardian Education*, 7.9.93 : 3).

Moreover, as demand for Ecstasy began to outstrip supply - as the popularity scene gathered momentum - so counterfeit 'tabs' comprised of a mixture of substances began to be hawked round the Rave clubs. The most 'benign' were usually comprised of a mixture of the hallucinogenic LSD combined with amphetamine sulphate to create an ersatz Ecstasy effect. Unreliable supplies have resulted in Ravers voting with their feet. There has been a general movement away from Ecstasy use in the Rave venues of the 1990s in favour of the more clearly identifiable drugs such as LSD, amphetamine sulphate, and the smoking derivative of cocaine, crack. A partial consideration in this change of emphasis among drug users is the price of Ecstasy which early in 1990 was retailing at between £12 and £20 per tablet. Inferior quality Es (compared with the original supplies of the late

1980s) made the purchase of several inferior or imitation 'tabs' a costly mistake. Instead, many punters now prefer to spend "£2 for a tab of acid", or "£12 for a gram of Whizz" (amphetamine sulphate powder). Crack is more expensive at "£20 a rock" but provides an accessible, instantaneous feeling of energy and well-being. A rock provides a new initiate with an evening of highs. Regular users may need two, three or four rocks to sustain them. Crack, though, is not readily associated with the commercial end of the Rave culture as smoking involves an improvised pipe of some sort (usually fashioned from a Coca-Cola can) and is therefore a practice difficult to conceal in commercial Rave venues. Multi-drug use now also involves a certain predilection for 'brown' which is a widely available form of coarsely refined heroin, more suitable for smoking than injecting. Again, heroin is not typically associated with the Rave scene, though some hardcore Ravers are not averse to smoking 'brown' as a way of reducing the stimulant effects of Ecstasy, 'Whizz' or Acid at the end of a Rave.

10.3.5 Conclusion: Gunchester - The New Decade?

> "Them's in trouble, them boys down Town
> Them's gotta Uzi, ta shoot their brothers down"
> (SLUMSHINE: Drug Wars)

The change in the nature of the drugs trade and a gradual evaporation of the love and peace, 'Nice Vibe', associated with the use of MDMA in the late 1980s also produced a change in the subcultural climate; the new decade saw a movement from Madchester to Gunchester. An early indication of the sea-change was provided when The Hacienda, cradle of the Madchester music and the late 1980s 'Summers of Love', was forced to close. After a succession of incidents, sparked by violent feuds between teams of dealers from Moss Side and Cheetham Hill, shots were fired at Hacienda doormen. In January 1991, The Hacienda shut up shop amidst "Gun Terror" headlines in the local press (*Sunday Observer*, 24.5.92 : 53) The City Centre club eventually reopened three months later with a "serious team" on the door and a gun-revealing metal detector similar to the one used in the House of Commons (*Weekend Guardian*, 15.6.91 : 6). By the time The Hacienda had reopened, the "age of thuggery" had started, a "purge" by the new Chief Constable of

Greater Manchester, Brian Jackson, in which "unemployed young people aged up to 24" were to be "targeted in a crackdown on Lancashire crime" (*Manchester Evening News*, 6.2.91). By July 1992, there were outbreaks of rioting and numerous incidents involving the use of firearms and machetes in most of Manchester's deprived Inner City estates. In Salford's Ordsall estate, for example, several shots were fired at police vehicles and fire engines after a "mini riot" by young men from the estate (*The Guardian*: "Chief Constable pledges to keep order after shootings", 8.7.92 : 8). Journalists claimed that gangs "surrounded by an often spurious outlaw glamour" were operating on Manchester's Inner City estates:

> "Their business is based on the supply of 'party drugs' for Manchester's nightclub scene, married to protection, ram-raiding and 'ringing' cars (stealing high performance models to order). Their mainstays are cannabis ... and Ecstasy ... a trade enforced by ... sawn-off shotguns" (*Sunday Observer*, 12.7.92 : 23).

According to Hacienda disc jockey, Dave Haslam: "Guns are everywhere. You see boys trying to get into nightclubs with a bulge under their jacket - usually a mobile phone or a firearm" ('Olympic City's Gun Lore, *Sunday Observer*, 12.7.92 : 23). Tony Wilson echoed the view of former Assistant Chief Constable John Stalker and insisted that "guns were about fashion. Handguns had replaced trainers as accessories" ('Northern Soul Searchers, *Weekend Guardian*, 16.6.91 : 6). In the Summer months of 1993, a new glossy colour magazine appeared, aimed at the 'teens to 25 age group. Entitled *Phat*, which is scally street slang for 'hot', or good looking, the magazine's first issue aroused considerable controversy because of a front cover which featured a street kid in a hooded sweatshirt aiming a handgun with the tag lines, "teenage gangsta!" and, "Hot Stuff for Hoodlums". Editor, Gavin Hills, presented the unacceptable face of gun culture worship when he proclaimed: "The truth about guns is ... most kids think they're sexy" (*Phat*, Issue 1, July 1993). *The Guardian* (16.7.93 : 5) described the magazine as "a primer for junior deviants".

In Manchester, there were over 120 shooting incidents between 1991 and 1992 (*Sunday Observer*, 17.1.93). In the first three months of 1993, there were a further 320

gun crimes recorded by the Greater Manchester Police (*Media Guardian*, 9.8.93 : 2). The police responded by targeting the "top twenty drug barons in the City" (*Manchester Evening News*, 23.11.92); there was to be a "police war on gun gangsters" (*Manchester Evening News*, 24.11.93), especially in those Inner City areas where "kids boast of bullet wounds" (*Manchester Evening News*, 25.11.93). In part, the police response was prompted by national media attention on the City after a series of drug-related gun and machete deaths which culminated in the murder of Benji Stanley, a fourteen year old boy gunned down in Moss Side in January 1993 (*The Guardian*: 'Killing marks new dimension in 'Gunchester' violence', 4.1.93 : 20; *Media Guardian*: 'Blood on the Streets', 9.8.93 : 2-4). Manchester's Inner City 'gangs' eventually found their way into the Sunday colour supplements, one edition of which included references to Maz, a study participant who retained the pseudonym he adopted in my study for the colour supplement interview. When I asked him about the interview with Gordon Burn in *The Sunday Observer* (*Observer Magazine*, 21.2.93 : 16-23), he maintained that:

> "'Rodney' [his co-interviewee] was the one who sorted it ... ah wus only there puntin' rocks [selling crack-cocaine] ... but Rodney 'e sez c'mon 'ave a laff man ... We filled 'im [Gordon Burn - the *Observer* reporter] up with 'gozz' [nonsense] ... 'e give us five tons [five hundred pounds] ... seemed like a top deal ... 'e wus askin' us 'bout the Moss [Moss Side] ... I don't know fuck all 'bout the Moss, ah wus just puntin' rocks ... Sorted 'im some pickies [photographs] o' rocks an' a tool [gun]. Rodney did all the talkin' ... pure gozz ... [Later that day] some o' the boys jumped 'is mate [the photographer] an' blagged 'is cameras ... we wus pissin' ourselves ... [They] ... said they'd cum back next day, [we] 'ad it sorted to turn 'im over [rob him] ... [but the] twats di'nt turn up ... [It was a] ... laff though ... [being] ... in thu paper an' that ... fuckin' superstar eh?!!"

After the Benji Stanley shooting, Moss Side community workers prepared themselves for the inevitable media invasion and sought to supply TV and newspaper journalists with a fact-filled broadsheet which highlighted the cumulative social impact of a decade of Tory rule. The broadsheet emphasised the extraordinarily high levels of unemployment in Moss Side which had been exacerbated by the privatisation of public services. Moss Side had traditionally provided many of the ancillary staff in hospitals, care assistants in residential homes, and local authority manual workers. These were sectors of the local labour market which had been dramatically affected by privatisation and labour shedding. The boradsheet also highlighted the implications of government proposals to abolish wage

councils (eventually achieved in September 1993) and reminded journalists that a quarter of all black employees worked in wage council sectors. As one Moss Side community activist, Gabrielle Cox, argued:

> "This is not to condone or excuse murder, violence, drug dealing ... [but] ... why should young people respect the law? ... Why should they believe that hard work will bring its own rewards when they have seen their hard working parents impoverished and humiliated by unemployment?"

Instead of the balanced media coverage naively hoped for by Moss Side community workers, what followed was lurid copy about the Inner City drug and gun culture. Gabrielle Cox condemned the media coverage and the journalists who were, she argued, "looking only for sensationalist copy":

> "They are not prepared to indict the truly guilty - those whose policies have starved communities like Moss Side of hope, have impoverished countless households, deprived a whole generation of a future. Also guilty are all those who throughout the eighties, have turned a ... deaf ear to the voices of anguish and pain from the inner cities, who have supported the culture of greed and selfishness" (*The Guardian:* Letters to the Editor, 5.1.93).

Hacienda co-owner, Tony Wilson, maintained that: "[If] you get rid of poverty ... you get rid of the gangs. Its fairly straightforward" (*Weekend Guardian*, 15.6.91 : 6).

