The Collapse of the School to Work Transition

by

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I certify that this thesis is my own work and all sources have been acknowledged.

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Abbreviations used in the thesis

ABS	Australian Bureau of Statistics
ACT	Australian Capital Territory
ACTSA	Australian Capital Territory Schools Authority
ATS	Australian Traineeship Scheme
BLMR	Bureau of Labour Market Research
CCCS	Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies
CDC	Curriculum Development Centre
CETA	Comprehensive Employment and Training Act (USA, 1973)
MSC	Manpower Services Commission
PEP	Participation and Equity Program
SCOPE	Student choice of occupations and paths in education
SLS	Social and Life Skills

A Note on Terminology

Brief mention needs to be made of the terminology employed mainly in Chapters 7 and 8 and occasionally elsewhere in the thesis. The terms **paid** and **unpaid work experience** are used in preference to the more awkward **in-school** and **out-of-school work experience** . (See for example pages 21, 23, 24, 73, 74.) In this study, the student informants used the terms **paid** and **unpaid work** to describe their jobs in naturally occurring and officially sponsored jobs. Furthermore, the latter are typically unpaid, except in Victoria where a token amount of $5 a day is paid to students.

The terms **primary** and **secondary labour markets** are used in this thesis to describe the difference between good and bad jobs. (See for example, pages 38, 49). The distinction is derived from the dual labour market hypothesis (*The MIT Dictionary of Modern Economics,* MIT Press, Cambridge, 1986: 115) where good jobs in the primary sector are characterised by high pay and promotion prospects; workers frozen out of the primary sector comprise the secondary sector which is characterised by **under-employment.** The workers in the secondary sector have a weak attachment to the labour force and include mainly teenagers and women. Some writers go beyond the dualist interpretation and seek to classify all jobs and workers within an exhaustive schema leading to further dualisms (upper/lower tier) in the primary sector (*New Pelgrave - A Dictionary of Economics*, 1988: 961). In the thesis, the dual labour market hypothesis is preferred since the student - workers themselves describe their jobs simply as either good (primary sector) or bad (secondary sector).

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Chapter 1

Introduction: The Problem and the Theory

The thesis is about the collapse of the school to work transition and its implications for 15 to 19 year-olds still at school. It examines the response of school students to the limited employment opportunities available to them by focusing on the pre-vocational experiences of 21 students in an ACT secondary college.

The significance of the study lies in the social, political, educational and theoretical implications of the transition's collapse. These are outlined below.

1. Implications of the Collapse

(a) Social implications

Youth unemployment in Australia and elsewhere has attracted the interest of researchers in many academic fields, for example, in psychology, sociology, history and economics. **Underemployment,** on the other hand,is virtually invisible in the scholarly literature. It is argued in the present thesis that youth underemployment in the 1930s was considered a greater social problem than it is in the 1980s. One of the first social scientists to identify underemployment as a serious social problem was O'Toole (1975). Underemployment has been defined both in quantitative (for example ABS 1984:17) and qualitative (for example O'Brien, 1986; Sullivan, 1987:1) terms. Several writers have identified young people, particularly teenagers (15 to 19 year-olds), as the most likely of all groups to be marginalised in sub-employment (BLMR, 1987:36; Wallace, 1987; Ashton, 1988). One objective of the present thesis is to provide an ethnography of underemployment in the 'new teenage workplace' of the 1980s.

According to Giddens (1973), underemployment in a deadend job is a form of exploitation which restricts an individual's life chances. In a similar vein, O'Brien examines the psychological consequences of underemployment and argues that "if job experiences restrict opportunities for personal control, skill-use and intimacy then employees have diminished capabilities for self-discretion, competence and interpersonal relationships" (1986:XI). Giddens also addresses the negative psychological effects of underemployment for individuals whose "habitual exposure to such conditions ('dull and routine labour') may itself have the effect of stultifying pre-existing or latent capacities of the worker, as these might be experienced in other areas of his (sic) life's activities" (1973:132).

Giddens goes further in claiming that underemployment restricts an individual's **life chances**. He defines life chances as "the chances an individual has of sharing in the socially created economic or cultural 'goods' which typically exist in any given society" (1973:130-131). The concept of life chances, like underemployment, is one of the important themes in the present thesis. In his theoretical book *Life Chances* (1979), Ralf Dahrendorf argues how OECD countries have witnessed an enormous increase in human life chances together with the contradictions of high unemployment. He believes that future historians will conclude that in a number of OECD countries an optimum of life chances was reached at the beginning of the 1970s (1979:35). Many of the baby boom children of the post-war period in Australia became parents themselves by the early 1970s. Ironically, their children, "the 'baby boom' children born in the late 1950s and early 1960s could not have come of working age at a worst time" (OECD, 1985b:7). The OECD's pessimistic analysis refers to all its member countries plagued by high rates of youth unemployment in the last two decades. It is worth noting the standard of living enjoyed by the parents of today's teenagers during their formative years. On all the important social indicators, their standard of living was markedly higher than any previous generation.

Dahrendorf points out that Weber used the term **Lebenschancen** more than one hundred times in his *Economy and Society* without ever defining the term precisely. Dahrendorf suggests that life chances refer to the sum total of opportunities (objective and subjective) available to individuals: "The element of generalized opportunity is probably crucial" (1979:28). It is argued in the thesis that the present generation of school leavers are a 'status group' whose life chances have been diminished by the collapse of the school to work transition. The political implications of the collapse are outlined next.

(b) Political implications

The disruption of a smooth transition between school and work for school leavers represents a crisis in unfulfilled expectations for both youth and society. Broom *et al.*, note that "...there is considerable agreement amongst Australian youth about the symbolic and material rewards that go with different jobs" (1980:13). Data in the present thesis strongly support this view. In their exposure to work in paid, part-time jobs (see chapter 7) and school-sponsored work experience placements (see Chapter 8), students learn amongst other things, the difference between good and bad jobs.

The importance of work for society and for the social and psychological well-being of individuals has been well documented by O'Brien (1986) . Jahoda, too, lists the "latent consequences of employment" as psychological supports providing time structure, shared experiences and contacts, goals and purposes, personal status and identity, and activity. Work alone combines all of these psychological supports with "as compelling a manifest reason as making one's living" (in Kumar, 1979:24-25). It is universally acknowledged that the labour market plays a crucial role in distributing income, governing life chances and defining personal identity. Finding a job and earning a living are the main preoccupations of young people in Australia this decade. A recent national survey of 2,000 Australians aged 15-24 by ANOP (1986) revealed that unemployment is the most important concern for this age group. Unemployment was thought by respondents to be the main preoccupation of young people generally. Of immediate personal concern to the respondents, however, lack of money and making ends meet (22 per cent) headed the list ahead of school (19 per cent) and unemployment (18 per cent). Linked together, these concerns are about the struggle to achieve a livelihood and a reasonable standard of living. Getting a job, establishing one's independence and identity has been reported as one of the highest priorities of Australian youth in most studies conducted in the past two decades (Wilson and Wyn, 1987:10).

As Parkin argues, "the backbone of the class structure and indeed of the entire reward system of modern Western society is the occupational order" (1971:18). Failure to make a successful transition from school to a good job means that other transitions may be disrupted such as the transition from child to adult, from dependence to independence and so on. The political implications of the collapse of the transition have been well publicised in the press both during the 1930s and in the 1980s (see Chapter 3). In the 1930s, governments feared that alienated youth would turn to fascism or communism. Today, the fear, largely realised according to Wilson and Arnold's study *Street Kids* (1986), is that they will turn to drugs and crime. As in the 1930s, today's political leaders fear the creation of a 'disinherited class' and the threat it would pose to the stability of the social order. The state's response to the collapse of the transition has been to seek supply-side solutions rather than changes to demand. Political leaders of all persuasions have found it easier to finance educational programs (such as work experience, PEP, ATS, and various forms of vocational training) than to risk disrupting entrenched economic and political interest groups by intervening in the economy. Official responses to youth employment problems in the 1930s bear a striking resemblance to those of the present era (see Chapter 3). Political responses, such as increased school retention, a return to the 'basics' and various forms of vocationalism, have been recycled as educational solutions to the economic problems of the 1980s. What this has meant for education, is outlined below.

(c) Educational implications

School students have responded to the restricted employment opportunities of the late 1970s and 1980s by combining school or college with part-time jobs, typically in the secondary labour market. The thesis examines the way students compare work in these jobs with what they learn at school and in work experience placements, mainly in the primary labour market. Part-time work is for many students their first transition from financial dependence to independence. Teachers are generally ambivalent about the cost-benefit ratio for school students who work part-time. Officially sponsored work experience by the school is recognised as a legitimate educational activity although it is typically not integrated in the curriculum. The thesis examines various pre-vocational programs which have become prominent in 'the vocationally-obsessed 80s' (Davies, 1986). These include both paid and unpaid work, school-industry links as well as conventional careers education and various forms of vocational training. The theoretical significance of these programs are discussed in the next section.

(d) Theoretical implications

According to Kemmis *et al.*, (1983), there are three main theoretical orientations concerning school to work transition: the neo-classical vocational orientation, the liberal-progressive orientation and the radical orientation of the socially-critical school. Watkins (1982) used similar theories in his doctoral dissertation on a Victorian work experience program. He labelled these conservative, liberal-progressive and radical. The neo-classical vocational orientation is a conservative approach to the school-work nexus and in sociological terms is functionalist in its perspective. The liberal-progressive orientation, while less conservative than the former, is nevertheless functionalist in its approach. Both approaches view the school-work relationship in instrumental, functionalist terms. Neo-classical vocationalism sees the purpose of education as a preparation for work, while liberal-progressivism views it more broadly as a preparation for life, in which work is only a part. The more radical orientations proposed by both Kemmis and Watkins, see the school in Marxist terms, as an agent of change. For example, in the socially-critical school, students are taught critical analysis and to participate actively and collectively in solving problems of social concern, such as school to work transition problems.

Watkins argues how the three theoretical traditions are related to particular ideological conceptions of the relationship between schooling and work. Various conservative perspectives see the school to work transition as a process whereby education slots school leavers into appropriate rungs in the occupational hierarchy. Liberal-progressive ideology is based on notions of equal opportunity with schools functioning as producers of human capital, job queues of differentially credentialled school leavers and as screening devices for the labour market. Opportunity, merit and equal access to life chances are the ideological bases of liberal-progressivism. With radical theories, it is outcomes rather than opportunity that are relevant. "The inequalities within society are reinforced and reproduced by the school system. This may occur through both the correspondence of the school and the workplace and the cultural transmission that schools endorse and reward" (Watkins, 1982:65). The concept of a socially-critical curriculum challenges the essentially mechanistic assumptions inherent in these theories.

(e) Liberal vocationalism

In this thesis, a critical pedagogy is also advocated within a liberal vocationalist theoretical framework. Liberal vocationalism (Silver and Brennan, 1988) combines the liberal-progressive and neo-classical vocational orientations without the latter's vocationally-specific emphasis. It is also flexible enough to include concepts from the socially-critical school. It is liberal in the sense that it seeks to liberate individuals from 'the present and the particular' (Bailey, 1984); it is vocational in that it recognises the centrality of work in society and in the lives of 15 to 19 year olds. However, it is not narrowly vocational or job-specific, but rather "...seeks to escape from the vulgar and damaging versions (of vocationalism) often present in popular or policy usage" (Silver and Brennan, 1988:245).

The uniqueness of a liberal vocationalist perspective is that it is based on the pre-vocational experiences of the students themselves rather than, as in the case of neo-classical vocationalism, on the requirements of the labour market; it utilises an interactionist, rather than a functionalist or Marxist perspective. In this way, liberal vocationalism has both practical and theoretical relevance for the analysis of the school/work nexus. Thus the experiences of work, as encountered by student-workers can be used as the knowledge and authentic, raw data for a critical pedagogy for teaching **about** work rather than **for** work (Bates *et al.,* 1984).

2. Sociological Theory

The last sentence in Watkins' thesis suggests that work experience and transition programs need to "take account of the factors of resistance and contestation in the social construction of the world of work" (1982:281). The present thesis uses an interactionist perspective in discovering how students, teachers, employers and others engaged in the socialization of young people construct a particular reality of the world of work in both 'good' jobs (sponsored work experience placements) and 'bad' jobs (student-initiated, part-time jobs). A social constructionist perspective sees socialization from the actor's point of view rather than from the agent's. That is, young people are engaged in shaping their destinies as well as being shaped by the various agencies of socialization like the family, school, media, peers and work. "Social constructionism is principally concerned with elucidating the processes by which people come to describe, explain, or otherwise account for the world in which they live" (Gergen, 1985a:3). Gergen argues that social constructionism is influenced by symbolic interactionism, phenomenology and to some degree, conventional social psychological theories. According to Berg, these various interactionist perspectives are based on the assumption that human interactions form the central source of data; there is also a general consensus that participants' perspectives and their ability to take the role of the other are key issues in any formulation of symbolic interactionism. Finally, according to Berg, they are guided by Thomas's dictum — how participants in a setting define their situation determines the nature and meaning of their actions, as well as the setting itself (Berg, 1989:8). Thus school students' definitions of the world of work and the meanings they and others attach to the experience of work is the focus of the present study.

Following Berger and Luckmann (1975), the theory employed in the thesis views the students' social construction of the world of work as a dialectical process between objective and subjective reality. How students and others interpret this dialectical relationship between social structure and the individual's inner dispositions determines the nature of the socialization that occurs. Berger and Luckmann evaluate 'successful socialization' by the establishment of "a high degree of symmetry between objective and subjective reality" (1975:183). They insist that the social-psychological analysis of the phenomenon of internalization (inner dispositions) must always have as its background a macrosociological understanding of their structural aspects (social structure). Thus, in the present study, the social construction of the world of work takes place as a social-psychological process within the objective reality of the opportunity structure.

This approach is derived from a number of sources. Ashton (1988) has argued that the impact of symbolic interactionism in Britain during the 1960s, combined with the use of ethnographic techniques, opened up new ways of exploring the experiential dimension. "Instead of 'imposing' ideas about the mechanics of occupational choice on youth, researchers started to inquire into the ways in which young people actually experienced the transition" (Ashton, 1988:409). With the collapse of the school to work transition in the 1980s (Clarke and Willis 1984), this approach assumes a greater significance. Ashton argues that the transformation of school leavers' prospects has profoundly affected the way in which the transition is conceptualised "This new context emphasized that young people were simultaneously undergoing a number of transitions, from youth to adult, from school to the labour market, from financial dependency to independence and from the family of origin to the family of procreation" (Ashton, 1988-419).

The interactionist perspective employed in the present thesis focuses on how in-school teenagers have responded to these disrupted transitions. The approach incorporates ethnographic interviews and observations in the different 'socializing contexts' (Musgrove, 1988) of home, school, peer groups and workplaces. A very recent study of American youth (Ianni, 1989), also advocates an interactionist perspective which takes into account the interactive effects of differing definitions of the child-into-world transformation provided by these social institutions and the tensions that these involve. Ianni argues that it is not the individual impact of any single institution that is important, but rather how various socializing contexts are integrated in the lives of young people. Of relevance to the present study, for example, is the author's argument that "any reconnection of schools with the realities of the economy and the changing job market must include more than the school and the workplace, since families introduce, and peer groups help to define, the places teenagers see for themselves in the adult world of work" (Ianni,1989:181).

It is not simply that the opportunity structure alone determines the life chances of young people; they are themselves involved in constructing their own definitions of reality. "Action is not merely understanding the world, it is also transforming and acting upon it" (Alexander, 1988:314). Alexander calls this process 'strategization' which simply means making a strategic consideration of the least cost and most reward of particular situations. To act against the world requires time, energy, and knowledge; one cannot expend time and energy indefinitely Alexander adds that every strategic calculation involves relevant knowledge, often knowledge about the future which puts rational calculation into a relationship with 'irrational' understanding and probability (1988:315). Students are continuously making such strategic calculations against the backdrop of an uncertain occupational future — whether to stay or leave college, whether to get a part-time job or defer gratification and concentrate on their studies, whether to choose courses out of interest or for instrumental reasons and so on. While they cannot alter the objective reality of the labour market confronting school leavers, they do have some control over the socializing contexts in which their everyday lives are experienced.

3. Social Structure and School Leavers

"You're trying to impress them for a job!" (Sue in a hotel kitchen).

R. J. Roberts (1980) has argued, unconvincingly, that school students cannot comprehend the world of work because it is not central to their reality and identity. "(Their) central reality is that of the family, school and so on, not work" (1980:168). It will be shown in the thesis that work is in fact part of the everyday life of teenage students and that the world of work, as a reality to be confronted in the future, is a constant preoccupation in "the vocationally obsessed 80's'. The experience of work for 21 college students will be outlined in the contexts of domestic chores, school work, and paid and unpaid employment in the labour market. Work associated with home and school is the lot of all teenagers and appears to be taken for granted by them. There is nevertheless a continuous process of work socialization involved. Primary school children learn that work is associated with a means of getting money, an activity and a workplace which suggests the ubiquity of children's recognition of the concept (Goldstein and Oldham, 1979:41). In their study of *Children and Work*, the authors conclude that children are relatively well informed about the generalities of parental occupational behaviour as well as the idea of a 'boss', the difference between good and bad jobs and the work ethic itself (Goldstein and Oldham,1979:69).

For teenagers, the experience of work includes domestic work and school work, as well as paid and unpaid work outside the home and school. These are the contexts in which school students typically experience the world of work and its various norms. Greenberger and Steinberg have argued that the workplace, along with the more traditional setting of family, school and peer group, now part of the socialization process for adolescents, has until recently remained unstudied by sociologists and psychologists (1986:4). For example, Musgrove's recent review (1988) of socialisation theories and 'socialising contexts' focuses on the family and the school. Occupational socialisation is entirely missing in an otherwise comprehensive review.

By way of contrast, Berger and Luckmann see secondary socialization in specifically occupational terms. They define it as "the acquisition of role-specific knowledge, the roles being directly or indirectly rooted in the division of labour" (1975:158). Likewise, Bullivant describes the concept of occupational socialization as the process whereby teenagers "draw upon any experiences of work they may already have, together with perceptions of their own social competence..."(1986:11). Occupational socialization can therefore be seen as a process which includes the objective structure of opportunities and subjective evaluations of an individual's abilities. School students are confronted by the social reality of the opportunity structure at a societal level and at an individual level they construct an occupational self-concept in accordance with the objective social reality. Furlong also argues that "...self concepts are not purely subjective constructs, but develop out of a person's experiences within objective structures" (1987:59). It is through these experiences in the family, school and workplace that young people develop a sense of social competence. It is clear from the 21 interviews in the present sample that what students internalize as their level of social competence is largely derived from how they and 'significant others' evaluate their performance of work tasks especially at school and in the workplace. "...This internalised view of both the social reality and of self has enormous power to shape the individual, his (sic) aspirations and expectations" (Wright *et. al.*, 1978:105).

Twenty years ago, Roberts attempted to place school transition within a theoretical framework. At the time, only developmental psychology as propounded by Ginzberg (1951) and Super (1957) was available to explain the processes of occupational role allocation and socialisation. These writers emphasised young people's ambitions and how these affected their *choice* of a vocation. Even two decades ago, Roberts challenged this model (and the dubious notion of 'choice') and proposed an alternative theory which he called the opportunity - structure model. He suggested that "school leavers' careers are derived from the way in which their job opportunities become cumulatively structured..." (Roberts,1968:179). He cited evidence from his own empirical work that British school leavers adapted to the opportunity structure and had a malleable orientation towards occupational roles in general. In other words, young people's ambitions are adapted to the occupations available for them to enter; that is, careers determine ambitions, not vice versa. Sofer (1968) has pointed out how Roberts's formulation bears a striking similarity to Karl Mannheim's analysis of economic ambition, which, according to Mannheim, is determined by the actual structure of society.

Roberts has recently criticised attempts to portray the transition from school to work as traumatic for school leavers. "All studies of post-war youth in the labour market found that the majority had little difficulty in handling their abrupt transitions" (1984:35). Thus the main problems associated with entry into employment were never transitional so much as availability. It is not the psychological deficiencies of school leavers that explain the collapse of the transition, but rather the inability of the economy to provide jobs to those who want them. Or as Roberts bluntly concludes:

> "Young people are able and willing to work as ever, but their jobs have gone" (1984:24).

Thus, according to Roberts, the structure of opportunities determines the life chances of school leavers and young people simply adapt to the structure. They do not think in terms of structures or economic forces but rather personalise their predicaments without seeing the link between individual biography and social structure. In a more recent Australian study, there are indications that school leavers do in fact make this connection. Carpenter and Western followed the destinies of over 1,000 Year 12 students in Queensland from when they left school in 1978 to a point four years later in 1982. They found that the students' post-school plans involved a complex interplay of sociological and psychological attributes. They argue that "the relationship between the social structure and the behaviour and personalities of individuals is mediated via their immediate interactional experience with others" (1986:10). The authors acknowledge the pioneering work of Paul Lazarsfeld who suggested the interplay between inner dispositions of individuals and external influences in social processes like school to work transition. Thus Carpenter and Western show how individuals assess their own educational and occupational potential and measure this assessment against that of significant others including parents, teachers and peers. All this is done, as Roberts has argued, with a degree of realism appropriate to the structure of employment opportunities available to school leavers.

It was this kind of theory that emerged from the work experience data in the present study. The occupational socialisation of the 21 students involved the interaction of social-psychological (eg. influence of significant others) and sociological factors (eg. opportunities for work in different socialising contexts).

4. Approaches Taken in the Thesis

Like Corrigan (1979), I did not want to put forward a set of hypotheses, or even 'foreshadowed problems' (Watkins, 1982), and then go out and test them. As so often happens in this kind of research, preconceived hypotheses determine the nature of the findings. I wanted to avoid this kind of 'contamination' by adopting an open approach to the respondents and to the data which emerged in the interviews. Thus, only one hypothesis is specifically tested in the thesis, namely that part-time work may be more important for 'at risk' students than for 'connected' or academically successful students (see Chapter 7).

The thesis is chiefly concerned with the pre-occupational socialization of school students at a time when the transition from school to work has collapsed. An interpretive methodology is used to discover how students, employers and teachers socially construct 'the world of work' under these conditions. Gergen (1985a) has identified four assumptions inherent in social constructionism:

(1) taken-for granted concepts, categories and methods are challenged, eg. that work is 'a good thing';
(2) meanings and connotations vary over time and across cultures, eg. school work may be real work for teachers, but not for students;
(3) The popularity or persistence of a particular concept depends more on its political usefulness for social influence and control than on its validity eg. vocational training and career education which have lasted throughout this century in spite of their ineffectiveness;
(4) descriptions and explanations of the world are themselves forms of social action and have consequences, eg. the various theoretical orientations relating to the school/work nexus outlined above and in the literature review (see Chapter 2).

As will be explained in chapter 5, an ethnographic approach is most suited to this kind of interpretative analysis. As Watkins argues, it allows the researcher "...to understand and interpret the events of the subjects' everyday world as they make sense of and construct the realities they meet" (1982:104). A possible limitation in the present thesis is the narrow focus on 21 students at a single Canberra secondary college. An attempt to broaden the frame of reference has been made by referring to the experience of students at other times and in different places. In this way the generality and representativeness of the experiences and perspectives of the 21 students can be tested. Also, the frame of reference has been widened to include a comparative analysis of students in a previous study. The class of 82 is referred to below.

My interest in the sociology of the school to work transition began during the research for my Litt.B thesis entitled *School, Part-Time Work and the Occupational Destinations of Senior Secondary Students in Canberra* (1983). The present thesis is in part a continuation of the 1983 study which focused essentially on the part-time employment of two dozen year 11-12 students. The work histories of some of the class of 82 are reported in the present study as are the changes over the past seven years in school-work relationships.

The following chapters trace these changes as well as documenting the collapse of the school/work couplet from the 1930s to the present. That the transition has collapsed for school leavers in the 1980s is argued in Chapter 4. After Chapter 5 on methodology, the remaining chapters focus on the meanings students attach to work in the contexts of home, school and employment. Chapter 6 discusses these processes in relation to the sociological theory above. Chapter 7 focuses on paid, part-time work and chapter 8 on unpaid, school-sponsored work experience. Chapter 9 discusses these pre-vocational work experiences within the context of the formal college curriculum and examines, amongst other things, the social construction of skill as part of the 'new vocationalism' of the 1980s. Finally, in the concluding chapter, a brief review is made of the main findings of the study.

Chapter 2

Review of the Literature

A considerable literature has appeared in the 1980s to correspond with the collapse of the school to work transition. The literature can be divided under three main categories: work preparation, work experience and work education. Each of these categories can be further divided into sub-sections which reflect the main themes relating to some of the substantive topics discussed in the thesis proper.

Two chapters in the thesis specifically focus on work experience. Chapter 7 deals with paid, part-time employment and Chapter 8, unpaid, school-sponsored work experience. As these chapters cite much of the recent literature in relation to these topics, it is not reported in the present chapter. The section on work experience below, is therefore, relatively brief. Work preparation, work experience and work education correspond broadly to the theoretical orientations described in Chapter 1. The preparation for work through vocational training, careers education and the 'new vocationalism' is firmly in the tradition of neo-classical vocationalism. The experience of work from the perspectives of in-school teenagers is primarily in the liberal-progressive tradition since students typically experience work in different contexts as individuals. What they learn is privatised as part of their general preparation for 'real life'. Whether at home or school, in sponsored or in naturally occurring jobs, work is perceived functionally as part of an individual's everyday socialisation experience and preparation for life in the 'real world'. Work education, as defined in the review, consists of three main orientations - the socially-critical school approach, the skills-based curriculum approach and 'the world of work in the curriculum' approach to school and work. The first is a radical approach to schooling and work, the second is part of the 'new vocationalism', while the third contains elements of both the liberal-progressive and radical orientations. Work education in the first and third approaches differs from both work preparation and work experience in that they perceive work as the **subject** rather than the object; put another way, these approaches are concerned with teaching **about** work, not for work. The relevant literature on the three categories of work — preparation, experience and education — is outlined below.

1. Work Preparation

(a) Vocational education and training.

Vocational training and its derivative career education have at various times in Australia been used as the main strategy for the work preparation of school students. The turn of the century saw an "...explosion of concern with social efficiency. The ideology of efficiency would seem to have made a vocational education curriculum a virtually inescapable social invention" (Rodgers and Tyack , 1982:286). [Vocational education has been used as a synonym of vocational training and guidance, although the former is a contradiction in terms to educational purists (Wellington, 1987:25).]

Nowhere was vocational education promoted more as a panacea for school reform than in America. Vocationalism was a call to refashion the schools into a comprehensive set of bridges to work; its promise was of a social instrument capable of mitigating problems as far afield as the deadend job of a young box maker and the competitive weakness of America in international trade (Rodgers and Tyack, 1982:278).

A similar faith in vocationalising the curriculum as a solution to youth unemployment is evident in many of the pronouncements of official reports in Australia. The Report of the Committee of Inquiry into Education and Training (Williams Report, 1979, vol.3:85) is perhaps the best example. The report recommended that moves should be made to bring back the old technical curriculum. Presdee criticizes the report for its 'two schools in one' approach, consisting of "...vocational courses for those good with their hands (and) academic courses...for those good with their heads" (1979:7). Furthermore, he challenges the assumption underlying the report, that the solution to unemployment lies in "shaping the basic skills and attitudes of school pupils" (Williams, 1979 Vol.3:54).

The foremost critics of vocational education, Grubb and Lazerson, have argued that vocationalism has failed to achieve its objectives since the real problem is not educational but rather "the structural inability of corporate capitalism to provide enough employment" (1982`:97). Given the ineffectiveness of vocationalism, the authors ask why vocational solutions to youth unemployment have persisted. They suggest that in periods of apparent crisis, policy-makers tend to turn to schools for solutions. Pedagogical solutions generate less resistance from entrenched economic and political interests than direct intervention in the economy. Put another way, rhetoric about employability is safer than direct action in the labour market."The seductive appeal of vocational education lies in its emphasis on individual adjustment and mobility rather than economic reorganization and equality" (Kantor and Tyack, 1982:43).

Australian educators have generally agreed with the anti-vocational sentiments expressed by the aforementioned writers. For example, recent reports (Swan-McKinnon, 1985; Blackburn, 1985 and the Commonwealth Schools Commission, 1987) have argued against vocational training in Australian schools. Richard Sweet argues that much of the anti-vocationalism in such reports is misguided as are attempts to teach **about** work rather than preparation **for** work. He suggests that the perceived deficiencies of vocational education in Australia are generally asserted rather than demonstrated (Sweet,1988:352). His argument elsewhere is that "...education for the workplace needs to give people the capacity to understand, and resist, the forces that are shaping the skills that are required of them at work" (Sweet,1987:115). Sweet's conception of vocational education is that it is broad, rather than narrow and extends beyond technical competencies into organisational, social and negotiating skills as well as technological insights. It is a form of 'liberal vocationalism' (Silver and Brennan, 1988) which he appears to be advocating.

A final point needs to be made about Japanese and German models of vocational training which are often touted as possible examples for Australia to emulate. Contrary to popular opinion, the Japanese and Germans are opposed to vocationalising the school curriculum. For example, Japanese misgivings about narrow vocationalism are clear in the following excerpt: "Industry generally expects schools to turn out youths with a good level of academic achievement and adaptability and does not attach much importance to pre-employment training designed to prepare young people for specific occupations."[1] Similarly ,West German industrial success owes little to the vocational strategies advocated in recent Australian government reports or in MSC initiatives in Britain. "Primary and secondary education in the Federal Republic of Germany has...stressed that learning at school is to be free of all economic ends or purposes" (Horner, quoted by Holt, 1987:169). Holt points out that post-16 education in Japan continues to be broad, but with a vocational emphasis, whilst in Germany the *Duales System* provides an academic education for the ablest students and a technical route for the remainder. In both countries, the academic route is the pathway to high-status jobs. Furthermore, recent evidence in over sixty countries indicates that the returns to traditional general curricula are greater than those for vocational curricula (Psacharopoulos, 1985:589). Career education (sometimes called careers education), as a hybrid of vocational education, is the subject of the next section.

(b) Career education

According to Grubb and Lazerson, career education is essentially a reconstruction of vocational education and like its predecessor it "has little to say about the actual roots of current social problems" (1975:462). The authors attack the assumptions on which career education is based. They argue that since the nature of work under advanced capitalism is boring and not likely to improve, career education creates false expectations. The claim that career education will prepare individuals for careers rather than for deadend jobs is, they say, evidence of career education's failure to acknowledge the structure of the labour market, especially in the retail and service sector (1975:466-470).

In Australia, career education, as a strategy for occupational orientation, drew its philosophy from the neo-classical vocational tradition where education as a preparation for work is meant to develop in students a sense of 'vocation' in their school life (Kemmis *et. al.*, 1983:185). Career education, like vocational education, was able to marshal support from a diversity of community groups. America's foremost career educationist, Marland, stressed its potential for achieving community consensus amongst students, educators, and employers (Marland, 1974: 185).

Not surprisingly, career educationists in Australia have made similar claims, at the same time recognising the scepticism of many of their teacher colleagues. Morgan and Hart (1977:3) believe that teacher suspicions about career education are due to their confusing the concept with vocational education or guidance. According to them, a correct definition of career education is "a curriculum-orientated (sic) programme of personal and career development operating against a background of traditional liberal education" (1977:11). The definition is within the developmental model which replaced the occupational - matching model criticized by Grubb and Lazerson because it "takes the structure and nature of jobs as given, and tries to match potential workers for jobs" (1975:465). The developmental model, on the other hand, is difficult to distinguish from general, mainstream education.

A recent report on careers guidance in Australia listed ten objectives which stressed, among other things, the needs of individuals, curriculum integration, knowledge of potential careers and flexible planning for the future (Commonwealth Department of Education, 1985). All of these objectives can be found in lists of general aims of education published by State education departments. Mainstream teachers would have little difficulty accepting these objectives of developmental career education, expressed as they are in the conventional language of general educational aims.

A more critical examination of the model reveals an ideology of individualism where preparation for life or work is the responsibility of the individual student. Social outcomes become personal rather than structural. Herein lies the conservatism of the more recent approach to career education. Whereas career education modelled on the occupational model was inspired by the social efficiency movement and drew its educational values from the neo-classical/vocational tradition, developmental career education is informed by the liberal-progressive tradition. Put simply, it is based on preparation for life rather than work, and emphasizes the development of the 'whole person' (Kemmis *et al.*, 1983:186).

Despite these two different traditions, career education has largely been ineffective as a strategy of anticipatory work socialization. Student responses to career advice evaluations invariably indicate that career advisers are not the people they go to for advice.[2] According to Roberts, "there is no evidence in Britain or any other country of careers education enhancing subsequent job satisfaction or career success" (1977:22). Whilst ineffective as a solution to youth employment problems, career education is nevertheless a pedagogical device that is perceived as politically preferable to more direct interventionist strategies. Its ineffectiveness ironically guarantees its survival in schools and colleges.[3]

(c) From careers education to 'new vocationalism'

The British experience of vocationalism in its various guises has been comprehensively documented by Bates *et al.*, (1984). They trace the development of careers education from the 'talent-matching' model of the vocational guidance movement early in the century through to the 'developmental' model of the 1960s to the 'new vocationalism' of the 1970s and 1980s. As there are very clear parallels in these developments with trends in Australia, they will be outlined here. First, as Bates *et al.*, suggest, careers education of the developmental kind was a great advance on the 'talent-matching' model of vocational guidance:

> "In the 1960s, with expanding opportunities and a general mood of optimism, the image of occupational choice underlining the 'developmental' model could be sustained without appearing absurdly to distort the everyday experience of young people and the common sense of their teachers and counsellors" (1984:190).

From the mid-1970s, the economic recession, high youth unemployment and a shrinking labour market rendered the concepts of 'career' and 'choice' innappropriate, if not obsolete. Various writers have identified three different themes which informed career education in its adjustment to the changed economic climate — an individual adjustment emphasis, a social change emphasis, and an alternative roles emphasis. (Bates *et al.*, 1984:191). To these changes within the careers education movement itself, a 'needs of industry' emphasis was imposed from without on schools. These developments in English school/work relationships have their parallels in Australia, particularly the individual adjustment and the needs of industry arguments, and to an increasing extent the "new vocationalism" inspired by the MSC. These are outlined below.

(i) Individual adjustment

As noted above, career education in its occupational and developmental orientations, emphasized matching and fitting individuals for jobs. Because it focused on individual adjustment, structural problems were ignored; economic problems were defined in terms of employability, rather than as employment.

Between 1974 and 1979 a number of Australian studies focused on the role of schools in preparing students for work. As mentioned earlier, the most controversial of these was the Williams Report published in 1979. The Committee reported that employers expected young people to adjust to the workplace, to be 'obedient', 'submissive' and to have 'a willingness to carry out mundane tasks' (1979:Vol 1:109). Schools were expected to prepare students cognitively, as well as attitudinally, to be good workers. The report heralded a change of direction and a shift of values implicit in earlier government enquiries (Karmel 1973; Henderson *et al.*, 1970). Dawkins has drawn attention to the difference between Karmel and Williams in terms of their value orientations. Whereas the rhetoric of Karmel had been equality of opportunity, the language of Williams was individual adjustment to the workforce "according to industry's requirements" (Dawkins, 1986:30).

Both reports are products of different economic climates. Young (1986:64) has referred to the close resemblance between the values of the Coleman Report (USA: 1966), the Plowden Report (UK:1967) and Karmel (1973) which were produced under similar economic conditions. The Williams Report was written for recessionary times and was concerned with manpower policy which would ease the fiscal burden of the state and discipline the workforce as well as make education more accountable to industry. 'Needs of industry' advocates are clearly in the neo-classical vocational tradition. Their perspective is outlined next.