The consumer boom which peaked in 1988 provided the background economic context for the 'Nice Vibe', 'Summer of Love' of the Madchester phenomenon. According to Will Hutton: "Crime actually fell in 1988 at the peak of the consumer boom" (*The Guardian*, 'Crime - the politicians' rich reward, 4.7.92). Until 1990, the seasonally adjusted unemployment figures showed a fairly unbroken downward trend following the peak of over 3 million unemployed recorded in 1986. However, the new decade saw a 'new' recession and unemployment began to rise, reaching a new peak of over 3 million in the same month as the shooting tragedy in Moss Side. Among study participants, the stringent economic climate of the 1990s, and the escalating levels of subcultural desperation, produced a renewed hardening of attitudes and an increased propensity towards violent crime involving the use of weapons. For Wilf, this was a logical

progression from carrying weapons when involved in dealing larger quantities of drugs to carrying weapons in order to "pull a blag":

> "With a blag it's [the money] there. Raw quids, no fuckin' about ... An' there's only an 'andful of faces [few people involved] ... If you 'ave it away [don't get caught] you're not goin' down ... it's 'istory. With the biz [drug trade] it's up an' down ... always lookin' out, crap gear, rip-offs, an' there's all the fuckin' faces involved ... You pay for the stash [someone to hold the drugs in a safe place] ... an' no one wants to pay up front, it's all fuckin' lay-ons [drugs loaned for payment later] ... It's fuck ups all down thu line ... Next to that lot blags is easy."

Aside from a growing subcultural preoccupation with armed robbery and violent crime as a source of easy money, the 1990s also saw a return to a more elitist clothing style. In part, this movement reflected a reaction against the developing commercialisation and commodification of the street-defined styles of the late 1980s. The final nail in the coffin of the Madchester style phenomenon occurred when London designer houses began to market high street clothes under the 'Mad' and 'Scally' labels! There was a consequent trend away from the self-defined and created street styles of the late 1980s and a search for status and exclusivity in the clothes and footwear marketed by specialist camping, ski-wear and outdoor pursuits shops. The most desired footwear, for example, became the boots and shoes produced by the American 'Timberland' company. These retailed at between £100 and £250 and became the prized targets for a new generation of Northside 'hoisters'. The specialist mountaineering jackets and coats produced by 'Sprayway' and 'Berghaus' were gradually replaced by even more elitist fashions, Armand Basi slogan T-shirts (£60 each), suits by Gianni Versace, Yohji Yamamota, and Paul Smith, and miscellaneous items by designers such as Comme des Garçons, Gaultier, Vivienne Westwood, Thierry Mugler and John Richmond were pursued by the Northside Crew in their quest for recession style and status.

Change also occurred within the local music scene. Local bands, such as Northside and King of the Slums, for example, achieved a wider commercial success in the wake of the Madchester music phenomenon. Both bands succeeded in attracting recording deals with record labels and, as a consequence of their commercial success, no longer played gigs at local venues such as The Dome. The explosion of interest in Acid House and

Rave music produced a diverse range of musical forms and interests from Belgian techno, German hardcore techno, ambient house, techno-funk, and so on. There was also a revival in interest in 'Movement Soul', featuring a range of musical idioms from the New Jersey 'garage band', 'Trak This', to the New York House of 'Flower Blossom'. Much of the Movement Soul was highlighted by DJs such as Colin Curtis and Richard Searling, both survivors of the Northern Soul phenomenon described earlier, who retained a significant influence among the Northside Crew as a result of their shows on Sunset Radio.

The Northside Crew managed to retain their subcultural swagger into the early 1990s (and their late twenties), partly as a consequence of the reflected glory derived from their active participation in the Madchester phenomenon and the cultural prominence of the City as a whole in terms of music and fashion. They also derived a sense of status and 'success' as a result of the consistent achievements of 'their' football team, Manchester United. 'The Reds' maintained a consistently high footballing profile throughout the 1980s and early 1990s with a distinct reputation as a cup-winning team. Victories in the FA Cup Finals in 1983, 1985 and 1990 were crowned by a successful return to European competition when the team won the European Cup Winners Cup in 1991. The night that the team brought home the Cup, I travelled with the Northside Crew to the City Centre. Pavarotti was appearing at the G-Mex Exhibition Centre. Over 250,000 people crammed into the Town Hall Square and opera fans in dinner jackets mingled with soccer fans in red and white scarves. It was, as Digger put it, "a buzzin' night". The talk was of beating London for the Olympics bid and the pride they felt in their team and their City. Two years later, the team also ended over a quarter of a century of League Championship 'hoodoo' by winning the English Football League for the first time since 1967. This produced a charge of reflected pride, not only among Northsiders, but the City as a whole.

Sometimes, it seemed as though Manchester United's quarter century of failure in the Championship race was just a piece of cool and effective symbolism, an elaborate illustration of the fact that the 1960s golden age of English soccer flair was buried forever

beneath the muscular robotics of our over-coached teams. The present team, however, contains faint but inspiring echoes of the sixties swashbuckling United sides. As a media 'trinity', names like Giggs, Sharpe and Cantona have too many syllables and operate within a more rigid defensive soccer climate to compare with the effervescent footballing aesthetics of Manchester United's sixties heroes. Nevertheless, they are as close an approximation as the 1990s is ever going to provide for the timeless Manchester United 'holy trinity' of the 1960s - Charlton, Law and Best. There have been almost as many new Georgie Bests as there have been new Bob Dylans, but at eighteen years of age, Ryan Giggs is the most passable imitation to date and a worthy footballing 'hero' for the new generation of Northsiders. However, after more than a decade of Tory rule and when viewed through the distorting lens of recent City-wide subcultural developments, it is not only Ryan Gigg's deathly pallor which provides a nagging reminder that these are less healthy times.

CONCLUSIONS

"Must the young stand alone? Must they be unorganised in spontaneous strategies so highly risky and destructive of persons whilst great machines of state lie idly, misunderstood or malevolently by?" (Willis 1988 : xxiv)

Introduction

My study has attempted to chart and document the ten year course of my involvement in the community of Hartingleigh. I have examined the history of my contacts with the residents of Hartingleigh and the staff, volunteers and affiliates of the Youth and Community Project. In particular, I have sought to outline and explore my fieldwork contacts with the young men and women who participated in, and contributed towards, the growth and development of the research. I have also sought to guide the reader through a theoretically eclectic, but descriptively rich and complex, account of the post-school transitions of study participants. In the exploration of participants' lives, since their school leaving in 1980, I have examined the implications of parental influence, family background residential location, gender, and local opportunity structures for the dynamic processes of transition and for the formation of adult roles, statuses and identities.

The different components of participants' post-school transitions involved different forms and degrees of economic and social participation in the wider society. Economic participation included, for example, participation in different levels and forms of post-school training and in employment (and under/unemployment). It also included economic participation in what Willis (1988) has described as the "citizenship of things", that is, participation as consumers of goods and services. It included participation in the household economy through financial contributions, or contributions to household labour and child care, and through the use of household resources; plus participation in recreation and leisure. Finally, the post-sixteen transition also included a growing participation in adult social life, in personal relationships of different levels of commitment and intensity, in sexual relationships, cohabitation/marriage, and parenthood.

During the 1980s, participants' transitions to adulthood were typically accompanied by attempts to sever complete financial and material dependence upon their parents and families. The process towards adult independence typically involved movement from the natal home towards residential independence. Such movements typically involved establishing an autonomous household, the development of long-term relationships, often formalised as marriage and leading to parenthood. In Britain, the typical components of the post-school transition to adulthood are enshrined in the legal/institutional acquisition of an autonomous adult citizenship. At the age of 16, for example, participants acquired the right to seek and accept contracts of full-time employment, or to run independent businesses. At the same age, participants became legally entitled to set up households independent of parents, or former legal guardians, to become (hetero-) sexually active, cohabit or marry.

The different components of the post-school transition are significant in defining citizenship and what is culturally defined and accepted as 'normal' in adulthood. According to Neugarten and Datan (1973), people are disposed to evaluate their own and others' movement through the life course in culturally circumscribed typologies of typicality: does one's transition conform to the culturally expected pattern of typicality, and do the components of transition occur in the culturally expected order? Research suggests that such normative expectations are particularly strong for young adults (Neugarten *et al* 1965) and that it is common for people to comment on their own and others' deviations from the normative pattern (Banks *et al* 1992 : 172). Examples reveal an implicit social control function within such normative expectations: "She'll never marry, she's a common tart"; "I married late"; "She doesn't want to leave home"; "He left home too soon"; "He didn't start work 'til he was twenty-six"; and so on. Whilst not attaching objective status to the pattern of what may 'normally' be expected, in terms of participants' post-sixteen transitions, these normative expectations do provide a framework of understanding, "against which we as researchers can ask [questions] about progress towards adulthood" (Banks *et al* 1992 : 172).

Among study participants, entitlement to the rights and accoutrements of adult citizenship, though legally enshrined, were, however, exercised in different ways, at different times and to differing degrees. Among the young working class, the ability to exercise the rights of adult citizenship, and the transition from a dependent status associated with residence in the parental home and reliance on parents for material support, to an adult independent status, have been traditionally correlated with the transition to full-time employment. In Chapter Four, I demonstrated how only a minority of study participants had taken all the traditional steps towards 'normal' adulthood outlined in the foregoing paragraphs. In 1986, for example, by the age of 22, around 40% of the participants in my study were still unattached and resident in the natal home, and only seven participants were sustaining residential independence in tandem with ongoing childrearing partnerships. By their early adulthood, the majority of participants in my study, nearly two-thirds, had failed to secure full-time employment following school leaving (see Table 9, Chapter Four, Section 4.4; Table 11, Chapter Five, Section 5.5, for details of participants' labour-market transitions).