(ii) The needs of industry

The needs of industry were well represented in the Williams Report which, as we have seen, was published under the auspices of a conservative government. The Williams Report gave the first indication that there was to be a Transition from School to Work Policy, which in fact was launched late in 1979 with the government undertaking to provide $150m over five years to transition education. Blakers (1985) has described how the critical scepticism amongst teachers declined as the narrow focus on 'transition' gave way to a broader approach to youth policy. By 1983, she notes, the election of the new Labor government coincided with a better understanding of the need for a more comprehensive youth policy.

In practice this has meant that solutions to the problems of youth (un)employment continue to be seen as educational solutions. Since Labor's election in 1983, every Australian state and territory has produced at least one major report on secondary education. There have also been a number of national reports within the education establishment, culminating in the publication of the School Commission's *In the National Interest* (1987). This report begins with a discussion of the economy and its demands on secondary education in preparing students for employment. National interests, according to the report, are economic interests and the Commission suggests that "there is a need for schools and employers to develop closer and more dynamic relationships in the interests of the economy" (1987:14). In attempting to analyse the relationship, the Commission focuses on five economic concepts - productivity, skill, management and work practices, entrepreneurship and technological change. The choice of a predominantly economic analytical framework was in itself an interesting development and led Ashenden to conclude that "the touchstone of the Commission's argument is economic usefulness, rather than (as in the past) equality" (1987:5). It is not surprising therefore, that the needs of employers are given considerable weight in the Commission's report.

(iii) The needs of employers

The opening chapter of *In the National Interest* (p.3), begins with a reference to the Business Council of Australia's recent criticism of the attitudes and standards of school leavers. The BCA's report noted that "generally applicants with secondary education only are poorly equipped to gain employment in a skilled job. For any one person recruited there are probably six more who could not be seriously considered" (BCA, 1986: 9). The problem of achieving a smooth transition from school to work by students is seen by the BCA as a consequence of the failure of schools to equip students with work-related skills.

Like the MSC, the BCA defines 'transition' as a movement between two culturally distinct worlds, separated by an academically irrelevant curriculum and the 'real' world of work.

At the local level, the Confederation of ACT Industry reported employer misgivings about the ability of schools to equip school leavers with basic skills "Much of what is being taught in our schools is irrelevant... employers are still witnessing poor literacy and numeracy skills...punctuality, discipline and innovation are lacking" (CACTI,1987:1). Again, the report noted that 70 per cent of respondents wanted schools to include 'world of work' topics in the curriculum. The overwhelming majority of respondents, the report concluded, believed that these 'fundamentals' are not receiving adequate emphasis in schools.

Both these reports make clear employer perspectives on the school to work transition. Employers believe that the employability of school leavers, not the declining opportunities of the labour market, is the reason for the collapse of the transition and increasing youth unemployment. Of most concern to the Business Council's members was the belief that too little emphasis was given in secondary schools to learning about work and career choice. As a learning outcome, this item attracted a 92 per cent response rate compared to an 83 per cent rate for basic skills or the 3Rs (BCA, 1986 Table 4: 17). The eighty companies surveyed by the BCA were among the most prestigious in Australia and the report notes that fewer than 25 per cent of employees are recruited directly from secondary or tertiary institutions. Most staff are recruited after at least one year's labour market experience. It is therefore surprising that 92 per cent of employers are concerned about their recruits' understanding of the world of work. The extent of paid and unpaid work experience amongst school students is such that very few of the 25 per cent recruited directly after formal education would not have had a reasonable understanding of the nature and discipline of working life. *In the National Interest* draws attention to this fact and while it finds fault with formal careers education of which work experience is often a part, it recognises part-time student employment as an important bridge in the school to work transition (1987:52).

According to Spring, British employers are not worried about school leavers' ignorance of work, but rather their knowledge of it: "Ideally, one could argue that business wants a workforce which receives enough education to get the job done but not enough to cause problems for management" (Spring,1972:245). That is, that young workers know all too well what their jobs entail and are unwilling to become the generalized, semi-skilled workers that employers require. O'Toole supports this view and offers a definition of skill demanded by employers:

> "The manual dexterity, technical virtuosity, and competence with machines that employers look for are plentiful. What is missing are blue-collar virtues. To many industrialists, to be 'skilled' means to be willing to tolerate narrow, boring, and repetitive jobs (O'Toole,1977:61).

(iv) Skills and the 'right attitude'

According to Doeringer and Vermeulen , employers generally identify five categories of skills which their workers must have: (1) communication and computational skills, (2) interpersonal skills, (3) productive work attitudes, (4) a familiarity with the world of work and (5) basic occupational skills. These are claimed by the writer to be 'universal' requirements that do not depend on occupational choice: "They should be part of any comprehensive educational curriculum that ties schooling more closely with subsequent work life" (Doeringer and Vermeulen, 1981:189). School leavers equipped with such skills, would, according to this view, be eminently employable. Employability has been defined as the capacity and willingness to do the job and has four components: basic skills, pre-employment competency, work maturity and occupational skills (*NMI,* 1988: 52-53). Here, the authors argue that schools can play a role in the first three components, but not in teaching occupational skills:

> "This part of youth employability development is best left to employers, rather that the educational system....Schools should keep vocational courses broad and conventional, and use them to motivate students for the task of basic skills... schools err, however, when they try to make vocational education courses too occupationally specific" (NMI,1988:69-70).

There is a contradiction between these two perspectives concerning basic occupational skills. The second view rejects the 'basic occupational skills' requirement of the first. It is most likely that employers, like educators, cannot know what skills will be required as technology changes in the future. It is the right *attitude* rather than a specific task ability that employers everywhere look for in school leavers (Sungaila, 1981; Bride and Knights, 1981; Dale, 1985). King's study of the expectations of employers, school leavers and young workers in Goulburn suggests that school leavers are aware of the importance to employers of the 'right attitude'. They know that: "...employers place more importance on qualities such as punctuality, interest in the job, sense of responsibility, willingness to work hard etc, and on aspects of presentation than they do on skills" (King,1983:64). According to King, employers do in fact expect these qualities and hire school leavers accordingly.

Maguire and Ashton (1981) interviewed recruitment personnel in 350 British firms and found that the qualities sought by employers concerned the applicant's personality (self-presentation, attitude to work, interest in the job and family background) as well as suitability to the job itself. Educational qualifications only mattered for jobs in the primary labour market, and then often for what they symbolised, namely, motivation, perserverence and discipline. Employers recruiting at the lower level of the job market had little interest in credentials and were preoccupied with the behaviour and attitude of new recruits. Thus there is ample evidence that employers do not seek the specifically trained (as in vocational education) or formal credentials (as in general education) but rather the willing worker.

Affective, rather than cognitive skills, appear to be what employers are seeking in their employees. For example, Maguire and Ashton note that recent British studies of employer recruitment practices suggest that non-academic criteria are more important than educational qualifications. In their investigation of employer recruitment strategies in 350 firms, they identified four personality factors which employers value in selecting recruits - self-presentation, attitude to work, interest in the job and family background (1981:27).

A recent study of 229 employers in NSW suggests that similar criteria are used for recruiting school leavers (only 5 per cent of the firms' total workforce are school leavers!). The employers placed little importance on academic criteria with 99 per cent citing oral communication in the interview, personal manners and presentation as the most important criteria. The study found that employers were interested most in obtaining information about school leavers' initiative, attitude to study, attendance, co-operation and conduct. In addition to these, employers indicated thirteen attributes[4] which they valued in recruits. On a thirteen point scale, these ranged in importance from initiative down to out of school activities which would include part-time jobs for example. Work experience ranked eighth in importance which suggests that employers do not perceive early work experience as useful to job-seeking, a view not shared by other parties, particularly students.

What the literature says about work experience will be discussed in the next section. Two chapters in the thesis are devoted to student perspectives on work experience and include some references to the literature which need not be repeated here. Similarly, school work as experienced by teachers and students recurs in various chapters and will not be included in the literature review. What follows are the three most common forms of work experience for students — domestic work, paid work in naturally occuring jobs, and unpaid work in school-sponsored work placements.

2. Work Experience

(a) Domestic work

Ann Oakley's answer to the question — who does housework? — 'obviously women do' , neatly sums up the large literature on housework which almost exclusively treats housework as women's work. Domestic chores are described as the province of women and the role of children of both sexes is virtually ignored. There are signs that children's domestic work is at last being recognised as an important contribution to the running of Australian households. For example, Amato (1987) notes that only two per cent of primary and one per cent of secondary school children reported that they *never* helped around the house. It is clear that domestic chores are allocated to children, either formally or informally, in almost all families. Teenagers reported doing a greater number of household duties than did younger children with 93 per cent of the sample (n=402) believing that helping around the home is a good thing (Amato 1987:44).

Zelizer has written the most serious and substantial account of child labor in the American home where "the useful labor of the nineteenth-century child was replaced by educational work for the useless child...As child work shifted from instrumental to instructional, special consideration was given to domestic chores" (1985:97-98). Zelizer explains how the new construction of childhood from economically useful to 'economically worthless, but emotionally priceless' created a boundary between wage and allowance. Pocket money became 'symbolic money' defined, like children's work, in moral and instructional terms. "From the start, the allowance was justified as educational money, for example, it would train children as efficient shoppers" (1985:105).

Children were removed from the marketplace between 1870 and 1930 because it had become more economical to educate them than to hire them. If children could not earn money in the marketplace, they would need to earn it at home. Zelizer describes how this created a dilemma for American families. If domestic chores were paid for regularly with real money, then the family would become another commercial setting. To prevent the commercialization of the home, the usefulness of children's chores was treated as secondary; the primary purpose of work was to train the child and to build its character and the allowance was meant only as a symbolic token. Zelizer points to the conflict between child-savers who want to keep children secure in their economic dependence (traditionalists) and those who want children to achieve financial independence through work (progressives). The new era operates on the belief that children must be exposed early to adult experience. The age of 'protection' has been replaced by a new era of 'preparation', according to indications cited by Zelizer. Whilst Zelizer's book *Pricing the Priceless Child* focuses on children up to age 14, her conclusions are relevant to teenagers of 15-19 years.

Layder has argued that teenage activities such as housework and school or college study are often not recognised as work because they involve no contractual obligations with employers or consumers. He suggests, however, that "...it is clear that such activities bear just as integral a relation to the economy as do more conventionally regarded occupations" (1981:100). In their study *Children and Work* (1979), Goldstein and Oldham surveyed 905 first to seventh graders and found that one in four had a 'work history' essentially confined to domestic chores in their own homes or their neighbours'; up to age thirteen or fourteen, work experience outside the home was negligible. It is typically the high school or college student who engages in work both paid and unpaid, outside the home. It is to this topic that we now turn.

(b) Work experience in paid and unpaid jobs

Up until 1980, there was virtually no serious research in Australia on the pre-vocational work experiences of young people. An annotated bibliography of Australian studies on the *Transition from School to Work* (Anderson and Blakers, 1980) included only twenty references (4 per cent of the entries) to officially sponsored work experience; student-initiated part-time work was mentioned only once as a separate topic and twice in relation to other topics. Since 1980, the collapse of the school to work transition and high levels of teenage unemployment have spawned a number of official reports, academic monographs, dissertations, articles and books dealing with both the paid and unpaid work experiences of school students.

The most comprehensive account to date is *When Teenagers Work* (Greenberger and Steinberg 1986), sub-titled 'the Psychological and Social Costs of Adolescent Employment. As implied in the sub-title, the authors are highly critical of the now entrenched practice in America for school students to hold down a part-time job. They show how official government reports in America during the 1970s extoled the virtues of work experience for school students. The assumption was that work experience would lead youngsters to become more responsible, cooperative, and participatory members of society - an expanded and secularized version of the view that work builds character. Age segregation in schools, it was argued, deprived adolescents of opportunities for learning adult roles. A central argument of government advisory panels was that expanded contact with adults would teach youth a range of adult responsibilities. It was hoped that work experience would link school and work, providing opportunities to practise and apply classroom academic skills. Earlier integration into the world of work, it was believed, would improve young people's marketability and their chances of full-time employment. Some even suggested that crime and delinquency could be reduced if these objectives were successful. To sum up, government panels in America, according to Greenberger and Steinberg, advocated work experience on the grounds of integration, responsibility, learning and improved employability and as a counter to teenage deviance.

Greenberger and Steinberg argue that none of the government reports ever recommended the retail and service jobs of the new teenage workplace as an appropriate setting for these objectives. The reality was that most teenagers found work in supermarkets and fast food outlets which in many school districts became placement sites for school-sponsored work experience programs (Greenberger and Steinberg, 1986:164). They argue that if teenagers were to gain from early work experience, whether in school-sponsored programs or in naturally occurring jobs they found themselves, the jobs would need to be good. Placing students in boring, repetitive, deadend jobs would defeat the purpose of work experience. If the jobs are bad, the difference between official and unofficial work experience is meaningless except that from the student's perspective a paid job obtained by oneself may be more highly valued.

When Teenagers Work examines the psychological and social costs of employment for school students. Among the consequences of employment in deadend jobs, they cite the negative impact on schooling, the promotion of some forms of delinquency, increased use of alcohol and drugs and the development of cynical attitudes towards work itself. The authors base the findings on a number of large-scale surveys including their own which compared 211 student workers with 319 non-workers in tenth and eleventh grade in four Californian high schools. They argue a persuasive case against the extensive employment (20 hours per week)[5] of school students in 'bad' jobs (unskilled and without career prospects) Elsewhere, Steinberg and his colleagues have remarked that 'only academics, policy makers or nostalgic parents would glorify the meaningless and menial work performed by most teenagers (1981).

When Teenagers Work challenges the conventional wisdom about youthwork in the 1980s. The authors acknowledge that their conclusions are counterintuitive, but insist that the dysfunctional social and psychological effects can be explained by the deadend jobs that are typically available to teenagers. "It is precisely because the typical adolescent's experience in the new workplace is educationally irrelevant, economically unnecessary, and largely age-segregated that adolescent employment has the impact it does" (1986:235).

Australian Studies of Work Experience

a. Paid work experience.

Possibly because of the perception that student part-time work is not extensive, there has been no comprehensive research on work experience in Australia to match *When Teenagers Work.* In the present writer's own study (Munro, 1983), only one study specifically on the sociology of student part-time work could be located. This was a survey by Douse (1975) of 300 fifth-formers in eight NSW and Queensland high school in 1974. As already noted, the topic was scarcely mentioned in the annotated bibliography compiled by Anderson and Blakers (1980).

Since then, a small but increasing number of monographs, articles and reports have dealt with student part-time employment. The most substantial of these have been in the tradition of youth cultures research based on the perspectives of young people themselves. Most of these studies use qualitative ethnographic techniques of participant observation and informal interviews of the kind pioneered by Willis (1977) in Britain. Recent examples in Australia include work by Dwyer *et al.*, (1984), Reeders (1986), Wilson *et al.*, (1986), Wilson and Wyn (1987) and Walker (1988). These studies recognise the importance of job-holding for school students as "...a crucial first step in the transition from school to work...(although) "...it is almost entirely ignored by their schools" (Wilson *et al.*, 1986). A number of recent educational reports have nevertheless drawn attention to the part-time work phenomenon and have advocated its incorporation in the curriculum (Blackburn Report, 1985: 28-9; in the National Interest, 1987: 53-4).

As in the United States, Australian teachers have been reluctant to recognise the value of student initiated work experience. Freedman has noted that the spread of 'official' work experience programs in America "...has not been accompanied by significant attempts to evaluate or to utilize the work experience of students finding their own jobs" (1963:512). There is little understanding by teachers of what students learn in their part-time jobs (Munro, 1983). Teachers generally believe that part-time work in deadend jobs has no educational value at all and is completely unrelated to school work and the students future career destinations. For example, a recent Australian report on teenagers and part-time work concluded that the jobs provide little technical skill development and are unlikely to facilitate long-term career prospects. On the other hand, the report noted, work is valued because it represents adult status and offers young people an opportunity to assume adult roles through their identification as contributing members to a work oriented society (Coventry, *et al.*, 1984:94). Official, school-sponsored work experience has attracted more interest from researchers. A brief account of the literature on unpaid work experience is given below.

b. Unpaid work experience.

In the annotated bibliography mentioned above, school-sponsored work experience had twenty entries compared to only one or two for student-initiated paid work. 'Official' unpaid work experience has also been the subject of serious academic scholarship in Australia, notably the doctoral dissertation by Watkins (1982). According to Watkins, the work experience innovation in Victorian schools originally adopted a critical philosophy whereby students were to "critically examine aspects of the society in which they lived" (1982:89). Radical innovations of this kind were easy to implement in the 1960s and early 1970s when the school to work transition was still intact. Watkins suggests that the economic downturn after 1974 saw the transformation of work experience's radical potential into a form of vocationalism. The "critical approach has now been subsumed to the socialisation of students to a taken-for-granted workplace" (1982:93). Nash has also argued how an initially radical reform of school curricula has been incorporated into the conservative mainstream of education (1980:20). Nevertheless, evaluations of work experience programs are generally positive, to the extent that it is unlikely to be matched by other educational experiences (Watts, 1983:87).

In his doctoral dissertation, Watkins (1982) provides a comprehensive review of the empirical and theoretical literature on work experience. He identifies the main approaches as the social efficiency, liberal/progressive and radical approaches. His own study supported both the social efficiency approach and the radical concept of work experience as a program aimed at reinforcing the dominant hegemony of work. While some students saw occasions of resistance in their work placements, they were in a minority. "The acceptance of the dominant culture of the workplace is the more general position" (Watkins,1982:277). Indeed, Watkins was forced to admit that his ethnography offered no support to the idea that students perceived possibilities for the transformation of the workplace (1982:269-70). The liberal-progressive approach was found to be inappropriate as the program was not concerned with intellectual or academic merit but with the inculcation of work-habits. Watkins concludes his thesis with the observation that the social efficiency outcome need not be inevitable. He suggests how the incorporation of work experience within a sociology of work course in the school would provide the opportunity for students to reflect on the problematic aspects of the workplace. It is to this topic that we now turn.

3. Work Education

(a) The socially-critical school orientation

Kemmis and his colleagues have questioned the ideology underlying transition education in Australia. They contend that there can be no such thing as 'transition education', only education "which is critically concerned with the problems of the 'transition' relationship between school and community, school and society" (1983:2). They argue that while schools cannot take primary responsibility for changing society, they do have a role to play: "By giving students and teachers one kind of experience rather than another, they change society...by creating some forms of school life rather than others, they create forms of life which to a greater or lesser degree, reproduce or transform society" (1983:3).

Other writers have endorsed the role of schools as agents of change: "The transformation of classroom relationships will lead to a transformation of community relationships" (Moore, 1984:90). According to Kemmis *et al.*, (1983), this can be achieved in the socially-critical school. Knowledge is seen as dialectical, that is, "constructed through social interaction and thus as historically, culturally, politically and economically located" (1983). Ideally, this approach to knowledge informs the entire school curriculum. It is then that the school may act as an agent of change for the rest of society. Carnoy and Levin have argued, for example, that the school's democratic dynamic has produced a 'new' worker, overeducated and innapropriately socialized in that he or she increases disruption and conflict in the hierarchical and unequal workplace (1985:215). They suggest how team work and cooperative learning in classrooms would be expected to produce an orientation towards worker participation, job rotation and the like in the workplace.

The socially-critical school's Marxist philosophy challenges the premises on which the employment relation is based. In relation to the world of work, the approach in the socially-critical school is on the subject, rather than the object (Bates *et al.*, 1984). That is, the school should teach **about** work, not **for** work. In its treatment of work experience, for example, Kemmis *et al.*, have outlined the essential characteristics of the socially-critical approach. These include:

- work experience as the basis for research and critical analysis;
- school/community boundaries are weak;
- work is integrated in the curriculum;
- group decision-making and the collaborative work between teachers and students are emphasised;
- the definition of the world of work is broad (includes issues such as gender, technology, working conditions and so on);
- students are engaged in constructing new knowledge.

Similarly, Giroux has advocated a critical pedagogy where students are taught to think critically about knowledge, values, and the "structural and ideological forces that influence and restrict their lives" (1980:358-9). Other writers who have suggested the radical potential of work experience include Cole, 1981; and Watkins, 1982, 1987 in Australia; Simon, 1983 in Canada; Stronach, 1984 and Shilling, 1987 in the U.K. Stronach has argued how 'the sacred anvil' of work experience opened up both progressive and conservative possibilities - either experiential learning, a socially-critical curriculum or the subordination of educational goals to employer needs. According to Stronach, mass youth unemployment undermined the possibility of a critical pedagogy. Instead, a new social pedagogy was created in Britain 'to proselytize the work ethic' (1984:49). He notes how the language of the schools changed from employment to work and educational goals came to be expressed in terms of 'generic' skills. Under the MSC in Britain, the language of skills has come to dominate educational debate and a vast literature has been produced in response to the 'new vocationalism'. A brief account of the literature, relevant to work education, is described below.

(b) The skills-based curriculum

Since Bates *et al.*, coined the term 'the new vocationalism' in 1984, a large number of full-length books have been published on its implications for the curriculum. Several of these have been cited in the present thesis (Dale, 1985; Gleeson, 1983, 1986, 1989; Holt (ed.), 1987). In Britain and elsewhere, the debate has been between the liberal-progressive ideas of the 1960s and 1970s and the ideas of the new vocationalists of the 1980s. Holt has argued that pre-vocationalism, that is, vocational training at secondary school, represents a further narrowing of the scope of education for ordinary people (1987:10). If the competitive academic curriculum is irrelevant to the needs of ordinary pupils, a watered-down, skills-based curriculum which is separate from the mainstream curriculum, is unlikely to be any compensation.

Atkins has warned that pre-vocational courses may well preclude students from entering good jobs with career prospects, since the courses are stigmatized by employers as second-rate (1986). If pre-vocational courses were taken by all ability groups, were 'liberally conceived' and included 'learning about the nature of work...' then such courses would be more attractive to students and employers (Dearden 1984 quoted by Wellington, 1987:25). Wellington points out, however, that vocational training is almost always translated in terms of 'skills'. He offers a useful critique of the notion of skill as presently employed in the language of MSC curricula. He argues how the skills-based curriculum is frequently biased towards a behaviourist, psychomotor-conception of skill. Whether specific or generic, the skills are typically abstracted from any particular knowledge base or context.

Examples of generic or transferable skills which are now part of curriculum jargon include social and life skills, survival skills, life skills, communication skills. The skills-based curriculum is no longer confined to knowledge and competence in the 3 Rs. It now includes explicit reference to behavioural and attitudinal objectives appropriate to the 'realities' of the world of work. For example, in a CDC publication in Australia (CDC,1987a:23) on 'work in the curriculum', italicized reference is made to 'a more effective workforce', 'enthusiasm', 'confidence', 'communication' and 'decision-making abilities'. Elsewhere, the CDC's principal curriculum officer draws attention to the consensus between employers and educators on various skills, knowledge, attributes and attitudes.[6] Whilst the CDC in Australia is opposed to vocationalising the curriculum , there is nevertheless an attempt to accommodate the skills needed by employers in curricula (see for example,*The National Training Council of Australia* (NTC), 1986; Cumming,1987a). In Britain, the MSC has gone further in attempting "to alter the content of the curriculum in favour of employer-led definitions of reality" (Gleeson, 1989:44). The final section of this review deals with an alternative approach to the skills-based curriculum.

(c) The 'world of work' in the curriculum approach

Perhaps to counter the possibility of such a drift towards 'new vocationalism' in Australia, the CDC has been at the forefront in promoting the world of work in the curriculum. As a national body responsible for curriculum development in Australia, it established a 'Curriculum and the World of Work Program' in 1986 to support schools and colleges which were developing work education courses. Work education, sometimes called 'the 'study of work' or 'the world of work', will be used to distinguish it from courses with different objectives such as 'job skills', career education and so on.

There have been a number of recent initiatives to incorporate 'world of work' concepts in the curriculum. Cumming (1987b) refers to extracts from four national reports and five state reports in Australia representing the views of the government and business sectors which support the study of work in the school curriculum.

The CDC has itself produced a number of documents supporting the idea of work education (CDC,1987b). It has also commissioned a number of monographs to assist teachers in developing courses on work related issues. The content of most of the monographs is factual and descriptive, since their main purpose is to expand teacher and student understanding of the dimensions of work (CDC, 1987a). The commissioned authors are all professional or academic educators working in state and tertiary education departments. The general approach of the monographs is in the liberal-progressive tradition, although several authors advocate a socially-critical approach. For example Wilson *et al.*, argue strongly for the incorporation of both paid and unpaid work performed by students in the curriculum in order to provide "...the opportunities for reflection that such a process would allow" (1986:33). Blackburn also advocates this approach so as to "...give access to broader social understanding" (1986:13).

An example of a course with this philosophy, is *Work Education,* which operates in South Australia for Year 12 students. The basis of the course is work experience or its equivalent as performed by the students. It can be sponsored or student-initiated, part-time, casual employment. The course requires a "critical analysis through research, and careful documentation" (SSABSA,1987). The course is a good example of work education at its best. Education is emphasised more than vocationalism and work is broadly defined. There is a theoretical component and the perspectives of student-workers are given high priority. The course also includes elements of the socially-critical school orientation with its emphasis on enquiry-based learning and youth participation in the community.

A feature of such courses and the CDC's approach to their development, is a critical reflection on whether or not the study of work is a legitimate part of the school curriculum. Cumming, for example, stresses the need for course developers to ask this question (1987b:22). Failure to do this, will result in a distortion of both work and education. A recent CRASTE report,*Windows onto Worlds* (1987), for example,takes a highly idiosyncratic view of how work provides the basis for an integrated Australian studies at the tertiary level. Crittenden rightly condemns the report for taking "...a narrow, local view of culture fundamentally at odds with educational values" (1988:308).

Finally, this review has described the main theoretical orientations in the literature relating to work as experienced by school students. Work **preparation** is firmly in the neo-classical vocational and 'new vocational' traditions; work **experience** is informed mainly by a liberal-progressive orientation, although a radical potential has been suggested by a number of writers using youth cultures research techniques. Various perspectives are evident in the literature on work **education**. What distinguishes work education from preparation and experience, is that work is treated as the **subject**, not the object. It is concerned with teaching **about** work, not for work (For a detailed discussion of Work Education, see Appendix vii).

CHAPTER 3

YOUTH UNDEREMPLOYMENT IN THE 1930s AND 1980s

'You must expand the temporal reach of your analysis' (C.Wright Mills,1973;167)

1. Youth Unemployment

There is a tendency for studies of youth employment issues in Australia to focus on the present or the very recent past as if social science has an aversion to history. An historical span is useful in giving the present problem of youth (un)employment a proper perspective. C. Wright Mills (1973:162) argued that every well - considered social study requires an historical scope. The purpose of the following account is to provide the historical span that is often missing in accounts of youth (un)employment issues in the 1980s.

What does the recession of the 1980s have in common with the Depression of the 1930s in regard to youth employment issues? Horne has noted that in England youth unemployment has not been adopted as a dominant motif of the 1930s and has been virtually ignored, not least by educational historians. Horne was nevertheless attracted by the temptation to reflect upon the persistence of a number of themes in the 1930s and now, concerning youth, unemployment and schooling (1986:10-12). The same temptation is presented in Australia and is difficult to resist given the possibility that present day responses to youth unemployment may turn out to be new wine in old bottles.

Compared to the literature on youth unemployment in the 1980s, the material available from the thirties is scant. The Australian Bureau of Census and Statistics was technically in its infancy and as a result statistical records of the period are largely unreliable. The 1933 census figures quoted below offer only a rough comparative guide to the extent of teenage unemployment for the two periods.

Table 3.1 Teenage Unemployment in 1933 and 1985
15-19 year-olds as a percentage of the total labour force unemployed

	1933 %	1985 %
Male	8.3	21.1
Female	25.5	27.6
Total	10.8	23.7

Source: Adapted from Holbrook and Bessant, 1987: 41 Table 1.

Unemployed teenagers were represented in the labour force in the same proportion in both periods but in 1985 their unemployment rate was more than double what it was at the height of the Depression in 1933 (23.7 per cent: 10.8 per cent). At first glance, teenage unemployment in 1985 appears worse than in 1933. But as already noted, statistics for the latter were relatively unsophisticated. Real unemployment among school leavers at the height of the Depression was probably in excess of 40 per cent (White, 1985:6). In any event, statistical comparisons between the two periods do not provide a true picture of the nature of youth unemployment or of the work available to those who were employed. During the Depression, the main source of community concern was male youth unemployment. "The community was concerned about the future of young men unable to find a niche, fearing that they would become discontented, unproductive and unfit to join the married child-producing ranks of society" (Gilbert and Inglis 1987:331). Another Australian study pointed to the special disadvantages of unemployed teenagers: "No age group was exempt from unemployment, but the young suffered more perhaps than the old. For boys and girls, often it was not as much a question of losing a job as of ever finding one" (Peter, 1964:64).

2. Underemployment in Deadend Jobs

Underemployment was also a source of concern in the thirties. Many teenagers employed during the Depression were 'helpers receiving no wages' and part-time workers in blind-alley or deadend jobs (White, 1985:6). School leavers who got deadend jobs as juniors were usually sacked at age seventeen or eighteen when they became eligible for a higher wage (Holbrook and Bessant, 1987:42) Gillis noted that the same fate faced young Americans of the Depression era (1974:127). A similar fate awaits the student of today, who like their colleagues of fifty years ago, may be tempted to leave school for the attraction of the wage packet. They then become trapped in low status jobs and experience underemployment as an alternative to no job at all. Underemployment refers to the inability of people to achieve "...satisfying work that uses an adult's skill and provides an adequate living" (Sullivan, 1987:1). Teenagers today are increasingly staying on at school and working part-time in deadend jobs hoping to avoid being unemployed or underemployed on a full-time basis (Munro:1983:1). Likewise, the Depression generation 'marked time' at school until the worst was over. When they finally left, they had no experience and had priced themselves out of the market. The Sydney Morning Herald quoted an Inspector of Schools on the plight of the school leaver:

> Pupils leaving school at the Intermediate or Leaving Certificate age have nothing to do but wander aimlessly round the town with no prospects. In a short while, they are ruined for life (SMH, 18-2-1932).

The newspapers of the day were brimful of pathetic stories about unemployed youths and teenagers:

> In answer to a three line advertisement offering employment to two girls experienced in bottling and labeling, 200 girls stormed the offices of Mr Knight, toilet preparation agent...yesterday morning. Many were well educated and carried references from leading city firms...Some told pitiful tales of privations their families have been through owing to unemployment and almost begged for the position (SMH, 13-2-1930).

Even blind-alley jobs were sought after and difficult to get during the worst years of the Depression. In 1939 the Government of NSW reported that there was "...annually a surplus of young men who, having spent their youth in blind-alley occupations, are unable to find employment as adults" (Mander, 1944:7). A blind-alley or deadend occupation was one where there were no prospects of permanency or advancement. Such jobs were often called 'boy labour' as they were generally taken up by males rather than females. Boy labour constituted the deadend jobs that today's teenagers find for pocket money while still at school. "The sandwich delivery boys of the thirties have become the McDonald's fast-food servers of the eighties..."(Holbrook and Bessant, 1987:42).

Surprisingly, there has been little attention by researchers to the social and psychological costs of teenage employment in deadend jobs which dominate the youth labour market of the 1980s. (The work of Greenberger and Steinberg (1986) in America is an important exception and was discussed in Chapter 2). During the inter-war period, blind-alley occupations were identified as a social evil and attracted much more research interest than they do in the 1980s. Deadend jobs, or blind-alley occupations as they were then known, were believed to be a cause of long term unemployment in the generation before World War 2. 'The Times' editorial of 25 May 1939 stated that "chronic unemployment among young men is a consequence in a large part of blind-alley occupations in their teens" (Conway, 1943:16). Furthermore, such jobs were seen to be linked to juvenile crime: newspaper boys engaged in illegal gambling and match boys were inclined to become beggars. Large numbers of these youth drifted into vagrancy and crime. Dangers were also thought to exist in the underemployment of 'young intellectuals who were forced to take jobs well below their aspirations" (Casson, 1979:3).

Social problems of this kind compelled several official bodies to report to the Government on the creation of an unemployable class trapped in blind-alley occupations "which offer a relatively high commencing wage but a minimum of industrial training..." (*Economic Review*, quoted by Conway, 1943:48). In many respects, wrote Osterman, the youth labour market during the pre-World War 2 years was remarkably similar to today's market. "Youth who worked during this period did so largely in low-skilled and low-paying jobs..."(1980:62).

Youth in England and America were compelled to work in deadend jobs or not at all. Of London's school leavers studied by Ronald Bray early in the twentieth century, almost two-thirds went immediately to jobs of the casual or deadend sort. A 1932 report in Massachusetts noted: "Many of the jobs commonly given to children provide irregular employment, almost if not completely casual in nature. ...Young boys and girls are hired because they are cheap and because they can be laid off without qualms of conscience as to family obligations" (Osterman 1980:62). Failure to get 'man's work', usually a skilled or semi-skilled job, meant economic poverty and social subordination for disadvantaged youth

(Gillis, 1974:128). The problems facing school leavers during the Depression are familiar to today's teenagers: "In these unprosperous days, many young people are less concerned with the difficulty of choosing suitable work than with the difficulty of finding any sort of work at all" (Macrae 1934, quoted in Bates *et al.,* 1984:175). There was in the 1930s, as there is today, great pressure on teenagers to get started in real work. Indeed, leaving school has always been a major rite of passage for young people as it represented "a fundamental moment in the life of the individual second only in importance to that of his physical birth" (Freedman, 1976:108).

Work as a Rite of Passage

Work, in western culture, is what distinguishes children from adults. As a rite of passage it represents independence and being grown-up. "Entry to the workforce has in fact fulfilled much the same function in western societies as initiation rites have done in some other societies" (Blakers and Nicholson, 1988:20). Work is particularly important when it is scarce which in turn confers greater status on those who have jobs. According to the author of *Children of the Depression,* American boys and girls from economically deprived families were most likely to aspire to grown-up status. He argued "...the goal of adult status is very much a function of family hardship. The greater the hardship, the more prevalent the goal" (Elder, 1974:82). The same no doubt applies today, except that during the Depression there was little opportunity for disadvantaged youth to stay on at school. It was economic necessity rather than financial independence that compelled students to leave. Working children were seen as more financially responsible compared to non-workers of both sexes. Girls who worked as well as performing household duties lost out in social life, but won social esteem (Elder, 1974:77). Boys who worked were accorded more esteem than those who stayed at school; the work was meaningful in that it had economic value for the family as a whole. The number of children, more than any other attribute of the family, had direct consequences for labour and economic needs in the household. About 66 per cent of boys with three or more siblings were employed, in comparison to 44 per cent in smaller families (Elder, 1974:68).

Working while still at school was also encouraged. Part-time workers were regarded as more ambitious than their non-working peers. "In varying degree, paid jobs called for punctuality, courtesy, thoroughness, and obedience to superiors" (Elder, 1974:74). Elder's study provides strong empirical evidence of the value of work experience for teenagers. He found that children who were gainfully employed during the Depression were more 'adult oriented' than their non-working peers. Qualities derived from work experience included "... the responsible use of money ... energetic or industrious behaviour, dependability and domesticity among girls, and the social independence of boys" (1974:82). It was, however the extrinsic value of the work, that is the money, which remained the reason why teenagers in disadvantaged families were expected to work. While this is true for the majority of the present generation of student workers, the money is used for a different purpose.