The overall unemployment rate in Manchester in the 16 to 24 age group is one in three. In my study area throughout the 1980s, it was approximately one in two. It is important to recognise that unemployment is not some quality spread over the population generally - as if all that is required is for individuals to wait their turn for a 'fifty-fifty' chance to work, or to 'top up' their individual 'employability' skills and qualities through (un)employment training to further augment their chances. My research clearly reveals the geographic, class, and educational concentration of long-term unemployment. The working class young in Manchester are three times as likely as the middle class to be unemployed; Inner City dwellers many more times as likely again; the unqualified are also many times more likely than the qualified; and so on. These are cumulative and interconnected forms of inequality which make a mockery of notions of citizen entitlements, equality, or 'classlessness'. If you are young, unqualified, working class and living in the Inner City, then the prospects for full-time employment (and certainly for moderately well-paid

employment in decent surroundings) have more or less disappeared. The only commonly available 'legitimate' employment prospect now available to the young adults of my study is that of the revolving door of state schemes, the Black Magic Roundabout of Youth Training, Re-Start, and the Adult Training Scheme.

In this final section of my study, I shall attempt to draw together the various strands of my inquiry, and consider what general patterns can be discerned and what broad conclusions these suggest about the dynamic process of post-school transitions in a high unemployment Inner City area.

Summary and Conclusions

The fieldwork conducted during the fourth phase of my study (1986-1990) examined in close detail the patterned differences in participants' experiences of transition from school to employment or, as was the majority transition, from school to under- and unemployment. Post-school progressions into and within the labour market also reflected the movement of participants from childhood dependence into adult independence. Three of the participants in my study effected a traditional post-school progression directly from school into the primary sectors of the labour market. In previous, more prosperous, decades, the traditional transition was the most common post-school progression for the majority of the young working class. The increased propensity of study participants towards post-school long-term unemployment, and the severely restricted numbers of participants who secured the traditional route to adult occupations, reflects both the collapse of the local youth labour market and a fundamental breakdown in the unofficial social contract between citizens and the state.

In Chapter Six, I sought to highlight the interconnected advantages of family background, parental influence and residential location upon the traditional transitionaries' post-school progressions. The three study participants who had effected the traditional post-school transition to employment were from the minority of families in Hartingleigh

who had moved up the benign spiral of the securely employed. These were 'respectable' working class families whose members' prolonged employment in skilled jobs had resulted in home ownership and who were strongly committed to the value of work as a self-evident means to individual social mobility. The important personal, social and labour market advantages bequeathed by the families of the traditional transitionaries included the significant advantages of working class 'respectability'. Such advantages were bestowed on family members seeking work in a restricted job market. The factors I explored were: secure housing status (owner-occupation in Hartingleigh's 'respectable' areas); a domestic background of commitment to employment as a source of self-advancement; a family history of members' prolonged employment; and the consequent ability to confer labour-market advantages through informal workplace contacts. These were the factors that distinguished the three participants in my study who had successfully secured the traditional post-school transition to full-time employment from the vast majority who had not.

Local networks and family contacts are crucially dependent upon informal access to the primary (adult) sectors of the labour market. For the three study participants who had secured post-school transitions to work, successful entry into the labour market was either derived from parental employment, or from the employment of older siblings. In each case, family members were employed in skilled jobs. What is significant is that family members had been in full-time employment for a number of years and therefore had the necessary contacts and repute to ensure access to jobs for other members of the family. The prolonged employment of family members resulted in the ability to confer labour market advantages through informal workplace contacts.

Working class 'respectability' also translated itself into an existential 'getting on - getting out' frame of reference which structured identity and social orientation. According to Brown (1987 : 105), the 'getting out' (of the working class cultural context) frame of reference is especially developed by those who view their occupational and social potential

as culturally distinct from the majority of their neighbours and peers in the working class neighbourhood. Ordinarily, the transformation in social identity required to foster a 'getting on - getting out' frame of reference is mediated through the school. A normative, or normative-instrumental, orientation to education provides for academic success, with academic credentials providing the basis for class mobility. However, my research indicated that employment experience and success also provided a significant social domain, wherein class-cultural identity was either reinforced (through 'getting on' in class-cultural terms), or transformed (through 'getting out' of the class-cultural context). For Deirdre Sharp (hairdressing in an 'upmarket' internationally famous salon) and Denise Weldon (dental nursing), for example, their working environments and the influences derived from their experiences within them, provided the appearance of upward mobility and reinforced a 'getting out' frame of reference (Chapter Six, Section 6.4.2).

For the three study participants who attained the traditional post-school transition to employment, 'getting on - getting out' frames of reference were reinforced subsequently through income acquisition, enhanced social opportunities, and leisure mobility; a general expansion of material, social and cognitive horizons. Augmented social opportunity was translated into a parallel 'domestic career' transition into adult domestic life, into traditional adult roles and statuses. The traditional domestic career transition typically involved a life-course of leisure mobility - 'going out' - followed by courtship, residential mobility, engagement, marriage and parenthood. A traditional post-school transition to secure employment provided the economic foundation upon which stable, conventional, adult roles and identities were constructed. The income derived from full-time employment ensured, for example, the material foundation for future planning with regard to traditional relationship patterns, such as 'saving up' for marriage to provide for a home and to start a family. Although patterns of long-term forward planning and saving characterised the domestic careers of the traditional transitionaries, in each of the three cases, personal savings were also supplemented by parental financial support, as well as financial assistance from the parents of participants' future marriage partners. Such financial

support enabled the traditional transitionaries to undertake owner-occupation. Material support from the wider family network was also forthcoming in terms of household items and wedding presents, all of which conformed to a middle class pattern of "kin aid" discerned by Bell (1968). A final factor in the upward mobility ('getting out') career pattern of two of the women traditional transitionaries was the phenomenon of what Erikson and Goldthorpe (1992) have identified as "marital mobility". The experience of the two women in the "marriage market" conformed to the notion of "marrying up" as identified by Erikson and Goldthorpe (1992 : 254). Both Deirdre Sharp and Denise Weldon encountered moderately successful professional young men as a result of their workplace sociability. Traditional patterns of courtship, engagement, marriage, owner-occupation and parenthood followed and, as a result, both participants anticipated settled, privatised and upwardly mobile lives.

The traditional transition was the minority, and therefore atypical, post-school progression amongst study participants. By obtaining the right kind of employment upon school leaving, the three traditional transitionaries were able to construct lives and identities that were characterised by stability and optimism. The traditional transition to employment was paralleled by an almost stage-like domestic career progression characterised by extended courtship, long-term planning, owner-occupation, marriage and parenthood. What is most striking, when comparing the traditional transitionaries with others in my study, is how differently they perceived their lives and futures. The solidity of the traditional transitionaries' social identities, their self-presentation and self-confidence, served to provide the backcloth against which could be highlighted the alienation, or helplessness, expressed by other study participants. The lives of the traditional transitionaries provided stark contrast to the more forlorn and tenuous hopes, careful fatalism or attitudes of embittered alienation held by others in my study group.

In Chapter Seven, I examined the more common post-school transition to full-time employment. Eight study participants had effected what youth researchers have described

as "uneasy" (Corbett 1990), "ragged" (Wallace 1987), "extended" (Furlong 1992), or "protracted" (Roberts 1987) post-school, labour market transitions. The labour market experiences of the protracted transitionaries were characterised by prolonged periods of post-school unemployment, punctuated by underemployment in contract, casual and part-time work, various government inspired training schemes and special programmes including TOP, WEEP and Community Programmes, work within the local informal economy and also acquisitive crime, periods in post-sixteen education, and for two participants, periods of incarceration in borstal and prison. The different components of the protracted transition served to extend the progression to full-time employment, 'proper jobs', for periods of between four to almost eight years.

For each of the protracted transitionaries, their initial post-school progressions were unambiguous. They were not the traditional transition from school to work, but rather from school into unemployment. Prolonged periods of unemployment were, in most cases, punctuated by semi-compulsory participation in government training schemes, often enforced under the threat of benefit suspension or withdrawal. Participants' experiences with government scheming did not lead to employment and served only to delay their post-school transitions to what they identified as 'proper jobs'. The difficulties most participants had in getting jobs after government schemes created a local folk-lore about their exploitative, containment, or 'slave labour' qualities. Participants had a short-term instrumental orientation to schemes and often viewed them as an inferior substitute for proper jobs. The protracted transitionaries were characterised by an overwhelming desire for full-time employment.

Although the protracted transitionaries' post-school progressions were characterised by extended bouts of unemployment, this did not lead to labour market withdrawal or an erosion of work commitment. Labour market withdrawal was a significant factor in the post-school transitions of study participants who had moved into 'alternative careers' within Hartingleigh's sub- and anti-employment subcultures; for the protracted

transitionaries, however, work commitment was maintained. I discerned various factors to account for the process of sustained work commitment among the protracted transitionaries, and, like the traditional transitionaries, parental influence, family background, and residential location, were important considerations.