Greenberger and Steinberg point out that whereas once "... working during adolescence was associated with familial financial need ... by 1980 it had become a distinctively individualistic, self-motivated phenomenon" (1986:75). Also, in contrast to the 1980s where children are important emotionally to the family, children in the Depression were seen as economically important. Teenagers were expected to contribute to the financial support of the household or to move out. Yet decent work was scarce; for example, twenty per cent of all male school leavers in NSW at the end of 1932 could not get work (McQueen 1976:134). Thus, underemployment in blind-alley occupations was the only alternative to unemployment for both stayers and leavers. Getting started in a job, any job, was the way youth responded to work as a rite of passage to adulthood and a livelihood. Confronted by the social and political consequences of creating a 'disinherited class', the state responded with initiatives designed to contain the 'boy problem' within education and training. These initiatives of the Depression era, which bear a striking resemblance to government programs and policies of the 1980s, are discussed below.

3. Official Responses

Vocational Guidance

The magnitude of the 'boy problem' was noted by Bland in New South Wales (1976:167). Vocational education and a variety of 'placement' strategies were introduced by the State governments and private organizations. As an example of the latter, a 'Youth Citizens' Association' movement was launched to improve the welfare of young people by providing educational and recreational facilities. During 1933, 3,200 unemployed juveniles aged between 14 and 21 gained membership and 600 boys and girls found employment through these associations (Bland, 1976:188). A number of measures were introduced to assist unemployed youth: courses in the skilled trades and farm work for boys and shorthand classes and domestic training classes for girls. Similar initiatives were taken in other states, but as Bland noted at the time, "nowhere is the position believed to be properly in hand" (1976:188).

Conceived in more favourable economic times, there was a sad irony in the promotion of vocational guidance during the worst years of the Depression. The failure of vocational guidance is illustrated by the South Australian experience where 80 per cent of female school leavers found domestic jobs in their own or other people's homes while 85 per cent of male school leavers had to be satisfied with 'odd jobs' such as in shops and offices, service stations, railways and so on (White, 1985:13). No amount of 'guidance' could place school leavers in permanent jobs which simply did not exist.

Something had to be done to ensure that the nation's youth were not radicalized by extended periods of unemployment or underemployment and the prospect of never sharing the fruits of prosperity with the more fortunate in society. Education, rather than the economy, was to be the focus of policy. Politicians and educationalists looked to vocational guidance as a means to alleviate the distress of those most at risk and most states introduced measures based on an inflated faith in guidance and counselling (White, 1985:7-8). The faith was kept alive primarily by the providers of vocational guidance, who in NSW in 1932, claimed that 93 per cent of those 'guided' were successful in the jobs they took up, compared to 66 per cent amongst the 'unguided' (Gilbert and Inglis, 1987:331). Other measures in the education sector included reorganization of post-primary schools, the curriculum, the public examination system, and changes to technical education. "Utilitarian attacks on 'the basics' (the 3 R's) in schools coupled to reinstating vocational emphases in the primary and post-primary curriculum, all carried the urgency of a nation preoccupied with the employment prospects of young people" (White, 1985:56). White's remark refers to Australia during the Great Depression but applies equally well to the rhetoric of the 'vocationally obsessed 1980s' (Davies, 1986:22).

The preoccupation with youth employment prospects however, meant paid work in industry for boys and mainly unpaid domestic work for girls. Girls and women are virtually invisible in the literature of the Depression which is preoccupied with the 'boy problem'. "In the blind-alley debate", notes Finn in relation to youth underemployment in England of the 1930s, "the objects of anxiety were the economic and social transitions of young men" (1987:21). At least in this area, recent literature on the 'recession generation' acknowledges the existence of underemployment for girls in deadend jobs and their right to a livelihood and decent work. Whilst middle class girls during the Depression had access to office work and teaching, their working class peers were trained for work in the home, in textile factories and for work as domestics. "No other form of State-provided schooling affirmed in such explicit terms the life trajectory of a social group as did the education of women" (McCallum, 1986:228). Domestic arts courses were established in working-class suburbs so that in the words of Victoria's Chief Inspector of Education, girls could study courses which "can best fit them for their main aim in life - the management of a happy home" (Minister's Report, 1932-33 quoted by McCallum 1986:228).

Then, as now, the employment of married women was a politically sensitive issue. Growing participation in the labour market by women was slight, but significant for the criticism it invited. Between 1911 and 1933 the proportion of women in the Australian work force rose from 19.9 to 21.6 per cent. The Commonwealth Parliamentary Secretary for Employment in 1935 cited these figures as 'one of the contributing causes of the unemployment of our school-leaving youths' (quoted by White, 1985:25-25). The latter almost certainly meant boys and young men. In the 1930s the argument against women's employment was ill-founded as most were employed in 'female' jobs - hairdressing, beauty salon and commercial work (typing, shorthand and secretarial), and semi-skilled work which remained female dominated until well after World War II (White, 1985:29).

The Politics of Retention

Whether youth unemployment was due to married women taking their jobs or to the economy's inability to provide enough jobs for all, there were pressures on teenagers to stay longer at school as the only alternative to unemployment or underemployment in deadend jobs. The 1933 census taken at the height of the Depression revealed that fewer children were leaving school than was the case after the worst of the Depression was over. In 1933, 19,000 sixteen-year olds were still at school compared to 2,900 in 1937 (Mander, 1944:20-21). According to Mander, there was almost universal agreement among educationalists in favour of the leaving age being raised to seventeen. Mander himself strongly advocated prolonged schooling provided schools were to change, especially for those not aiming at the skilled trades or the professions. Such students "...would spend their secondary period in schools where the emphasis was laid on general knowledge, together with the cultivation of hobbies and other useful leisure interests" (1944:16). The alternative, Mander believed, was unemployment or underemployment as "...a messenger, an errand boy, a milk-boy or a newspaper boy - half the time hanging about with nothing to do, and the other half occupied in a job which certainly teaches him nothing useful" (1944:17). Educationalists generally, like the Inspector of Schools quoted earlier, agreed with this analysis.

Prolonged schooling also appealed to journalists and politicians who saw the advantage of keeping youth off the streets; trade unions, farmers' associations and other interest groups also supported the idea (Holbrook and Bessant, 1987:44). Political expediency rather than educational reasons was the motivating factor. As Coleman observed, the general principle is that as the labour of children has become unnecessary to society, school has been extended for them (1975:VII). Not everyone supported the notion of keeping teenagers at school longer. Opposition came from some employers who feared the loss of cheap labour, and from parents who would be deprived of their children's income for a longer period (Holbrook and Bessant, 1987:44). Although the retention rate to age seventeen rose at the height of the Depression as previously noted, it is unlikely that many teenagers from deprived homes were amongst these students. "Exemption from the world of work could be allowed the children of the well-to-do, but there were grave doubts as to whether the economy could dispense with the labour of children of other classes" (Gillis,1974:133). Elder's (1974) study, for instance, described how in deprived Depression families, older boys were prematurely drawn into the labour market in order to help with the family's economic survival.

School retention policy in the 1980s has obvious parallels with the arguments used in the 1930s. "The tendency, in the immediate pre-war years, to remain at school longer may be understood as a response to the conditions of economic stagnation, high levels of youth unemployment and the demands of some parents for greater security and job prospects for their children" (McCallum, 1986:235). Osterman argues that the theme of the 1920-1940 period in America was the institutionalization of the exclusion of youth from the primary labour market. Educators, public officials and union leaders invested schools with a custodial function. Youth were either 'enclosed' in schools or in youth work programs, an institution that emerged during this period (Osterman, 1980:69-71). Similar developments are occurring in the back-to-school rhetoric of present-day debates in Australia and in the ideology of the MSC in the UK. In the United States as well, according to Grubb and Lazerson, many of the vocational educational programs of the 1960s and 1970s drew upon the employment initiatives of the Great Depression. Their real function, they argue, is warehousing, that is, keeping youth out of the unemployment statistics (1982:169-171). Schools and various education and training programs have become alternatives to youth unemployment and substitutes for employment for many school leavers.

In the inter-war period, as now, schools responded by reorganizing curricula to make subjects more 'useful' and 'relevant' to students when they finally left school. Osterman points out that efforts to integrate school curriculum and the world of work in America date from the beginning of the twentieth century (1980:67). Depending on the state of the economy and work opportunities for teenagers, school to work transition is either a forward or reverse process. In the thirties and eighties the process of transition was reversed when schools became a holding ground for teenagers. Then, as now, argues Osterman, schools generally failed to play an important direct role in the youth labour market (1980:67). The present Australian government aims to increase the retention rate to Year 12 in 1990 to 65 per cent which is in essence a de facto raising of the school leaving age by some two years. The fact that jobs are scarce means that schools will be used to delay the entry of youth into the labour market. Keeping them out of the unemployment statistics in the 1980s is as politically important as keeping them off the streets was in the 1930s. Unemployed youth were seen as a threat to the social order of the 1930s just as they are in the 1980s. The following newspaper editorials make this clear (Holbrook & Bessant, 1987:42-43):

> These are the 'disinherited class', many of whom have reached young manhood without ever having the satisfaction of earning their own living. Their future is a problem apart, and nothing except special measures which will equip them for a late start in industry or commerce can save them from becoming the 'debris of the depression' (*Age* 9-3-1937).
>
> No problem is a greater threat to the stability and happiness of our society than the isolation, the cutting adrift, of tens of thousands of tomorrow's adults by denying them a job and the chance to build a respected place within the community (*Age*, 24-1-1985).

In the Depression the threat to youth was perceived to be Communism and in the current recession it is drugs and crime. Although these 'diseases' are not explicitly stated, they may be discerned between the lines in the two press excerpts quoted above. The fear of Fascism and Communism as attractions to alienated youth was more explicit in this doctor's comment at the time:

> We know perfectly well that the present position regarding unemployment is so grave that unless something is done to assist the vast army of

> boys...we shall hear in time of rumblings...of revolution...(Gilbert and Inglis, 1987:333).

Horne has referred to the parallels at the level of ideology during the 1930s and the present. The 'ideology of youth unemployment' was discussed in terms of moral harm - demoralization/sexuality for girls, and a weakening of the work ethic for boys. A second theme was, and is, 'employability', concerning the work habits and skills of young people (Horne,1986:24). It is to this theme that we now turn.

Faith in the 'Basics'

In both the 1930s and the 1980s blame for youth employment has been placed on "the perceived failure of the institutions of schooling to prepare their students for employable labour and also the level of wages paid to youth" (Holbrook and Bessant, 1987:47). Holbrook and Bessant note that newspapers in the two periods were remarkably alike in their attacks on government (but not non-government) schools. Tax-payers were not getting value for money and schools had to return to teaching the 'basics'. Similar claims and demands have been voiced most recently by the Business Council of Australia which ranked learning basic skills (3 Rs) as the most serious deficiency of secondary schools in Australia (BCA, 1986:17).

Whilst the present Australian government has not used school leaver deficiencies in literacy and numeracy to explain youth unemployment, it has promoted improvements in basic skills as essential to the nation's economic recovery (*In the National Interest*, 1987; Dawkins, 1988).

Just prior to the Schools Commission report (1987), the review committee on the *Quality of Education in Australia* came up with similar proposals although it went further on the subject of 'basics' and 'value for money'. The terms of reference included specific reference to communication, literacy and numeracy. The report saw the preparation for the labour market as the main, if not sole aim of mastering these basic skills or competencies. There are close parallels here with the Gibson Commission's (1935) report and the Wolff (1938) report which gave considerable attention to the 3Rs. Whilst educationalists of the thirties agreed on the need for the development of general mental and manual skills, industrialists were more concerned with standards of literacy and numeracy and work attitudes of young employees (White, 1985:49).

It is interesting to note that the latter was an issue during the Depression as it is today. National efficiency was the catchcry in the oft quoted slogan 'education for efficiency' (Holbrook and Bessant, 1987:43). *In the National Interest* has followed suit, albeit in a more sophisticated tone. What is important is that in both periods,most commentators assumed that youth equipped with more practical skills would more readily obtain work (Holbrook and Bessant, 1987:44). The declining number of jobs available to the unemployed and the tendency of employers to discriminate against teenagers were rarely considered as the real problem.

Employers and Teenagers

There is evidence that some employers in the Depression used the age of workers as a cost-saving measure and non-unionised teenagers were most vulnerable to exploitation (see Lowenstein, 1979:127-128).

Unions today are more vigilant in protecting young workers from exploitation, but business and employers are prepared to argue the case for paying young workers less than the adult wage. The bottom line is that in times of depression or recession the shortage of work and the structure of opportunities mean that it is an employers' market. Youth wages will be determined accordingly. "Like today's young people, the youth in 1930 tended to find employment in the industries most likely to provide secondary jobs" (Osterman, 1980:62).

With the exception of Japan, young workers in Western economies have always been discriminated against in preference to adult workers. Moore has argued that the discrimination has nothing to do with the intrinsic personality characteristics of young people, but to life-cycle characteristics. He concludes that the "factor which differentiates young workers from others is simply the fact that they are young" (Moore, 1983:23).

The failure of various employer-based solutions to youth unemployment has its genesis in this attitude. Holbrook and Bessant (1987:45) point out that both in the Depression and in the current recession employers were expected to put altruism above self-interest in their employment of youth:

> It is of national importance that the employer should put himself to some inconvenience or make some sacrifice in this cause (VPD 13-6-1935).
>
> Employers also need to be reminded of their direct responsibility in this area. At the moment they are only offering negative strategies (Australian, 30-8-1985).

Calls for employer altruism, particularly in times of economic hardship are wishful thinking. Economic self-interest rather than social obligation has always been a basic tenet of industry. Even in Japan, where companies accept responsibility for training young workers, the motive is economic gain. Young workers are favoured over older colleagues because of a wage system based on seniority. Young workers are seen as more flexible and less expensive, the latter being the key variable (Bresnick, 1984:73). This issue will be taken up in the next chapter.

Employer attitudes towards young workers will inevitably determine the success or failure of youth training schemes. Bresnick has noted that it is far cheaper to support a student in school than to provide a job with a salary in addition to training. He also points out that recent attempts to provide American youth with on-the-job-training have coincided with a recession, a time when employers have the least need for workers, especially young workers who in any case are not viewed as potential career employees (1984:56). The fate of traineeships in the 1930s and 1980s can be appreciated against this background. During the Depression recipients of traineeships were to be disadvantaged youths 18 years and over. Poor planning appears to have bedeviled the program from the start. Instructors could not be recruited and many of the selected youth did not take up the traineeships (Holbrook and Bessant, 1987:48).

Following the recommendations of the Kirby Report, the Hawke government introduced the Australian Traineeship Scheme (ATS) in the 1985-86 budget. Although it is too early to evaluate, the scheme is unlikely to reduce youth employment if it does not secure "a genuine point of entry in a career path offering a chance of satisfying and permanent work...(Livingstone, 1986:25). There is the danger with the ATS that history will repeat itself. "The evidence suggests that in the thirties no matter what form the strategy took in each state the outcome was the same - a relatively small number of trainees who were neither fully trained nor able to find permanent employment" (Holbrook and Bessant, 1987:46). Current traineeships under ATS at least offer a formal credential thus providing recipients with entry to more advanced study. For school leavers, traineeships have become a new form of apprenticeship training, the latter having served boys better than girls. The Kirby Report noted that only four per cent of female compared to 33 per cent of male school leavers took up apprenticeships each year. The ATS is expected to redress this imbalance. By contrast with their low participation in apprenticeships, young women made up 68 per cent of the 9,154 traineeship placements as at August 1987 (Commonwealth of Australia, 1987:50). Whatever the improvements are over apprenticeships, the ATS still emphasizes training rather than employment and is therefore essentially a warehousing device.

New Wine in Old Bottles

An important difference between the policies of the 1930s and 1980s was the role of the central government. Youth unemployment during the Depression was a state responsibility with the central government's involvement in economic and social policy being a war-time and post-war phenomenon. Another difference at the policy level concerned cutbacks in funding to schools. Cutbacks in the 1930s were justified on the grounds that secondary education was a privilege, not a right, and that in conditions of high unemployment, the state's money would be wasted on education. Because these arguments cannot be sustained in the 1980s, the emphasis has shifted to the instrumental value of schooling, particularly in the secondary and TAFE sectors (Dwyer *et al.,* 1985:101-102). Yet in the 1930s and 1980s, similarities in official responses to the youth employment and underemployment issues greatly outnumbered the differences. Depression policy debates were concerned with raising the school leaving age, maintaining the apprenticeship system, modifying post-primary curicula and extending vocational guidance and training. It was hoped that keeping teenagers in education and training would ensure the supply of trained workers once the economy recovered (White, 1985:17).

The reforms mentioned above have parallels in current initiatives to restructure the secondary curriculum by introducing an element of vocationalism with such concepts as 'curriculum and the world of work'. Employers were, and still are reluctant to employ school leavers, claiming that they lack basic literacy and numeracy skills as well as a healthy work ethic. The perceived absence of a work ethic and basic skills amongst young people has prompted governments in both eras to put their faith in the 3R's and vocational education. Later chapters will analyse the ideologies underlying the 'new vocationalism' in schools.

All of these measures are ostensibly designed to improve the employability of school leavers. Supply-side initiatives dominated policy thinking in the 1930s as they do currently. These responses to youth unemployment and underemployment did not create jobs in the thirties, nor will they in the eighties. Distinct from official responses are the responses of teenagers themselves to the limited employment opportunities in the primary labour market of the 1930s and 1980s. Teenagers responded by seeking jobs in blind-alley or deadend occupations. In the earlier period, these jobs were condemned by official bodies as a social evil. In the 1980s, underemployment in the new teenage workplaces of supermarkets and fast-food outlets has provoked little public concern. Thus, two questions are raised by these official and informal responses to youth unemployment. First, why are failed policies of the past advocated today and second, why is teenage employment in deadend occupations perceived by many commentators as acceptable and even desirable? These questions will be examined in later chapters. But first, the changing fortunes of teenagers from the post-war period to the present will be examined.

4. The Legacy of the Depression

"The religion of Australia is its standard of living" (Lloyd Ross).

There is a striking similarity in the psychological literature, according to Furnham and Lewis, of the effects of unemployment irrespective of place, time and population (1986:119). The apparent consensus in the literature may be explained by the emphasis by psychologists on non-economic factors such as loss of activity, time structure and job prestige. Other researchers have argued that economic factors, chiefly loss of income, were more devastating during the Depression than loss of job content, since most jobs were lacking in intrinsic satisfaction and would not be missed by the unemployed (Jahoda *et al.*, 1933: Bakke, 1940). Put another way, it was the loss of daily bread, rather than daily meaning which accounted for the suffering during the 1930s. Jahoda has suggested that the unemployed of the 1980s, on the other hand, experience economic deprivation less and the absence of employment more than their counterparts living under unquestionably worse living conditions during the 1930s (1982:15-16). A conflicting view has been put by Terkel who argued that the real tragedy of the Depression was not so much economic as psychological deprivation, not so much poverty as guilt (1970:19-20). Terkel sees the loss of daily meaning as more disastrous than the absence of daily bread. This interpretation is unconvincing when one reads accounts of the experience of unemployment by people in the 1930s (For example, *Marienthal* (1933), *The Unemployed Worker* (1940) *Weevils in the Flour* (1979). Jahoda's (1982:15-16) interpretation that in the 1980s, economic deprivation (daily bread) counts for less and the absence of employment(daily meaning) for more, is more plausible. She contrasted unemployment in the two eras as the difference between absolute and relative physical deprivation (Jahoda, 1979:493). Put another way, the spectre of misery in the 1930s could be compared to the spectre of poverty in the 1980s.

Relief to the unemployed in the Depression, unlike today, was determined by need rather than by unemployment itself. It was known as 'sustenance' with appropriate connotations of stinginess and stigma. Commenting on letters written by the Depression unemployed, Peter noted that "humiliation, degradation and anxiety were woven into almost every aspect of everyday life" (1964:109). The stigma and shame of collecting dole rations could be seen on almost every face. It was not just poverty that afflicted the unemployed, but misery as well. Only Queensland had an unemployment insurance scheme and in 1933 Australia spent a mere 3 per cent of national income on unemployment relief (Jones, 1983:47). At no stage during the Depression was there an official inquiry into the standard of living of unemployed people (Peter, 1964:67).

In the thirties, social policy played a small role in policy thinking (Jones, 1983:39). People were expected to look after themselves as the concepts of state dependency and welfare rights did not develop until the 1970s. Until then, benefits were generally selective, austere, flat rate and non-contributory (Jones, 1983:4). Social security was to become more important in the post-war years although initially it was to be kept to a minimum. According to Prime Minister Chifley, "...the main function of reconstruction will be positive - to create conditions in which palliatives will be less and less necessary" (Chifley, 1944:1).

"Full employment is a fundamental aim of the Commonwealth government" was Curtin's pledge in 1944 and apart from brief fluctuations in 1961-63 it was largely achieved until the present recession began in 1974. Post-war reconstruction and the continuing emphasis on full employment depended for their initial impetus on the experience of the Depression (Peter, 1964:427). It is difficult to imagine that this could have been otherwise.

A teenager in the Depression years who had experienced hardship would be unlikely to forget the worst years during middle age in the 1950s and 1960s. For this reason, the political choice of Australians was for the maintenance of as high a level of employment as possible (Boehm, 1979:325).

Writing in 1943, the War historian C.E.W. Bean said: "None of our present generation can look at the economic future except in the light of the most bitter economic experience of the present century - the Great Depression of 1929-34" (1943:7). Bean advocated social security in six major areas: food, clothing, housing, health, education and recreation. Like many other social commentators in the immediate post-war years, Bean hoped that Australia would never again experience a depression or war. The expectation of economic growth and full employment, if necessary through government action , dates back to the 1930s. The wastes and distress of this era strengthened the case for government action (Boehm, 1979:308).

The Post-War Period - Standard of Living

As early as 1932 Lloyd Ross remarked that "the religion of Australia is its standard of living" (1932:208). During the Depression no government could protect the sanctity of the standard of living. In the post-war period, no government could afford to ignore it. Australians came to accept rising inflation for the trade off of an acceptable level of unemployment. The low unemployment rates of under 2 per cent for 1945 to 1974 were below the levels experienced by most other countries (Jones, 1983:196).

Parents of today's teenagers were themselves teenagers during the post-war boom of the 1950s. As previously noted, their parents had lived through the hardships of the Depression and were determined that their children would not suffer as they had. Elder's Oakland study, *Children of the Great Depression* (1974) focused on the subsequent occupational attainments and attitudes to work of males who were in their early teens during the Depression. In later life, teenagers from deprived families attributed greater value to job security and income than their less deprived counterparts. It seems that many of the deprived group were motivated by the fears of their parents to attain jobs with good security and income (O'Brien, 1986:204). Further evidence for the Depression-effect in motivating people's educational attainments can be gauged from Bakke's study in which respondents lamented their shortsightedness in seeking income rather than continuing their education. Many unemployed workers believed with hindsight , that had they deferred gratification, more education would have made their jobs Depression-proof. (Bakke , 1940:24). It is difficult to estimate if the experiences of these workers were transmitted to their children who were born in the Depression, but it seems highly likely, in the light of O'Brien's analysis of Elder's study, that this was the case.

Marcia Freedman has provided a useful description of the 'succession of generations' in America:

> The parental generation of the fifties and sixties experienced the depression as children...(as well as) 'unparalleled opportunities to become established at work, because they were a relatively small cohort that came of age in a time of sustained economic growth. Since expectations are colored by experience, the way things were for the parental generation becomes the 'normal' state (Freedman, 1976:21).

The Birth of the Teenager

Brought up under conditions of near full employment, it would be difficult for the parents of today's teenagers to understand the problems of being unemployed (or underemployed) in the 1970s and 1980s (Watkins,1982:161-62). Sheehan has argued that the perceptions of hardship have been clouded by the "symbols of Depression - dole queues, near starvation, and unemployed on the move" (1980:35). Having heard or read about the misery of the thirties, many would deny even the existence of unemployment in the present recession. A generation which had experienced continued prosperity in the post-war era would find the transformation of life for their teenage children difficult to grasp.

In the post-war period, the high percentage of the population under the age of 21 became a market in itself. The modern 'teenager' was probably born in America in 1944 with the publication of the magazine *Seventeen*. It was a time of general optimism and prosperity and the teenage market was exploited by advertisers in the consumer-oriented society. "An image of 'youth culture' was generated (in Australia also) with a major emphasis on self-fulfilment, freedom, affluence, entertainment and excitement..." (Dwyer *et.al.*, 1984:70). The term 'teenager' implied "...a sense of freedom, autonomy, and frivolousness: it connoted an individual who was not old enough to function as an adult member of society but who nonetheless was no longer under stringent parental control" (Greenberger and Steinberg, 1986:77). The definition of youth was redefined between the 1930s and 1940s. In the pre-war period, school leavers were generally able to get jobs needed for their role as breadwinners. As adolescents and juveniles they could enjoy adult responsibilities as workers but not the freedoms associated with spending power. This was to come in the early post-war decades, at least for males, who as teenagers enjoyed a new status as consumers. Female school leavers in Australia, according to Poole, did not enjoy the opportunities available to their male counterparts. She argues that the pattern of inequality in the 1950s continued into the 1980s and notes that in Canberra and Queanbeyan in 1970, for example, female disadvantage was not markedly different from their inferior position in the 1950s (Poole,1984: 44-45).

In the post-war period the 'teenager' was invented to take advantage of the more prosperous times. For example, it was estimated that between 1938 and 1960 the gross wages of English teenagers increased fourfold (Gillis, 1974:205). "The distinctive fact about the behaviour of (English) teenagers", wrote Springhall, "was economic: they spent a lot of money on clothes, records, concerts, make-up and magazines - all things that gave immediate pleasure and little lasting use" (1986:216). In America ,Eugene Gilbert's book *Advertising and Marketing to Young People,* proclaimed in 1957: "The adult market is a depression-conscious market. Even those who have never suffered financially are nevertheless acutely aware of what they term 'extravagant' purchases...Young people, on the other hand, have never known a nonprosperous world" (Greenberger and Steinberg 1986:78). These young people are the parents of today's teenagers whose life chances have been undermined by the recent recession.

For teenagers and youth, employed or unemployed, the future is about the struggle for livelihood. "The problem is a shock to the past expectations that a person's opportunities were limited only by one's competence, ambitions and willingness to work" (OECD, 1986:10). According to Wilson and Wyn, the authors of *Shaping Futures* (1987), young people remain hopeful and positive, aspiring to a 'better life' than their parents have had. Every generation expects to enjoy better life chances than their predecessors. What has changed between the 1960s and now, according to Wilson and Wyn, is society's capacity to deliver the promise. Young people have always sought the independence associated with leaving home and establishing their own adult identity. The transition from family of orientation to family of procreation in times of economic prosperity has usually been smooth. Unlike their parents, the restricted opportunities for today's youth in terms of jobs and housing, have given them a lower economic and social status. They have become marginalised and labeled variously as a 'lost', 'unlucky' and 'recession' generation. As one teenage girl lamented:

> I wish I was a teenager in the sixties. The people seemed to have fun and hope. You could work for a while, travel, come back and always know you'd find another job. You were free to pick and choose and to make mistakes. You can't do that today. I'm lucky to have this job in the dress shop (HSC matriculant , in Munro,1983).

In the post-war era Australia enjoyed one of the highest rates of home ownership in the world. Since the recession of the 1970s Australians, particularly young Australians have had to lower their expectations as home owners and their standard of living generally. The causes of the recession have been covered extensively in the literature and will not be dealt with here. What is of interest in this study is the transformation of the employment opportunities available to today's teenagers compared to what their parents had enjoyed.

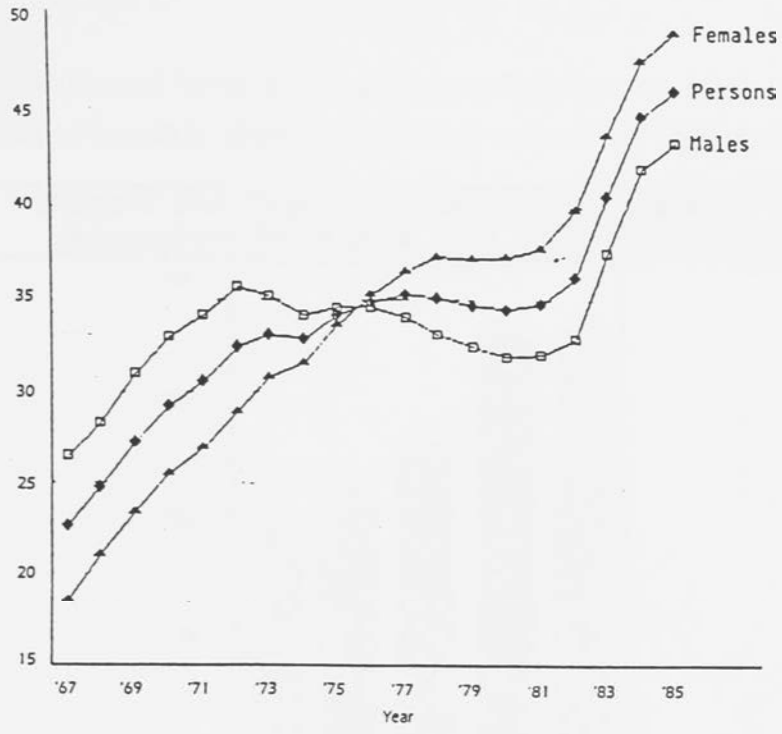
Education Equals Social Advancement

According to Connell *et al.,* for most people in the 1940s, more education was one of the hopes they had for a better and more equal post-war world. It was not motivated by ambitions to join the middle class: "Rather, Depression memories saw education as a protection against unemployment" (Connell *et al.,* 1982: 19).

The twenty years after 1948 brought more changes to education than any other two decades in Australia's history (Barcan, 1980:322). Educational provision expanded dramatically with the proportion of Gross National Product allocated to education increasing threefold. Before the war less than half of all school-age children attended secondary school compared to four out of five who completed at least four years in the post-war period (Macintyre, 1985:100). The increased enrolments in the 1950s were partly due to the post-war baby boom but also because secondary schools were seen as an avenue to the new types of white collar occupations. According to Barcan, this was a revolution in the way education was perceived by Australians - "as a means of social advancement" (1980:324). Surveys of parental attitudes in Australia showed how parents saw education as the key to success in adult life. A 1967 survey, for example, revealed that 73 per cent of parents wanted their offspring to continue their education beyond the age of seventeen (Dwyer *et al.*, 1984:89). In all western industrialized post-war economies, work in the cities depended on the supply of trained and qualified school leavers for jobs in banks, insurance companies and so on. The quality as well as the supply of jobs available to school leavers improved. Roberts noted that in England employers found it impossible to fill deadend vacancies. Tea girl and messenger boy jobs all but disappeared (1984:27). At the upper level of the job market, the percentage of the workforce employed in the professions doubled between 1947 and 1966 (Macintyre, 1985:101).

As a measure of living standards, education had great symbolic meaning which apparently influenced Ben Chifley when he remarked that he "would rather have Mr Menzies' education than a million pounds" (quoted by Bennett, 1982:163). Yet education was not a significant issue in the 1940s and 1950s. In conditions of near full employment, all who wanted to work could do so. Roberts noted that in England "...throughout the 1950s and 1960s there was sufficient consistency between school leavers' ambitions and occupational structure for the majority to make smooth transitions" (1984:43). A similar supply of jobs awaited Australian teenagers until 1966 when full-time employment among teenagers fell sharply (BLMR, 1985:6). Whilst jobs were plentiful, education was more of a status symbol than a meal ticket. When jobs became scarce, teenagers were forced to prolong their schooling. School participation rose for teenagers of both sexes from the mid-1960s until the early 1970s. For females, retention generally rose from 1975 reaching a plateau in 1978-80 and then rising again during the eighties. During the years 1977 to 1982, the retention rate of males slumped but picked up again during the remainder of the eighties. The divergence in trends for males and females was almost certainly due to worse labour market opportunities for girls in the second half of the 1970s (Commonwealth Schools Commission, 1987:58). Girls tended to stay on at school, while boys took up apprenticeships. Worsening labour market opportunities for both sexes has kept an unprecedented number of teenagers at school during the latter part of the eighties as shown in Figure 3.1.

Figure 3.1 **Apparent retention rates to year 12, all schools 1967 to 1985**



Source: Commonwealth Department of Education, School Commission, 1987:58.

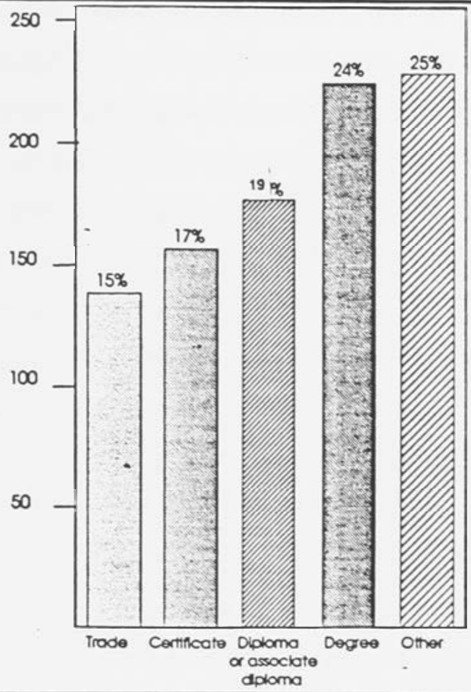
Credentials - The Paper Chase

Credentials have become increasingly important in the last two decades, even in modest occupations. In a Career Guide of 1934, the educational requirements for the job of retail salesman were described thus: "Education is not necessarily an important factor provided there is adequate grounding in English and arithmetic. Some of the better class firms, however, demand an Intermediate Certificate" (ABC, 1934:30) Increased qualifications including university training are now part of the requirements for this occupation. In 1987, a School Certificate is the minimum requirement but most firms distinctly prefer the HSC with satisfactory results in English and mathematics. Tertiary qualifications are required for trainee management and specialist areas (CRS, 1987:256).

Increased qualifications are demanded in virtually every occupation although skill levels have either remained the same or have been reduced. In the retail industry, for example, juniors were once expected to command a specialized body of knowledge involving understanding of the origins and nature of the goods dealt with, receipts, storage, distribution of goods as well as the principles of display and salesmanship (ACER, 1951:103). The demand for juvenile labour was such that in 1948 in NSW alone, 30,000 positions were unfilled (ACER,1951:21). Retailers were competing in the post-war years for young workers and could not afford to neglect the training and skilling of their employees. The employers' market of the 1980s imposes no such responsibilities. Teenage labour is in over supply and increased credentialism as well as exploitation, deskilling and underemployment are features of work in the retail industry. These issues are discussed in detail in the next chapter.

The increased demand for more educational credentials in the 1980s is clear from a summary of careers and qualifications described in a recent NSW Careers Guide.

Figure 3.2 Number and Type of Qualifications required in all occupations listed in a 1987 NSW Careers Guide



Source: Figure 3.2 was constructed from lists of careers and categories contained in *Background to Careers*, (CRS,1987). Several careers are listed in more than one category so that the numbers do not represent the total number of jobs available.

Figure 3.2 indicates that three-quarters of all jobs require some formal qualification and almost a third of these are at tertiary degree level. Credentialism is a feature of all Western economies in the 1980s requiring young people to prolong their education well beyond the legal school-leaving age. The OECD drew attention to this trend when it noted that in 1945, 80 per cent of 14 year-olds in Western Europe left school and joined the workforce. In the 1980s, some 80 to 90 per cent of 14 to 17 year-olds are in full-time schooling (OECD,1985a:21). Figure 3.2 clearly shows that further education after Year 12 is necessary for entry into most careers. Thus for most school leavers, the transition from school to immediate full-time employment has been blocked.