The families of the protracted transitionaries were typically situated at the mid-point of the local 'rough-respectable' continuum. Participants were generally drawn from families who lived in local authority housing on Hartingleigh's Canton and Marton estates. In terms of local perceptions, these areas were considered not as 'respectable' as the owner-occupied terraces of the Kings Road district, but not as 'rough' as the Jungle (the Chicken Lane estate). The eight protracted transitionaries were characterised by a general commitment to the orthodox labour market, in part due to the example of the full-time employment of their family income providers (usually fathers), who were typically in full-time employment. However, in contrast to the families of the traditional transitionaries, the income providers within the families of the protracted transitionaries were generally employed in low-skilled or unskilled jobs. As such, family members were unable to supply the significant personal, social, or labour market, advantages as the family members of the traditional transitionaries.

In terms of the employment commitment conferred by working class 'respectability', which characterised the family background and parental influence of the traditional transitionaries, the income providers within the families of the protracted transitionaries tended to view work as a means to an end, not as a method for social advancement, or as a source of intrinsic satisfaction. As a consequence, the main income providers within the families of the protracted transitionaries viewed employment status as forming a more peripheral part of their overall self-image than did the income providers within the families of the traditional transitionaries. The distinction between modes of work commitment was significant, for, like their parents, the protracted transitionaries were typically characterised by an 'alienated' orientation to employment. According to Brown (1987 :

131), the 'alienated' orientation gives rise to an existential 'getting in' frame of reference, which is characterised by the overwhelming desire to get in to the adult working class culture through employment, and the income derived from employment. The undiminished desire of the protracted transitionaries to 'get into' employment was not informed by a concomitant desire to enter work for its intrinsic satisfactions, or as a means to individual self-advancement, but rather to attain adult working class status and autonomy by earning a wage. Work commitment was generally sustained because of the realisation that work provided the key to material satisfactions and the enjoyment of non-work time. The autonomous wage was viewed as a symbolic marker of working class adulthood.

Evidence for the non-erosion of the labour market commitment of the protracted transitionaries was gleaned from the amount of dedicated effort they devoted to job searching. Even in the face of several years of fruitless job searching, rejection by potential employers, exploitation and inadequate supervision and training on schemes, the failure of such schemes to result in employment, and despite the significant periods of time participants spent in casual, contract, informal, and part-time work, the protracted transitionaries, nevertheless, maintained their commitment to finding 'proper jobs'.

The domestic career transitions of the eight study participants who effected protracted labour market transitions may be contrasted vividly with the experiences of the three study participants who secured a traditional transition to primary employment upon school leaving. The traditional transitionaries' domestic careers followed a clear cut life-course progression. The traditional transitionaries left home and were formally engaged to be married by their early twenties, and had all married and undertaken owner-occupation and parenthood by their mid-twenties. Traditional transitions to employment were reflected in relatively unambiguous transitions to traditional adult roles and statuses. In contrast, the post-school transitions of the eight participants who undertook a protracted route to proper jobs were characterised by economic instability, which prevented the forward

planning and 'saving for the future' which had characterised the domestic careers of the traditional transitionaries. Among the protracted transitionaries, relationship/family formation was extended and complex, and characterised by economic instability and social insecurity. Progressions to adult roles were typically elongated, delayed by lack of income, marred by residential dependence and, in some cases, characterised by psychological precariousness. Institutionalised economic instability produced by participation in 'sink' schemes and protracted bouts of unemployment was reflected in the social ambiguity of transitions to adulthood. Essentially, the protracted transitionaries were attempting post-school progressions to adulthood without employment, often whilst still living at home with their parents. Most were unable to sustain residential independence until their mid- to late twenties and only two of the eight successfully undertook owner-occupation.

The patterns of economic instability, social and residential insecurity, and psychological ambiguity were also repeated in the post-school transitions of the majority group within my study, the long-term unemployed. Their experiences in the labour market frequently produced cyclical transitions. This was a Black Magic Roundabout of post-school unemployment, government scheming, underemployment, more unemployment, more schemes, and so on. To some extent, this pattern was similar to that of the protracted transitionaries. However, unlike the protracted transitionaries, for those study participants who undertook a post-school cyclical transition, primary employment was not an end result. The cyclical transitionaries could, therefore, be distinguished from the protracted transitionaries in terms of their final labour market destinations. The cyclical transitionaries were study participants whose post-sixteen progressions into adulthood occurred entirely in the absence of the major identity 'structuring' influence of full-time employment. The devastation of the prospects for work for the majority group within my study was also a devastation of their sense of the future. As Willis (1988) has argued, the income derived from employment is the means towards an autonomous future adult identity:

> "The wage is the crucial pivot for social and cultural transitions into what society defines as adulthood: making plans for marriage and settling down; moving into a household separate from parents; becoming a consumer and exercising some power in the market place; joining the drama and the power struggles of the ways in which we make ourselves and our futures through the world of work" (1988 : 261).

In Chapter Eight, I explored the career components of a cyclical mode of post-school progression. These broadly duplicated the labour market experiences of the protracted transitionaries and contained early movements into and out of unemployment, interspersed with participation in one or more varieties of (un)employment training schemes. Discussions with study participants produced reactions to government scheme participation that were ranged in a continuum from unfavourable to bitterly hostile. References were made to the poor working conditions of those schemes with work experience components, and the failure of such schemes to provide the amount, or type, of training promised. Complaints were also made about the derisory training allowances, the element of compulsion invoked to undertake the schemes under threat of benefit withdrawal, and the sense of being 'ripped off' for working alongside full-time employees earning up to four times the training allowance for doing exactly the same work. There were further expressions of bitter complaint concerned with the sense of being patronised, or being treated 'like shit', by training supervisors on community based schemes or training workshops. There was no evidence amongst study participants that multiple scheme participation provided access to employment, or compensated for social and educational disadvantage. The most common complaint among study participants was that cyclical transitions into and out of schemes and special programmes had not produced 'proper jobs'. The thirty-nine participants had between them amassed a total of almost ninety training schemes of different varieties and styles. In terms of the aggregate amount of time, this represented a staggering total of almost sixty years of their lives. In only one case had scheme participation provided direct access to a 'proper job'. Thus, I have argued that the evolution of an implicit 'national youth policy' of containment and socialisation *via* the interventions of government policy (mobilised through the MSC as a central state agency for youth) reflects, into the late twentieth century, the historical

continuity of 'respectable fears' concerning the young unemployed working class. As a consequence, they have found themselves increasingly 'conscripted' onto schemes and thus ' kept off the streets'. The provision of 'training for jobs' has ensured relative compliance. Social control has been attempted through time and work discipline, containment secured through surveillance, regulation, and "schooling for the social order" (Gleeson 1986 : 393).

The majority of participants who endured government scheming and post-school cyclical transitions on the Black Magic Roundabout had, by the mid 1980s, entered the massed ranks of the long-term unemployed. The long-term unemployed in my study group were characterised by a number of distinctive factors. They were all drawn from Hartingleigh's council estates, and nineteen participants had originated from the most stigmatised of Hartingleigh's estates, namely the Chicken Lane estate, known locally as 'the Jungle' and commonly understood to be the 'roughest' estate on the Northside (of Manchester). I also highlighted the significant levels of trans-generational unemployment to be found on the estate. Aside from their original residential location on the estates characterised by persistently high unemployment and from within families at the 'rough' end of the 'rough-respectable' continuum, the long-term unemployed were also characterised by extensive familial and parental unemployment. For twenty-two of the twenty-five study participants who had entered more or less permanent unemployment, their families contained main income providers (generally fathers) who were also unemployed. Unemployment within such families was endemic and often such families were also characterised by the unemployment of older and/or younger siblings. As working family members may be a useful source of unadvertised job vacancies, family unemployment may be considered responsible for severing participants from an important, informal, information network. Moreover, in the case of eight of the long-term unemployed participants, paternal figures were actually absent from the household due to death, divorce and separation, or long-term imprisonment.

Despite the illusion of greater opportunity for young people in the 1980s and the increased variety of post-sixteen progression routes, youth research literature has repeatedly demonstrated that, throughout the Thatcher decade, it was young people from socially and educationally disadvantaged backgrounds who remained most vulnerable to long-term unemployment. 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.

The absence, or long-term unemployment, of the parents of the cyclical transitionaries precluded significant parental intercession, both in terms of the ability to bestow social or labour market advantages, and in terms of the inculcation of work commitment or aspirations related to the formal labour market. This was in stark contrast to the significant degree of parental influence and intercession exercised by the parents of the traditional transitionaries on their offspring and, to a lesser degree, the protracted transitionaries.

Although the families of the unemployed cyclical transitionaries did not contribute significantly to the inculcation of work commitment and labour market aspirations, most participants, nevertheless, unsuccessfully attempted post-school entry to the formal labour market. However, employment commitment was replaced by cynicism and disillusionment, in part as a consequence of early labour market experiences but, most importantly, as a result of participants' experiences with the futility of the Black Magic Roundabout of cyclical transitions through unemployment, underemployment and 'sink' schemes. The smouldering resentment engendered by such experiences provided a partial explanation for the abandonment of labour market commitment - and the proactive development of sub- and anti-employment norms and values, a realistic response to a bleak situation.

Cyclical transitions, labour market withdrawal, and long-term unemployment had profound 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. Participants built on a collective sense of identity constructed out of an exaggerated and predominantly aggressive version of working class machismo. Group bonding and solidarity ensured that same-sex friendship patterns and affiliations formed the predominant focus for domestic progressions. For six of the long-term unemployed males, commitment to the generating milieu of their localities and peer groups militated against early residential mobility. Eight male participants, however, sustained residential independence as a consequence of income derived from 'fiddle' jobs or acquisitive crime. Of all study participants, the unemployed males displayed the most complex variation in domestic career transitions, but most were generally unsuccessful in sustaining ongoing childrearing relationships. The pressure, insecurity, lack of stable routine, and sometimes danger, associated with alternative modes of transition mitigated against stability or emotional durability in relationship/family formation.

By 1990, the following overall picture of the domestic career transitions of the fourteen long-term unemployed males could be discerned. Three participants were resident in the natal home and unattached, although one participant had separated from his former partner and child. Five participants had effected residential independence and were unattached, although four of these participants had separated from childrearing relationships. Four participants had effected residential independence and were sustaining ongoing childrearing relationships, although one partner had separated from his original partner and their child in order to establish a second relationship with a young woman and her two children. Two participants had effected sustained residential independence and were cohabiting and childless, although one of the participants had formerly cohabited with another young woman.

The complex variation in domestic career transitions and the lack of success among the long-term unemployed males in generally sustaining childrearing relationships may be attributed to various factors. The lack of stable routine associated with the disciplines of formal employment, together with the life-style associated with participants' 'alternative transitions', were often incompatible with sustained childrearing partnerships. Sometimes continuity in relationships was broken by periods of absence spent 'on remand', or in prison. Although the majority of participants had undertaken childrearing relationships and fathered one, or more, children, only three participants successfully sustained ongoing relationships with their original partners. The masculine 'code of honour', and the exaggerated subcultural emphasis on hardness, emotional detachment and perceived machismo, also inhibited the development of a durable intimacy with women.

There was a general pattern among the separated male participants of 'absentee parenthood', of periodically visiting their former partners in order, "to see the kids". Some participants developed semi-nomadic life-styles based on movement between their own accommodation, the homes of their friends and girlfriends, the parental home, and the home of their former partner. A restless instability was often fuelled by drug-taking and the lack of daily routine associated with long-term detachment from the disciplines of full-time employment. Such instability was also reflected in the 'booms and slumps' of anti-employment, sub-employment 'careers'.

The mediation of gender in participants' cyclical transitions produced gender-based responses to long-term unemployment, and labour market withdrawal was articulated in distinctive gender-bound domains - the home and the street. Whereas, the males fell back on an exaggerated version of masculinity, women retreated into a domestic version of femininity. The domestic career transitions of the long-term unemployed women were circumscribed by a working class cultural emphasis on a domestic apprenticeship of homecare and childrearing. Early domestic careers of pregnancy, childrearing, and homecaring served generally to locate women in positions of economic and domestic

subordination. Domestic roles and duties effectively kept the women divided and dependent. In such situations, there was a typical withdrawal from labour market commitment and aspirations into a taken-for-granted fatalistic acceptance of traditional domestic roles and duties. 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. Lack of viable options, such as, for example, the possibility of a 'proper job' or independent style of life, made, what I have described as the 'mothering option', a higher status 'occupation' than long-term, under- or unemployment.

The overall unemployment rate for young women is broadly similar to that for young men. However, the new broken transitions suggest that the traditional roles of young working class women have intensified. Thus, for the women in my study the notions of 'choice' and 'freedom' carried little meaning. Choice would only have meant something if women participants had access to a range of opportunities - including 'proper' jobs - and if such opportunities carried a 'social wage'. Such demands should be at the heart of policy development, but they are not, and, until they are, policy makers should not be surprised by women's continued interest in gender-specific escape attempts to mitigate the meaningless and boredom of long-term unemployment. Whether, for example, single parenthood is 'chosen', and whether or not it creates an alternative route towards the definition of an adult identity and residential independence, for the long-term unemployed women in my study it generally brought greater entrapment in poverty, in the home, in further domestic work, and in heightened social isolation (with the dubious eventual 'escape' into heterosexual relationships). The recent targeting of lone parents, i.e. 'single mothers', by New Right representatives such as Peter Lilley and John Redwood indicates that, under a spurious Victorian morality, the lone parent is to be ideologically shunted into the category of undeserving poor as a precursor for reductions in entitlement to, and further cuts in, state support. Evidence suggests 'single mothers' are not only abandoned by men (patriarchy), but that they are also to be abandoned by the economy (capitalism),

as the so-called, 'neutral' state seeks further to reduce social expenditure. Arguably, the achievement of adulthood for young working class women is still largely dependent on their relationship to men who dominate the worlds of education, work and policy. Therefore, the 'choices' for young working class women are even more limited than they are for young working class men. One has only to consider the terminology; to be a 'family man' is a symbol of respectability for men, to be a 'family woman', without a man, the reverse. This is not because of any intrinsic factors concerned with the adequacy of the 'single mother', but because of extrinsically created and perpetuated male (patriarchal/capitalist) social values.

Under the heading: "Do they want to marry a man or the state?", a thoroughly offensive cartoon recently appeared in *The Sunday Times* of a feckless bride marrying a male figure called Social Security, while pig-like children crawled among her skirt and a tattooed man stood in the background pouring lager down his throat. Behind them, of course, were the obligatory tower blocks, the other symbols of 'brutalist' architecture and urban decay. The overclass's view of the so-called 'underclass' makes for ugly reading. Although the majority of lone parents are widowed, divorced, or separated, and have therefore tried and failed, for whatever reason, to attain the dominant ideal of the nuclear family, the caricature of the 'lazy breeder' who allows herself to be impregnated in order to 'scrounge off the taxpayer', or 'jump the housing queue' is the image routinely resurrected. Again, government culpability is smokescreened behind Victorian morality, and the policies of those that have precipitated the social conditions which foster such desperate escape attempts - which are inevitably accompanied by penury - remain hidden. Evidence from research participants indicates that, had other options or 'choices' been available, they would have been taken and pursued. A way forward would be to ensure adequate pre-school independent childcare, or tax relief, or changes in benefit regulations, which would make part-time work a feasible proposition. But such policy innovations imply a collectivist and non-patriarchal societal response that is at odds with the ideological impetus of government strategy. It is easier simply to blame the victims.

I would agree with Coffield *et al* (1986) and Willis (1988) who have called for a new 'social contract' for young people and for "programmes of positive discrimination in favour of young women" (Coffield *et al* 1986 : 226). This would need to be addressed at all levels. At the level of national policy, all women are at the receiving end of an institutionalised sexism, which is still unselfconscious and self-perpetuating; thus the MSC document, *A New Training Initiative* (1981), groups together: "Women, disabled people and members of ethnic minorities" (1981 : 4). At the local level, scheme allocation procedures reproduce sexist assumptions about women's roles and, as a result, careers offices often develop an "inbuilt tendency not to take [women] quite so seriously" (see Chapter Eight, Section 8.6.1). Enabling initiatives, such as those advocated within anti-sexist youthwork principles and practice, could be actively promoted rather than economically marginalised; a new social contract for young women can only be effective if it is educative and if women can seize the reins of any new initiatives that are created. Limited evidence for the effectiveness of such a strategy within youthwork was provided by Amanda Gardiner (Chapter Eight, Section 7.8.7) who, through a practical engagement with anti-sexist youthwork, was able to recreate her adult identity free from the imposition of conventional role expectations. The new social contract for working class women must similarly begin to challenge the relentless continuity of their lives as carers of the home, of children and of men.

Recent youth transitions research has suggested that post-sixteen progressions have become freer from class-gendered constraints, that the opening up of new post-school training routes implies that young people can construct their futures within newly created institutional spaces (*cf* Chisholm *et al* 1990). My study generally does not support this view. Basic survival within the "canopy of structured inequality" (Riseborough 1993 : 2) was the dominant experience of research participants. Like Roberts (1993), I would argue that: "For working class youth, beneath the mirage of wider opportunities, descent into unemployment was the main new career trajectory created by trends in the 1980s"

(1993 : 245). Thus, within the overarching context of structured inequality, my research conforms to the broad findings of the recent ESRC 16-19 Initiative:

> "The deprivation associated with a less prosperous home background continued in the late 1980s to shape adult destinations of young people, [and] the deprivation associated with a depressed local labour market was almost equally profound in its effects" (Banks *et al* 1992 : 183).