Deprived of meaningful work, today's teenagers are compelled to prolong their schooling, and are divorced from the world of work in age-segregated schools where they are accorded "client" status. "The young today reach physical maturity as early or even earlier than previously but are kept outside decision-making, particularly in economic affairs...(OECD, 1985a:24). In Australia, school retention, whilst low in comparison to other OECD countries, has increased steadily in the past two decades. There has been a simultaneous decline in teenage participation in full-time employment whilst part-time work for teenagers still at school has increased dramatically. By working in part-time jobs school students have initiated themselves into the world of work gaining what will be for many their only experience of paid employment.

5. Conclusion

This chapter began with a brief description of unemployment and underemployment as experienced by different generations in the 1930s and 1980s. Underemployment was considered a more serious social problem in the 1930s than it is in the present decade. Many of the solutions to the problems of youth employment in the 1930s have been, or are being recycled in the 1980s. The chapter described how the post-war era in Australia saw the birth of the teenager at a time of general affluence characterised by near full employment, low inflation and rapid economic growth. Education expanded to meet the growing demand for better trained workers in the new white collar occupations but only became a significant political issue in the 1970s when jobs for school leavers were drastically reduced. Since then employers have demanded more credentials for even semi-skilled jobs compelling more and more teenagers to prolong their schooling. Many have attempted to satisfy their need for financial independence by working part-time. In this respect the teenagers of the 1980s differ from their parents who could chose between either school or work. Extensive part-time employment by teenage school students is a phenomenon of the past two decades and has more in common with the Depression of the thirties than the early post-war decades. Because of its increasing importance to in-school teenagers, part-time work and the new teenage workplace of the 1970s and 1980s, is the subject of the next chapter.

CHAPTER FOUR

The New Teenage Workplace

"A guillotine has fallen on the traditional couplet school/work"
(Clarke & Willis, 1984)

1. The Collapse of the Transition

Teenagers (15-19 year olds) have traditionally been 'occupied' either at school or work, the former being a prerequisite for the latter. Whilst jobs were plentiful, the transition from one to the other was generally smooth. Recent studies of school to work transition have described the transition as problematic, a period of 'Sturm and Drang', according to the official reports of government working parties. Roberts has argued that school leavers themselves do not find the move from school to work traumatic or problematic. "Recent school-leavers have worried less about the transition into employment than the possibility of remaining jobless" (Roberts,1984:3 citing Youthaid, 1979). Transition programs are therefore based largely on the false assumption that school and work are distinctive cultures requiring major adjustment in moving from one to the other when the problem is in reality severely reduced employment opportunities for school leavers. In this sense, adjustment to the world of work has become a generational, rather than an individual problem. In short, a guillotine has fallen on the traditional passage from school to work. Or as Roberts states: "Young people are as able and willing to work as ever, but their jobs have gone" (1984:24).

What jobs that are available to school leavers are mostly in the secondary labour market, jobs that "do not require and often discourage stable working habits; wages are low; turnover is high; and career ladders are few" (Reich *et al.,* 1973:359-360). Carnoy has argued that the chief characteristic which distinguishes workers in the secondary labour market and the primary labour market is the lack of stable working habits in the former (1980:32). Work stability means working full-time in a job which offers a good salary, security of tenure and career prospects as well as tasks commensurate with education and training. It is the failure to achieve this last criterion which results in underemployment, that is particularly relevant to Year 12 graduates in their transition from college to the world of work.

Ainley and Fordham point out that the idea of a successful transition is a particularly difficult notion to define. At the general level the problems involved in moving from school to work are in part the problems of adjustment to adult life while at a simple level it involves school leavers getting jobs. "Beyond that might be added a measure of whether the job obtained was commensurate with the person's skill. These two criteria correspond to the notion of unemployment and underemployment" (Ainley and Fordham, 1979:27). It is this latter criterion of *underemployment* which most aptly describes employment in the new teenage workplace available to school leavers in Australia and elsewhere. The remainder of the chapter examines the structure of the teenage labour market and the service sector upon which it is based. While teenage employment (or more accurately underemployment) is the theme of the chapter, the related issue of youth unemployment needs to be addressed briefly.

High levels of unemployment among young people are a feature of many OECD countries. Teenagers and school leavers face even higher levels of unemployment than older youth as indicated in Table 4.1:

Table 4.1 Teenage and youth unemployment in selected OECD countries in 1986 as a percentage of teenage and youth labour forces

	Teenage [a] Rate	Youth [b] Rate
Spain	48.4	43.1
Italy	n.a.	39.3
France	29.2	23.4
U.K.	23.0	20.7
Netherlands	22.9	19.8
Australia	19.1	14.5
U.S.A.	17.9	12.7
Canada	16.8	15.2
above average	25.3	23.6
Total OECD [c] average	18.1	16.3

(a) Teenagers are in the age group 15-19 except for Spain, U.K. , U.S.A. where it is 16-19 years.
(b) Youth refers to the 15-24 age group except for Italy (14-24) and Spain, U.K., U.S.A. (16-24).
(c) This includes the 8 countries listed as well as Japan, Germany, Finland, Norway and Sweden which have below-average rates of teenage and youth unemployment.

Source: OECD, 1987:50-53 adapted from Table 2.4 (p.50) and 2.6 (p.53).

Table 4.1 indicates that Australia's teenage and youth unemployment rates exceed the total OECD averages. Furthermore the difference between teenage and youth unemployment rates is two and a half times greater in Australia than in the OECD. The particular severity of teenage unemployment in Australia is further illustrated in Table 4.2.

Table 4.2 **Unemployment Rates in Australia by selected ages at July 1987.**

Selected region averages	15-19	20-24 (percentages)	25-34	all ages
Australia	18.5	10.9	7.0	7.9
N.S.W.	19.1	12.4	8.3	8.7
Victoria	15.0	7.2	4.9	5.7
Queensland	19.5	13.8	7.8	9.3
South Australia	25.5	13.0	7.6	8.9
West Australia	16.3	10.8	6.9	7.7
Tasmania	24.3	13.3	7.2	9.3
N.T.	*	*	*	5.5
A.C.T.	23.3	*	3.8	5.4

* Numbers too small for reliable estimates.

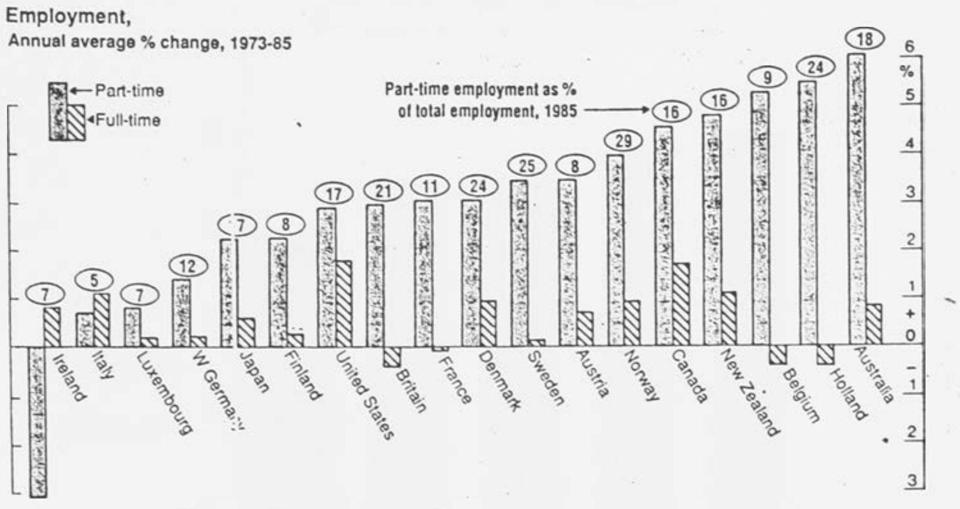
Sources: Cass, 1988:61 adapted from Table 4.9 based on ABS Labour force estimates unpublished data, July 1987.

Table 4.2 shows that the teenage rate is more than double the all ages average and is most pronounced in the ACT where it is three times the Australian rate and four times the ACT all average rate. It is for this reason that the employment problems of ACT teenagers deserves special attention. But first, a general picture of employment opportunities for Australian teenagers needs to be drawn.

The Teenage Labour Market

While full-time employment opportunities for 15 to 19 year olds in the past two decades have declined, at the same time there has been a dramatic growth in the number of jobs available on a part-time basis. Axinn and Stern (1988) have shown that almost all new jobs created since 1980 in the United States are either part-time or low-wage. They argue that the middle-income jobs that once dominated the manufacturing economy are no longer there in the new service economy. Of the 9.1 million new jobs added to the US economy between 1980 and 1985, 89 per cent were in the retail trades and miscellaneous services. Three-quarters of these have been filled by people who would have preferred full-time employment and "...the evidence suggests that underemployment continues to be a major problem for Americans" (Axinn and Stern,1988:23). These trends are international, particularly the growth of part-time employment as indicated in Figure 4.1

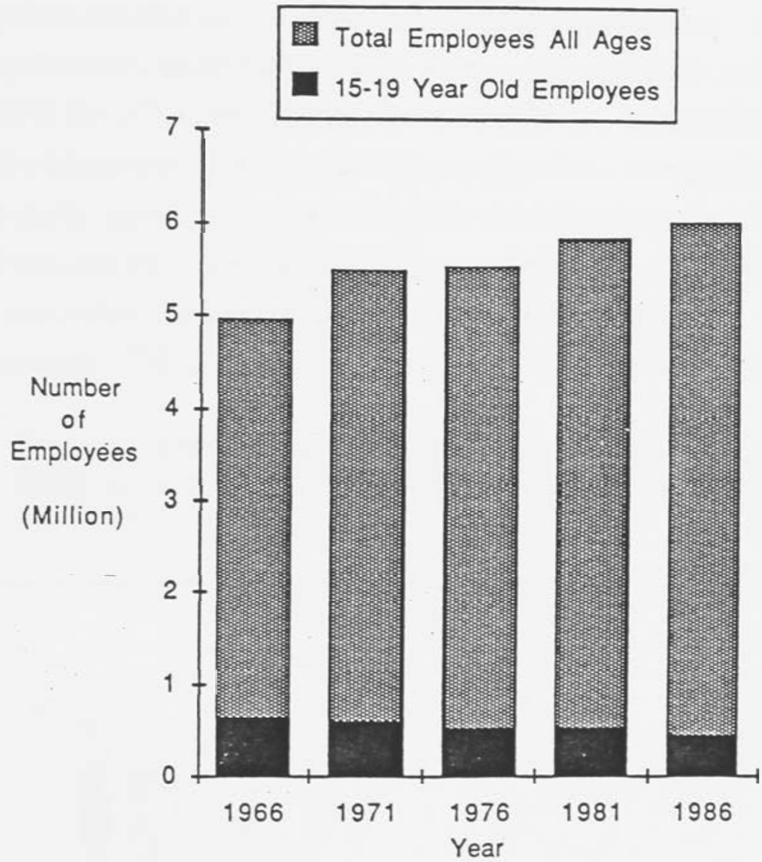
Figure 4.1 **Part-Time Employment as % of Total Employment, 1985 in Selected Countries**



Source: OECD reproduced in *The Economist*, July 4, 1987:95.

Figure 4.1 shows, that with the exception of Ireland and Italy, part-time employment in OECD countries has expanded faster than full-time jobs. The fastest growth in part-time jobs occurred in Australia with a rise of 6 per cent a year compared to less than 1 per cent in full-time jobs. Teenagers have been the main casualties of these changes in the labour market as illustrated in Figure 4.2.

Figure 4.2. Full-Time Employment of Teenagers Compared to all Ages in Australia, 1966-1986



Note: 15-19 Year Olds Share of Total Full-time Employment

14.1%	**11.5%**	**10.2%**	**9.6%**	**7.6%**
1966	**1971**	**1976**	**1981**	**1986**

Source: Curriculum Development Centre, 1987b:5.

Decline in Full-Time Work

The teenage share of full-time jobs fell by almost half over the past two decades. Furthermore, in relation to their own age cohort, 15 to 19 year olds have experienced a dramatic loss of full-time job opportunities over the same period as shown in Table 4.3.

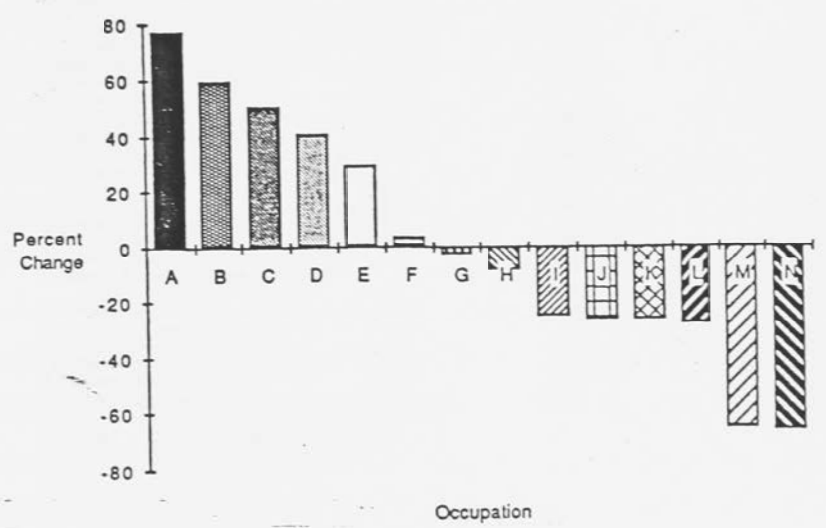
Table 4.3 Full-time employment of Teenagers (15-19 years) as a percentage of the population aged 15-19 years by sex for 1966 and 1986.

	1966 %	1986 %
Males	63.1	34.9
Females	57.1	28.2
Total	59.2	31.1

Source: ABS The Labour Force Cat. No. 6203.0 (August issue), adapted from Sweet, 1987: Table 1.2.

Thus by 1986 there was an 30 per cent drop in full-time jobs for teenagers in the twenty years since 1966. The largest rates of employment decline have been in skilled jobs requiring extended post-school training and in white collar, clerical occupations. For females, employment opportunities as clerical workers, nurses, stenographers and typists have been severely reduced in the 1971-1981 period. For teenage boys, the decline has been in clerical and white collar occupations. Teenage job opportunities have increased only in the less attractive occupations, namely shop work for girls and labouring jobs for boys. These jobs require less training and skill; the only jobs linked to further training where there was some growth (20 per cent) were for boys in the metal and construction trades. These changes in job opportunities between 1971 and 1981 are illustrated in Figures 4.3 and 4.4.

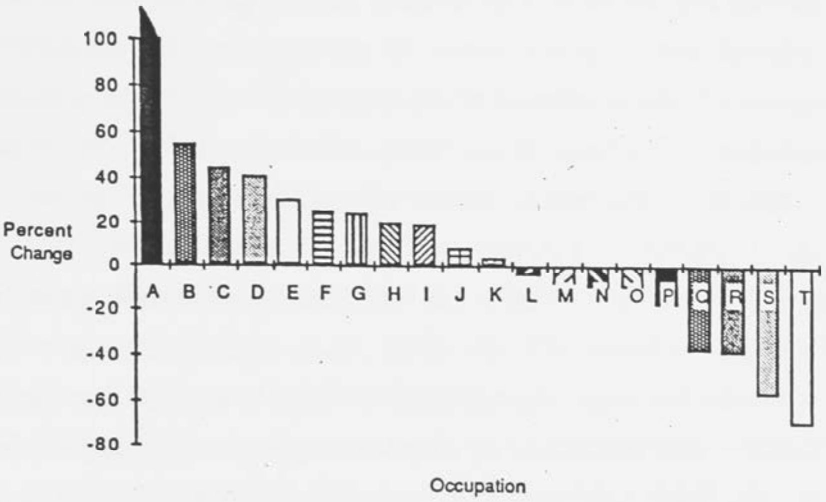
Figure 4.3 Employment Trends in Occupations Including One Per Cent or More of Employed Females aged 15 to 19 in either 1971 or 1981 Australia



Occupation	Per cent Change 1971-1981	Absolute Change 1971-1981	Share of Total Employment 1981 (%)
A. Waiters, Bartenders	77.2	2,838	2.3
B. Bookkeepers Cashiers	59.4	4,945	4.7
C. Shop Assistants	50.4	23,515	24.8
D. Farm Workers	40.5	918	1.1
E. Housekeepers, Cooks	29.5	2,113	3.3
F. Service Sport, and Recreation Workers	3.0	172	2.1
G. Hairdressers	- 3.3	- 267	2.8
H. Clerical Workers	- 8.3	- 6,569	25.5
I. Packers, Wrappers	- 25.5	- 846	0.9
J. Nurses	- 27.1	- 4,561	4.3
K. Draftsmen	- 27.1	- 1,048	1.0
L. Stenographers and Typists	- 28.3	-11,119	9.9
M. Telephone Operators	- 65.1	- 3,174	0.6
N. Tailors & Cutters	- 66.0	- 6,221	1.1

Source: Adapted from Sweet, 1987

Figure 4.4 Employment Trends in Occupations Including One Per Cent or More of Employed Males aged 15 to 19 in either 1971 or 1981 Australia



Occupation	Per cent Change 1971-1981	Absolute Change 1971-1981	Share of Total Employment 1981 (%)
A.Housekeepers, Cooks	278.4	4,828	1.9
B.Labourers	54.6	12,166	10.1
C.Storemen & Freight Handlers	44.1	4,207	4.0
D.Shop Assistants	41.0	8,715	8.8
E.Farmers & Farm Managers	30.3	1,170	1.5
F.Metal and Electrical Production Process Wkrs	24.6	1,297	1.9
G.Toolmakers, Mechanics,etc	23.6	11,024	16.9
H.Carpenters, etc.	20.0	3,190	5.6
I.Bricklayers Plasterers etc	19.0	1,404	2.6
J.Painters & Decorators	8.0	384	1.5
K.Members of Armed Services	3.4	302	0.9
L.Drivers (Road)	- 4.1	- 302	0.9
M.Farm Workers	- 7.2	- 1,466	5.5
N.Millers, Bakers, Butchers, etc.	- 9.7	- 1,056	2.9
O.Electricians, etc.	- 9.8	- 1,823	4.9
P.Compositors, etc.	- 16.9	- 783	1.1
Q.Draftsmen and Technicians	- 37.6	- 2,723	1.3
R.Other Clerical Workers	- 38.2	-13,781	6.5
S.Bookkeepers, Cashiers	- 56.7	- 2,628	0.6
T.Postmasters, Postmen, etc	- 69.7	- 2,668	0.3

Source: Adapted from Sweet, 1987

Source: CDC,1987b:11-12

The above figures clearly show that between 1971 and 1981, there has been virtually no growth in career opportunities for either male or female teenagers. Increasingly, teenagers have been compelled to stay on at school as the only alternative to unemployment or underemployment in deadend jobs. While most of these jobs are filled by school students in Australia, the trend elsewhere (Western Europe, U.K., U.S.A.) is that increasing numbers of young people are spending much of their working lives in the secondary labour market, effectively blocked from entering primary jobs with good career structures (Polk, 1985:27). Many Australian teenagers believe that education provides an entree to more skilled work. Whilst this is generally true, simply having qualifications does not guarantee employment. The relationship between education and jobs is no longer regulated by any simple formula between the two, that is, being able to type or take shorthand does not guarantee employment as a secretary. As indicated in Figure 4.3, more than 11,000 jobs have been lost to these workers in the 1971-1981 period. Neither better education nor more marketable school leavers will change the labour market and the kinds of jobs the economy is able to provide.