Within my study, I have sought to draw out the relationship between institutional and structural developments - such as the collapse of the local youth labour market and the local effects of government policy interventions in areas such as housing, welfare benefits and post-school training - and study participants as active social agents, often responding proactively to changes rather than simply being "propelled" or "programmed" (Roberts 1993 : 223) by them. As C. Wright-Mills has advised researchers, the challenge of sociology is to understand both the objective (history) and subjective (biography) aspects of social life, locating them historically and interpreting the relationship between these interrelated dimensions. This remains the challenge facing future researchers interested in post-school transitions. Following from C. Wright Mill's dictum, and also from my own predilections, my research provides evidence of the empowering proactivity and resistance of the subcultures of the long-term unemployed. Of all the post-sixteen transition routes, what happens to young people after the movement into long-term unemployment is the most under-researched. Lack of research access, compounded by a host of ethical and political considerations, has prevented researchers from venturing into this, as yet, undisclosed social realm. In Chapter Nine of my study, I examined a typology of alternative careers and transitions and, in Chapter Ten, I sought to examine the slide into the sub-economy and the acquisitive crime mode in the context of the subcultural milieu within which such alternative transitions were constructed. I argued that the subcultures of the long-term unemployed provided an alternative, though largely symbolic, basis for life-course transitions and, at the same time, supplied non-conventional criteria for re-constructing self-identity and self-esteem. Like Willis (1990 : 156): "These have been my own [micro] questions ... how [objective] subordination is sometimes lived

[subjectively] as celebration; why oppressed groups go so lively to their own confinement" (brackets in original).

My work in these areas indicated that, in concrete situations, symbolic [micro] subcultural creativity produced responses to changes that occurred at the [macro] economic, structural and institutional levels. Subcultural creativity hints at the possibilities for oppositional, independent, or alternative reformulations of the self. The subcultures of the long-term unemployed circumvent the transition to adulthood defined by the new regulating, institutional youth agencies, and procreate the exploration of alternatives. They pushed against the definitions of, and as a consequence, partially changed, the stages, meanings, and impositions of the old conventional local transitions. I argued that alternative transitions and careers could best be understood as "status sequences which involved choice patterns" (*cf Coles* forthcoming). I argued that individuals intentionally pursued and/or actively constructed alternative transitions, but that it would be a mistake to assume a clear-cut life plan with unconstrained patterns of motivation and 'free choice'. As participants maintained: "No job, no money, what fuckin' choice", or "Beggars can't be choosers" (Chapter Five, Section 5.7). Thus, as Willis has argued: "There are choices but not choices over choices" (1990 : 159).

The objective material circumstances which generate "relative deprivation" (Lea and Young 1984), or "status frustration" (Cloward and Ohlin 1960) link objective (historical) and subjective (biographical) dimensions in the genesis of alternative transitions. As Cloward and Ohlin have observed:

> "When pressures from unfulfilled aspirations and blocked opportunity become sufficiently intense many lower class youth turn away from legitimate channels, adopting other means beyond conventional mores which might offer a possible route to success goals" (1960 : 105).

This is not to argue for a crude cultural, or materialist determinism, or that objective material circumstances inevitably determine subjective feelings and responses. It may not be a one-to-one causal relationship but to argue that -

> " ... people in our culture who are absolutely worse off than they were or expected to be, and who are still young enough to both resent and resist this, will not have a stronger tendency towards deviance, seems curious to say the least" (Box 1987 : 196).

Of course not all those who are impoverished by long-term unemployment turn to acquisitive crime, but without such considerations as relative deprivation, status frustration, or the "current grotesque levels of income inequalities" (Box 1987 : 201), it is difficult to see how else the motivational elements of individual predispositions might be generated, unless, of course, we return to evasive reactionary arguments which rest on issues of biology, or individual moral defectiveness, or victims' carelessness, etc. (see Chapter Four, Section 4.8.7).

The 'causes' of the predisposition towards acquisitive crime are, in my thesis, rooted in moral indignation, resistance, and material circumstances. However, the phrases 'career' and 'career choice present a picture of participants choosing freely from a wide range of alternatives. In the everyday world of the young working class of Hartingleigh, choices were constrained by a variety of factors including a background of social and economic disadvantage, stigmatised residential location, absentee fathers, trans-generational unemployment, the cynicism and alienation of a broken unwritten social contract, and participants' post-school labour market experiences. Alternative careers and transitions were evolved within a cultural ecology of alternative enterprise that was tolerant of acquisitive law-breaking as a domain for proactivity and resistance. For the long-term unemployed males in particular, alternative transitions articulated oppositional cultural patterns which drew on elements derived form the parent culture in a creative and potentially transformative fashion. Alternative transitions were frequently sustained by the focal concerns of the sub- and anti-employment subcultures which, through activities such as 'totting' or 'grafting' not only appropriated the colloquialisms of the parent culture, but also reinvented them, investing them with new subcultural meanings and behaviours.

In making what Becker (1963) has indicated is the crucial initial career 'choice', participants' decisions were circumscribed by the trans-generational transmission of a

subcultural ethos of law-breaking behaviour. The subcultural social theatre provided a domain for the articulation of a negation or inversion of conventional norms and values, which, for example, allowed participants to redefine law-breaking and negative societal labelling in a positive, status-enhancing, light. Within the overarching context of diminished legitimate opportunity for constructing, or asserting, adult status and identity, participants evolved and fostered alternative, subcultural, status systems which accorded prestige to law-breaking behaviours, demeanours and endeavours.

I also highlighted the paradoxical role of both the Juvenile Justice System and the adult custodial experience in reinforcing resistance and opposition, through the provision of an additional impetus in the direction of criminal solidarity, and, as an additional source of subcultural status. In view of the resurrection of the "hang 'em, flog 'em and gaol 'em" rhetoric of the most recent Conservative Party Conference, and the impending policy changes signalled by Home Secretary Michael Howard, I would follow Box (1987 : 199-213) in recommending that a more practical way forward would be to imprison fewer, rather than more, petty young offenders. Scotland Yard have been blunt in attributing last year's rise in crime in London to the deteriorating social conditions in the poorest parts of the capital (*Guardian* 9.1.93 : 22). Thus it is not only sociologists who recommend that the way to reduce the vicious cycle of crime-prison-marginalisation-crime-prison, etc., is to address the social problems which have precipitated it; problems such as long-term youth unemployment, and the 'grotesque' inequalities of education, opportunity, income and wealth. In the meantime, the poor will continue to make their own history and construct their own solutions.

In Britain, the irregular economy has long been a historical fact of working class life. Participants whose lives became organised around moves into, and out of, sub-employment had already taken the first steps into illegality by not declaring the income to 'the Social'. Activities in the intermediate range of alternative careers - such as 'hustling' or 'totting' - merely extended the transition into law-breaking activity. Such a movement

further separated participants from the restraining codes and conventions of orthodox citizenship, and allowed them to progress further into a marginal, semi-legal existence. The connections I explored in Chapter Ten between the subcultural trends in the Madchester dance, music, fashion and football culture meshed with an alternative enterprise organised around the status roles of 'hustling' drugs. The subcultural routines and easy income derived from 'hustling' served finally to remove participants from any investment in waged labour in the formal sector of the economy and from the conventional routes towards the definition of adult self and identity.

The transition from early careers within the alternative enterprise of the local informal economy to intermediate careers of 'hustling' coincided with new opportunities for alternative income acquisition and status definition supplied by the wider subcultural landscape. The impact of the Madchester Acid House and Rave phenomenon was overwhelming. Within the subcultural focal concerns, style, music and drugs were the resources utilised to articulate a hedonistic irreverent attitude, and they also provided the symbolic means for articulating a sense of community and of community resistance and opposition. The anti-employment ethos of the Rave culture also inverted conformist values, such as work commitment, so that the ability to prosper, 'scally style', without recourse to paid employment became a measure of self-worth and status - a virtue in itself.

Anti-employment careers took various forms but were generally characterised by an angry and apocalyptic viewpoint, a fundamental rejection of the restraining codes of conventional citizenship. I outlined the general contours of several anti-employment careers. The alternative career of the 'blagger', perhaps, represented the ultimate culmination of an anti-employment posture. The 'blagger's' main resource was a mad courage; the kind of courage required to enter the public space of conventional citizenship to forcibly take what they believed was simply their due. The overriding concern with an image of machismo offered alternative routes towards defining an essentially fragile masculine psychological and economic potency. Lacking nearly every social attribute that

defines status, or success, in conventional terms those members of the anti-employment subculture inflated the one quality they had dominion over - their masculinity. This provided the basis for group solidarity in the face of disadvantage in every other respect.

The symbolic sense of community generated by the group bonding, solidarity and loyalty of their subcultural affiliations also provided the Northside with a sense of organic community. It was a "magical recovery of community" (Clarke 1976 : 99); "an attempt to retrieve some of the socially cohesive elements destroyed in their parent culture" (P. Cohen 1980 : 83). The "magical recovery of community" was achieved through drugs, style, music, football and communication - listening, dancing, talking, singing, chanting - through 'making' messages and symbolic history and biography, not receiving them from the 'top down'. The symbolic challenge to the dominant moral order was not pitched at the level of material resources, although in the case of the anti-employment factions material rewards were generated from acquisitive law-breaking, but, rather, resistance was articulated in the terrain of cultural symbolism; through chemically changed consciousness, anti-fashion, drugs, the symbolic community of the Rave, trance-dancing, and the symbiotic 'success' generated through football affiliations and acquisitive crime. Thus, as always, the subcultural community of the Northside did not offer any effective challenge to the 'orderings' of inequality:

> "The development and emergence of proto-communities may signal not so much a fundamental change in the orderings of power, class and economic interests as a shift in how these things become lived and perceived" (Willis 1990 : 142).

Nevertheless, through their subcultural concerns and the 'magical', 'symbolic', recovery of community, the Northside, for a brief subcultural 'moment', fashioned a self-generated response to the Thatcherite onslaught on their lives and community. Such an onslaught could not go unanswered and, even as I write, the new spontaneous Inner City responses are being generated - incidentally feeding reactionary myths and stereotypes as they do.

Final Thoughts

In seeking to investigate and analyse the subcultural creativity of the long-term unemployed and, as best I can, represent their interests, I am caught in the huge moral dilemma brought about by exposure to and involvement in the telling of hidden secrets about private knowledges. Thus, although subcultures cannot attack, much less defeat, power and inequality, they depend for their success on stealth, on the ability to sneak between the cracks in systems of social control. Ducking and diving, 'hustling' and 'totting', creating opportunity in the face of disadvantage, subculture maintains its autonomy by spontaneity, by keeping one step ahead of incorporation. Exposure, analysis, the telling of profane secrets, may aid social control if not, indeed, criminal control and prosecution. Exposure may also serve the process of blaming the victims through imputed pathology, rendering the subculture as the 'problem' and not the social conditions of their existence. However, "some private knowledges actually cry out to go public". For the point is to uncover the dialectic between agency and structure "not for the university seminar, but for its relevance to local action; to help in the politicisation of cultural knowledge; to make struggle (practice) more dialectically informed with its own attendant forms of knowledge (theory)" (Willis 1988 : xxiv). For the young must not stand alone - it is the responsibility of adults to engage in their experience and perception, to do the work of preparation and analysis. It is the responsibility of us all to help to fashion the circumstances in which the profane creativity of the young may be enabled and empowered by our advocacy: "To create the conditions in which spontaneous creativity can be more constructive and able to benefit from rational perspectives" (Willis 1988 : xxiv).

The analysis should start from the dialectics of inequality, although such analyses inevitably inform the dialectics of change, perhaps of liberation, so that human agents might more knowingly perceive how inequality shapes life chances and post-school transitions to adulthood: "Their problem is related to the scarcity of good chances and practice, not pathology" (Parker 1974 : 205). The tools of analysis and understanding

provide the bases for change and the creation of new possibilities for agency and culture. At best, therefore, my thesis is an attempt to 'ring the bells' of advocacy and understanding - an attempt to contribute to the process of change. The young working class of my home City are generating their own, often desperate, responses and solutions to the social and economic onslaught on their communities, and I would be failing in my responsibility to participants and others like them to ignore the tolling of the bells of anger ringing deep from within the Inner City:

> "Ring the bells, wake the town
> Everyone is sleeping, shout at the crowd
> Wake them up
> This anger's deeper than sleep"
>
> (James: RING THE BELLS 1992)

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APPENDIX A

QUESTIONNAIRE -

HARTINGLEIGH YOUTH AND COMMUNITY PROJECT: SCHOOL LEAVERS SURVEY (1980)

[redacted]

Neighbourhood Project

[redacted]

MANCHESTER

Tel. No [redacted]

Strictly confidential

[redacted]

School Leavers Survey

PART I ... (ABOUT YOURSELF)

January 1980

I a) Surname [redacted]

First names in full [redacted]

b) Sex *(Please ring appropriate number)*

Boy 1

Girl (2)

Leave blank

II a) Date of birth [redacted]

b) Today's date [redacted]

Day Month Year

III a) Home address [redacted]

b) Name and address of school

[redacted]

Neighbourhood Project

MANCHESTER

Tel. N

You may feel that some of your answers are personal but we can assure you that the only people who will see this survey are and Steve

All your replies will be treated in the strictest confidence and if you wish you may leave your name and address off the front cover. Later on you will be given a second questionnaire which will ask for your views and opinions about services and facilities at the Youth Centre. You will also be invited to attend the Youth Club to give your views to the workers and management committee about how you would like the Youth Club to be run and what projects you would like to see set up

We have also left the last page of this questionnaire blank in case there are any comments you'd like to make. We are very interested to hear your views.

Thank you again for giving us your time.

Steve

Jan. 1980

How to answer the questions

You will find that the questions on these pages are of three kinds:
Firstly, there are those where we ask you simply to write an answer of a few words in the space provided.

Secondly, there are those questions where there are a number of possible answers and we have written these with a number against each one. All you have to do is put a ring around the number that is next to the answer that you want to give.

For example:

In your school, are there:

Both boys and girls	(1)
Boys only	2
Girls only	3

Thirdly, some questions have a box or boxes by them in which you have to write a number, or numbers.

For example:

How old were you last birthday? | 1 | 5 | yrs.

You may sometimes feel that you have not been able to say all that you want just by ringing or writing a number. If so, please add any comment you want either next to the question or on the back of the form.

Remember that this is not a test of any kind. *There are no right or wrong answers.* What we want to know is what *you* think or have done or want to do.

Thank you for all your help

In the next few pages you will be asked about yourself, your school and what you expect to be doing in the next few years. It is, of course, very important that the answers you give us really do tell us your ideas about things, so please give as accurate and open an answer as you can.

Country of birth England

If you were born outside England, Wales or Scotland, in which year did you first come to live in this country? .....

With which hand do you write best?

Ring one number

Right hand	1
Left hand	2
Equally well with either hand	3

Below is a list of things that people of your age have said about how they feel towards school. Read each one carefully and then ring one of the numbers to show for each one how true you think what it says is in your own case.

Leave blank

	Very true	Partly or usually true	Cannot say, no feelings either way	Partly or usually untrue	Not true at all	
a) I feel school is largely a waste of time	1	2	3	4	5	
b) I am quiet in the classroom and get on with my work	1	2	3	4	5	
c) I think homework is a bore	1	2	3	4	5	
d) I find it difficult to keep my mind on my work	1	2	3	4	5	
e) I never take work seriously	1	2	3	4	5	
f) I don't like school	1	2	3	4	5	
g) I think there is no point in planning for the future; you should take things as they come	1	2	3	4	5	
h) I am always willing to help the teacher	1	2	3	4	5	

Sometimes people are punished for misbehaving in school. A list of typical punishments is given below. We should like to know whether you think that any of these should **never** be used in school. Please ring the number against any which you think should **never** be used.

Ring all appropriate numbers

Having to stay in school outside normal hours (e.g. detention)	1
Being expelled	2
Suspension (not being allowed to come to school for a while)	3
Corporal punishment (cane, or any other method)	4
Having a report or letter sent to your parent	5

5 At what age do you think you are most likely to leave school?

Ring one number

16	1
17	2
18 or over	3
Uncertain	4

6 Are any of the following important reasons for leaving school at this age? Ring the numbers to show which are important to you.

Ring all appropriate numbers

I have always taken it for granted	1
I need to earn as soon as possible because my family needs the money	2
I want to earn a wage and be independent as soon as I can	3
I don't like doing school work	4
I want to do the same as most of my friends	5
My parents' advice	6
I can't study what I want to study at school	7
Teachers' advice	8
I have a particular course or job in mind which I don't have to stay on at school to do	9
I want to get married in the next year or so	1
I want more qualifications	2
I like school life	3
I want to go somewhere else to finish my education	4
I can't think of anything else to do	5
I'm not good enough to stay on	6

7 Everybody has had to stay at school until they are 16. In your own case do you wish that you could have left when you were 15?

Ring one number

Yes	1
No	2
Uncertain	3

8 Do you think that people of your age who do not want to go to school should be allowed to stay away?

Ring one number

Yes	1
No	2
Uncertain	3

9 Have you stayed away from school at all this year when you should have been there?

Ring one number

Yes	1
No	2

If **yes**, please ring the number against whichever of these were reasons for you missing school.

Ring all that apply

Fed up with school	1
Had to help at home	2
Wanted to do something special away from school	3
Some other reason	4

Write here your reasons for "bunking off" school:-

I didn't Find School interesting

I [illegible] told what to do.

10 For each of the following subjects we would like you to say roughly how good you think you are at it compared with other people of your age. Please ring the appropriate numbers against each subject.

Leave blank

	Never studied this subject	Below Average	Average	Above Average
a) Mathematics	1	2	3	4
b) English	1	2	3	4
c) Science	1	2	3	4
d) Art	1	2	3	4
e) Music	1	2	3	4
f) Practical subjects (e.g. woodwork, metalwork, domestic science)	1	2	3	4
g) Sports and games	1	2	3	4

11 Have you ever had any contact with the following services since your eleventh (11th) birthday (please ring all that apply)

Please ring

Social Services or Social Work Dept..... 1
Educational Welfare Department.....2
Careers Officer/Youth Employment Officer.....3
Voluntary Social Work Agency.....4

(please state which)

Police or Probation Officer.....5

12 Have you ever been in trouble with the police

Please ring

Yes.....1
No.....2

13 Have you ever been taken to Court

Please ring

Yes.....1

No.....2

If yes, please give as many details as you can.....
.....
.....

14 After you leave school would you like to:

Ring one number

Continue with full-time study	1
Do a job that involves part-time study	(2)
Do a job that requires no further study	3
Don't know	4

15 If you want to continue with full-time study, please ring the number against the place where you would most like to do it.

Ring one number

A University or Polytechnic	1
A teacher's training college (college of education)	2
A technical college, college of commerce or secretarial college	3
A college of art, music or drama	4
Somewhere else	5
Don't know	6

16 How anxious do you think your parents are that you should do well at school?

Ring one number

Very anxious	1
Fairly anxious	2
Contented if I do my best	(3)
They don't mind one way or the other	4
Uncertain	5

17 What would you **like** to be your first full-time job? Please give as many details as possible.

Leave blank

Modeling fashion.

Hairdressing.

18 a) What do you think is **in fact likely** to be your first full-time job? Please give as many details as possible.

[redacted]

modeling hairstyles and clothes.

b) From where have you heard about this job? Ring all of the following that apply.

Ring all appropriate numbers

From your parents	1
From another relative	2
At school, from a teacher or careers talk or film	3
From a Youth Employment Officer	4
From seeing something on television	5
From seeing something in a newspaper or magazine	6
From a friend	(7)
Somewhere else	8
Don't remember	9

) In choosing a job what things about it do you think are important? Choose your answers from the list below; ring as many as you wish.

Ring one number

The job should involve working with your hands	Y
It should involve using your head and need thought and concentration	X
It should be an outdoor job	0
It should be well-paid	1
It should have convenient hours and conditions	2
The job should involve variety	3
The job should offer you chances of promotion	4
It should give you the chance of being in charge of other people	5
The job should let you be your own boss	6
It should be a clean job	7
It should give you the opportunity of helping others	8
It should not have too much responsibility at first	9

b) Now go back over the list above, choose the one thing which is *most* important to you about a job, and write its number or letter in the box in the margin.

Enter number or letter in boxes

the most important	3
and the second most important	8
and the third most important	Y

If to get the job you wanted you had to move to a different part of the country, would you be prepared to do so?

Ring one number

Yes	1
No	2
Uncertain	3

a) Do you have a spare-time job or jobs during term-time?

Ring one number

No	1
Yes, *weekends* only	2
Yes, *weekdays* only	3
Yes, *both* weekdays and weekends	4

b) How many hours most weeks does this job (or jobs) take up?

Ring one number

Less than 3 hours each week	1
3–6 hours each week	2
More than 6 hours and up to 9 hours	3
More than 9 hours and up to 12 hours	4
More than 12 hours and up to 15 hours	5
More than 15 hours	6

c) How much money do you earn on average each week through part-time work during term-time?

Ring one number

Up to 99p	1
Between £1 and £1.99	2
Between £2 and £2.99	3
Between £3 and £3.99	4
Between £4 and £4.99	5
Between £5 and £5.99	6
[illegible]	7

22 a) How much money do your parents give you on average each week to save or spend? **Include** any money they give you regularly which is specifically for clothing, travel or meals. (If they give you money as you ask for it, please try to work out how much this comes to most weeks.)

Ring one number

None	1
Less than 49p	2
Between 50p and 74p	3
Between 75p and 99p	4
Between £1 and £1.49	5
Between £1.50 and £1.99	6
Between £2 and £2.99	7
£3 or more	8

b) Is this money meant to cover:
(*Please ring all that apply*)

Ring all that apply

All or most of your clothes	1
Travel to school	2
Some meals	3
None of these	4

23 From the following list, please choose the two things on which most of your money goes. (*Ring two only*)

Ring two numbers

Records, cassettes, record players, etc.	Y
Sports kit and equipment	X
Clothes	0
Make-up	1
Entertainment (cinema, discos, watching sport, etc.)	2
Alcoholic drinks	3
Food and sweets	4
Cigarettes	5
Books, papers, magazines, etc.	6
Savings	7
Any others (please describe)	8

24 What do you think would be the best age to get married?
Ring the number against this age.

Ring one number

16 or 17	1
18 or 19	2
20 or 21	3
22 – 25	4
26 – 30	5
Over 30	6
Uncertain or don't know	7
Don't wish to marry	8

25 At what age would you ideally like to start a family?

Ring one number

16 or 17	1
18 or 19	2
20 or 21	3
22 – 25	4
26 – 30	5
Over 30	6
Uncertain or don't know	7
Don't wish to have children	8

26 What size family would you like to have?

Ring one number

No children	1
One child	2
Two children	3
Three children	4
Four children	5
Five children	6
Six or more children	7
Don't know	8

Leave blank

27 a) Have you learnt in lessons at school about any of the following? Please ring the number against each one that you have learnt about.

Ring all that apply

How babies are conceived (started)	1
How babies are born	2
How people get VD (venereal disease)	3
The care of babies	4
How children grow and develop	5
Practical problems of family life (e.g. budgeting, looking after a house, etc.)	6

b) On such topics did your lessons include: (*ring all that apply*)

T.V. programmes	1
Radio programmes	2
Films	3

28 No doubt you have been told about these things by other people or in other places. For each of the things listed below please show, by ringing a number, from where you think you got *the most useful information* on this topic.

Leave blank

	Friends or a brother or sister	TV (not at school)	Films (not at school)	Books or magazines	Church	Parents	Someone else	Youth clubs	Nowhere in particular	
How babies are conceived	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	
How babies are born	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	
How people get VD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	
The care of babies	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	
How children grow and develop	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	
Practical problems of family life	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	

For each of these things do you feel that you need to know more?
For each one ring the number below the answer you want to give.

	Yes I need to know more	No I don't need to know more	Uncertain	*Leave blank*
How babies are conceived	1	2	3	
How babies are born	1	2	3	
How people get V.D.	1	2	3	
The care of babies	1	2	3	
How children grow and develop	1	2	3	
Practical problems of family life	1	2	3	

Below is a list of things which many people do in their spare time. You will probably only do a few of these. Please show by ringing one of the numbers for each one whether this is something that you do often, sometimes, never or hardly ever. If it is something that you would like to do but don't have the chance, please ring 4.

	Often	Sometimes	Never or hardly ever	Like to but no chance	*Leave blank*
Reading books (apart from school work or homework)	1	2	3	4	
Playing outdoor games and sports	1	2	3	4	
Swimming	1	2	3	4	
Playing indoor games and sports (e.g. basket-ball, badminton, gymnastics, etc.)	1	2	3	4	
Watching television	1	2	3	4	
Going to parties in friends' homes	1	2	3	4	
Dancing at dance halls, discos, etc.	1	2	3	4	
Voluntary work to help others	1	2	3	4	

Have you ever taken part in any of the following activities?
(*Please ring all that apply.*)

	Ring all that apply
Babysitting for your younger brothers and sisters	1
Babysitting for other families	2
Helping to run a playgroup	3
Helping with younger children at school	4
Any other activity with children much younger than yourself (please describe .....)	5

How satisfied are you with the following things in the neighbourhood or area in which you live?
Please ring the appropriate number against each one.

Leave blank

	Satisfied	Uncertain	Dis-satisfied	Not bothered	
Places for young people to meet (clubs, coffee bars, dance halls, etc.)	1	2	(3)	4	
Playing fields, pitches for sports and games	1	(2)	3	4	

Ring one number

Is there a room in your home where you can usually go to be on your own to do homework or revise for an exam ?

Yes ..... (1)
No 2

34 Some people nowadays consider that young people and their families do not always get on very well. We should like to find out more about this. Read the statements below and please show by ringing the appropriate numbers how true each of them is in your own case. If any of these do not apply to you (e.g. you have no brother or sister) leave that one blank.

Leave blank

	Very true	True	Uncertain	Untrue	Very untrue	
I get on well with my mother	(1)	2	3	4	5	
I get on well with my father	1	2	3	4	(5)	
I often quarrel with a brother or sister	1	2	3	(4)	5	
My parents have strong views about my appearance (e.g. dress, hairstyle, etc.)	(1)	2	3	4	5	
My parents want to know where I go in the evenings	1	(2)	3	4	5	
My parents disapprove of some of my male friends	1	(2)	3	4	5	
My parents disapprove of some of my female friends	1	(2)	3	4	5	

35 How many cigarettes do you usually smoke in a week?

Ring one number

None, don't smoke	1
Less than 1 a week	2
Between 1 and 9 a week	(3)
Between 10 and 19 a week	4
Between 20 and 29 a week	5
Between 30 and 39 a week	6
Between 40 and 49 a week	7
Between 50 and 59 a week	8
60 or more a week	9

36 How long is it since you had an alcoholic drink (beer, wine, spirits, etc.)?

Ring one number

Less than 1 week	1
2 – 4 weeks	(2)
5 – 8 weeks	3
9 – 12 weeks	4
Over 12 weeks	5
Uncertain/Can't remember	6
Never had one	7

37 If it is less than one week since your last drink, please write down below the number of drinks you have had in the past week, and what they were (e.g. one whisky, and two halfpints of beer).

Leave blank

_____

38 Where did you drink these? (Please ring all that apply.)

Ring all that apply

At home	1
At a friend's home	2
In a restaurant	3
Somewhere else (please say where Public bars)	(4)

39 Have you ever taken drugs

Please ring

Yes.....1
(No).....(2)

If yes please say which kind.....
.....

40 Have you ever sniffed glue or solvents (cleaning fluid, lighter fuel, etc.)

Please ring

Yes.....1

No.....(2)

If yes, please give as many details as you can.....
.....
.....

41 Do you know who the Prime Minister is?

Please ring

Yes.....1
No.....(2)

If yes please give name.....
.....

If you wish to add any comments on anything in this questionnaire, please use the space below. Like everything else in this questionnaire this will be strictly confidential.