From the data presented so far, there is clear evidence that the opportunity structure for teenage employment has changed for the worse during the two decades since 1966 and that any explanation which ignores the changes in demand is wholly misguided. In other words, supplyside factors such as education, qualifications and skills (including literacy and numeracy) are far less relevant than the decline in demand for young workers. "It is not young workers who have changed, but the opportunity structure" (Doeringer and Vermeulen, 1981:26). In the Australian context, this has meant a basic restructuring of the workforce and a redefinition of work (Dwyer *et. al.*, 1985:13). The restructuring is evident in the growth of part-time jobs and the loss of full-time employment opportunities for young people. Sweet has argued that part-time employment needs to be counted with unemployment as an indication of the collapse of the school to work transition (1983:24). In effect, teenage work has come to be characterized by *underemployment* in marginal, part-time jobs particularly in the service sector.

2. Growth in Part-Time Work

Underemployment and labour market segmentation were identified by the OECD as characteristics of youth employment problems in Australia (OECD, 1986:15). Its report referred to the plight of teenage girls whose participation in full-time work declined nearly twice as quickly as the male proportion, while their proportion of the part-time employment market increased more than twice as quickly (OECD, 1986:16). Whilst the report noted much of the increase was due to teenagers working while still at school, it could not say whether the trend towards combining school and part-time work has been responsible for the slightly increased enrolment rates in full-time education. The experience of the student-worker in America suggests that Australian students may be following their example. Nor could the OECD explain whether advantaged or disadvantaged students were working part-time. Again, American experience confirms that it is increasingly middle class students who are holding down part-time jobs. Finally, the report was unable to predict the long-term effects of part-time work on the students' subsequent employment. Empirical studies in America concluded that for a minority of students (7 per cent) in good jobs 75 per cent had secured a post-high school job, compared to only 40 per cent of the majority employed in typical odd jobs like baby-sitting and food service work (Greenberger and Steinberg, 1986:149-150).

The present thesis will explore these questions in a later chapter. For the moment, the themes of underemployment (in part-time jobs) and labour market segmentation (mainly in the service sector) will be discussed. Underemployment is usually defined either in terms of quantity of hours worked or as a qualitative measure concerning utilization of skill and job-satisfaction. The former criterion is used by the Australian Bureau of Statistics to include part-time workers who would prefer to work more hours or full-time workers who work less than 35 hours a week (ABS, 1984:51). A qualitative definition is more appropriate to the underemployment of teenagers since many, especially school students, do not want to work more hours. What they want is "...satisfying work that uses an adult's skills and provides an adequate living. In its loosest sense, 'under-employment' refers to the inability to achieve this objective, either for a given worker or an aggregation of workers" (Sullivan, 1987:1). For increasing numbers of school leavers underemployment in part-time jobs in the service sector has become the only alternative to unemployment or further study. School students who have experienced such work and do not qualify for tertiary entrance often prefer to go on the dole rather than continue in what they regard as behind-alley occupations. This decision raises the question of whether it is the attitude of the job-seekers or the jobs themselves that is responsible for the high rate of teenage unemployment.

That there is nothing fundamentally wrong with the work ethic of teenagers is demonstrated in their self-initiation into the world of work as part-time workers while still at school. As previously mentioned, part-time employment has been the fastest growing sector in Australia during the past two decades. It is the secondary labour market of part-time work that has provided the only growth in employment opportunities for the majority of teenagers. Whereas in 1966 only one in every fifteen jobs held by a teenager was part-time, by 1986 it had risen to one in three (Sweet, 1987:4). Four out of every five of these jobs are held by school students, more than a quarter of whom have part-time jobs (Commonwealth Schools Commission, 1987:13). This is a comparatively recent phenomenon in Australia and is in part the result of the collapse of the school to work transition which until the 1974 recession was relatively smooth for school leavers. As full-time job opportunities have declined, part-time work is often the only alternative for teenagers (ironically mainly school students) to earn money. Necessity and opportunity have combined to make the part-time job a norm for more than a quarter of 15 to 17 year old students. Their need to work will be discussed later. What is of interest for the present, is the opportunity for work which the part-time job market provides for teenagers still at school.

Greenberger and Steinberg have described the part-time employment of school students as a "distinctively American phenomenon" (1986:22). They argue that while it is not unique to the United States, the proportion of youth who work and their commitment to it are not duplicated anywhere else in the world. The extent of the phenomenon of the student worker in other countries compared to America is shown in Table 4.4.

Table 4.4 Percentage of 16-17 year old school students in the labour force in the 1978-79 school year in selected countries

Country	%
USA	66
Canada	37
Sweden	20
Japan	2

Source: Greenberger and Steinberg, 1986:22-23.

3. The Service Sector

Australia's rate (25 per cent in 1987) is considerably lower than North America's and higher than Sweden's. The characteristics of part-time work in Australia are similar to those in America where most students are employed in two main occupations - store clerks (27 per cent) and food service workers (21 per cent). These low-skilled jobs constitute what Greenberger and Steinberg describe as 'the new adolescent workplace'. The old workplace in the skilled trades, on the farm and in the factory account for only 13 per cent of the jobs held by today's school students (Greenberger and Steinberg, 1986:63). A similar development has occurred in Australia as a result of structural factors in the organization of work in the service sector. Changes in the scheduling of labour to meet peak demand and general deskilling in retail work have made it possible for employers to hire cheap and inexperienced teenagers on a casual, part-time basis. Employer preference for students can be explained by virtue of their being "more willing to tolerate casual, deskilled, poorly paid jobs with fewer career prospects than would full-time labour force members" (Sweet, 1987:19). The teenage student is the natural proletariat for jobs in the service sector.

For teenage girls, the service sector has provided the biggest growth in jobs as shop assistants. In 1981, 24.8 per cent of all female teenage jobs were as shop assistants compared to only 8.8 per cent for teenage boys (see Figures 4.3 and 4.4). Shop Assistant is in reality a misnomer as most of the girls are employed as check-out chicks at the supermarket front counters where selling is reduced to adding up the purchases. The real selling for the check-out chick occurs in the 'personality market' wherein "...the great shift from manual skills to the art of 'handling', selling, and servicing people, personal or even intimate traits of the employee are drawn into the exchange and become of commercial relevance, become commodities in the labour market" (Mills, 1951:182). Mills argued that salespeople in small stores get meaning from their work through an ideology of 'service' whereby they identify with customers in a small and personally known market. Today's check-out chicks are denied the opportunity to offer real service in the sense of advising on products or even 'dealing with customers'. Self-service techniques, pre-packaging, more informative labelling, electronic weighing and pricing have made the salesgirl obsolete in the modern supermarket. Selling skills and the need for detailed product knowledge have been eliminated (Braverman, 1974:271-172).

Braverman has described the adoption of electronic cash-registers which have the effect of reducing the checkout counter to an assembly line. Despite the deskilling which occurs with the introduction of electronic systems of control, the shop assistants' union has claimed that the new technology 'upskills' rather than 'deskills'. The claim is based on the longer training period required to work the new registers and illustrates the union's attempt to manufacture an element of skill in work which in Braverman's terms is gradually being reduced to the routine and pace of the factory. "What is left to workers", he writes, "is a reinterpreted and woefully inadequate concept of skill: a specific dexterity, a limited and repetitious operation, 'speed skill'... today the worker is considered to possess a 'skill' if his or her work requires a few days' or weeks' training..." (Braverman, 1974:443-4). Whilst jobs for girls in the retail sector have been deskilled, teenage boys have marginally better prospects.

> "They have a different career path. If they're good and prepared to work hard... they became sub-managers, then managers, progressing through various grades to better wages, perks sometimes, depending on how much work they put into it" (Supermarket store manager in Adelaide).

Careers literature on retail management makes no mention of the preference given to males in managerial jobs. Gender is studiously avoided in the sales pitch:

> "Many people in their early twenties are in charge of a division or section and controlling up to 40 people" (CRS, 1987:256).

O'Donnell has suggested that the idea of 'management' in retailing is ideological as managers have little security and a good deal of stress in return for low pay (1984:145). She notes that the retail industry in Australia is highly centralised with six big firms controlling a quarter of all retail sales. Senior management posts are, with the exception of *Sussan*, occupied by men and career prospects for women are virtually non-existent. O'Donnell suggests that the pressure of managerial work in retailing is incompatible with the demands of motherhood and hence women are employed mainly as operatives. According to Game and Pringle, when women do become managers, the mothering role continues and as with mothers, their power operates only over a limited domain(1983:73). Most female managers are in junior management and earn little more than sales staff. Yet, as Game and Pringle note, the 'status of management' is a powerful incentive to girls and women working in a 'threshold' industry just above manual labour in status.

The reality, as anyone who visits a supermarket knows, is that young men control younger girls who are employed at the operation level. In supermarkets this means at the check-out.

Life in the Supermarket

Check-out chicks are among the most dissatisfied student workers in part-time jobs (Munro, 1983:45). They invariably describe their work as boring, and physically rather than mentally tiring. Of all the jobs that students take, this is the most deadend, the most dreaded: what the factory is to the blue collar worker, the modern supermarket is to the teenager.

> "I really hate it...I never want to be a shop assistant!"
> (Girl respondent, aspiring teacher in Munro, 1983).

Life in the supermarket for check-out chicks has been vividly and sympathetically portrayed by Adelaide journalist Shirley Stott Despoja. Her observations are worth quoting at some length:

> "Imagine Leanne in a different job, using her bright, giving personality in something rewarding for her. It's not the first time I've thought a girl like this should be in an up-front job, appreciated, with a career path ahead. I can remember a funny little chorus of checkout girls at another supermarket, singing the praises to me of a cheaper ice cream than the one I'd selected. 'It's creamier, and its South Australian too', they said. Charming, persuasive, full of good humour. 'You ought to be in the tourist bureau, or a promotions job,' I said to them. They laughed again, but their laughter had a different ring this time, 'What us? Some hope!'" (Despoja, 1985).

For most of the girls who work as check-out chicks, the job is tolerated because it is temporary and part-time. The idea of being a check-out chick for ever is unthinkable for most girls who hope that getting their Leaving Certificate will save them from the supermarket:

> "If you don't do well at school, you end up in some boring job that drives you crazy - that's if you get a job" (HSC female student employed at Coles, Melbourne , in Munro,1983).

Girls like Leanne are not so lucky. She works four and a half hours a day, five days a week and takes home $68, half of which she pays in board. Her mother was happy when she got the job. Leanne believed her father has a 'good' job because he's smart. Like many of the girls who work as check-out chicks for male bosses, Leanne believes she lacks this 'masculine smartness' that gets them managerial, supervisory jobs at the supermarket. Here again is Despoja's description of Leanne at work:

> "'Girl', you will notice, is how the checkout people are always designated. It denotes quite a lot: the fact that they are young women but without status; all casual employees working 4 1/2 hour shifts. Leanne puts on her uniform, her nametag which says 'Hullo, I'm Leanne' as though she could not say it for herself, and puts off her own concerns for the next few hours. The Supermarket day has begun. Eloquent, bubbly Leanne is silent now as she joins Sally, Maria and Pat at the tills, distributing change to trays, setting signs to blink, impulse lines to attract."

The real work is co-ordinated by the front-end controller who wears a different uniform. She controls the check-out chicks as well as the microfiche for price checking and the microphone for directing the checkouts, trolleyboys and for touting specials. The scene is familiar to every shopper: the action is at the front, with whoever holds the microphone. For the check-out chicks there is virtually no challenge or excitement in what they do. It is particularly distressing to the young women in such jobs that 'dealing with people' is limited to a fleeting conversation. Leanne describes it well:

> "You see a lot of purses and hands, and if you're lucky you can look up and catch a smile, a thank you, and return it before they're gone."

A middle-aged colleague of Leanne's, (a rarity in most supermarkets) had a similar yearning for more authentic contact with people:

> "When I pack for people I try to have a few words. If I remember someone wasn't too well last week, I ask them if they're feeling better now. If I can make a person feel better I feel I've done my day's work well."

Impression Management

Several studies have reported that girls seek people-oriented employment. Working with people is the preferred activity for girls, rather than boys (Wright *et al.*, 1978). Yet the jobs available to teenage girls and young women in the retail sector are virtually devoid of authentic contact with people. For many check-out chicks, the bright spot in the day is when they have personal encounters with customers. Whether pleasant or unpleasant, it is something to talk about. Irate customers offer a kind of emotional release from the boredom of the cash register. Because the customer is always right, antagonism is concealed. The girls learn to put on a happy face and manage the impressions they make in accordance with the rules of the personality market: "In all work involving the personality market...one's personality and personal traits become part of the means of production. In this sense a person instrumentalizes and externalizes intimate features of his (sic) person and disposition" (Mills, 1951:225). A student who worked in the hospitality industry succinctly describes how this affects catering workers:

> "'On the one hand, they are taught to be obliging and diplomatic, and able to enter at any time into the role of 'gracious host'. In direct contrast to this, they are also instilled with a certain amount of arrogance and independence, and a strong sense of self-survival.... It is an ability to change roles at great speed without experiencing conflict because they are secure in their own self-image" (Suzie in Morgan, 1980:27)

Yiannis Gabriel's recent ethnography of *Working Lives in Catering* (1988) is the most comprehensive study to date of work in the food industry. He observed how young workers in the fast food outlet *Fun Food* got through the day by 'playing games'. These included breaking the company rules, taking short-cuts, flirting with customers, sharing little trade secrets and inventing personal touches which "represent a little arena of negotiation, a terrain of disputed control, even in industries where Taylorism and technology seek to strip the individual of all control" (Gabriel, 1988:107). Thus ,even in the xeroxed fast food industry, workers find ways of maintaining a measure of autonomy by putting their personal stamp on the product:

> "You won't believe this; but I can go to the A-Star store where I've worked, have a 'burger special' and I can tell you who made it - from the amount of seasoning, the place where it was even put, the way its wrapped and many other small details" (as told to Gabriel, 1988: 107-108).

These innocent little strategies are no compensation for the deskilling and degradation in the catering industry.

Emotional Labour

Alienation affects workers in the personality market as it does in the assembly line of the factory. Just as the latter become estranged from the products they produce, the former feel distanced from their put-on emotions. Hochschild has referred to 'emotional labour' as part of the commercialization of human feeling now endemic in many service industries.

Emotional labour, according to Hochschild, means "the management of feeling to create a public observable facial and bodily display: emotional labor is sold for a wage and therefore has an exchange value" (1983:7). e argues that women do more emotional managing than men; women who put their feelings less at the service of others will be considered less feminine. It is no accident then that jobs involving emotional labour comprise over half of all jobs women do (1983:171). Teenage girls are given an early initiation into the nurturing, 'being nice' role in the personality market of the retail sector. As a chemist's assistant, Terese has learnt both to put on a happy face and to mother customers:

> "I get to wear a nice little uniform, high heels, makeup and the whole works - to be presentable to the outside world"(in Munro,1983).

She related how the boredom of saleswork, of 'just standing around' can be relieved by an unusual incident. A young child vomited in the shop and she volunteered to clean up the mess when everyone else held back. "The pharmacist (male) couldn't deal with it," she boasted proud to live up to the nurturing role of nurse, mother and woman. The pharmacist's reluctance had more to do with his self-image as business man, boss and man rather than an inability to cope. It has been suggested that the partition in the pharmacy functions as a dividing line between the chemist and the shop staff. It is a way of physically distancing the professional from the stigma of serving others. In the above incident the chemist's apparent helplessness was interpreted by Terese as a measure of her own competence and aptitude for nursing, a career which she subsequently took up. The idea of service in a career such as nursing however, has a different meaning to service in shops and supermarkets.

In the latter, the essentially meaningless nature of work in the personality market induces workers to accept a notion of skill based on emotion rather than intellect. In Terese's case, underemployment as a shop assistant means that the social skills of being presentable, nurturing others and 'being nice' are more in demand than technical skills, required for example in nursing. Teenage girls, nore than boys, are likely to have to provide this kind of emotional labour. Thus, Hochschild's concept suggests how in the personality market the sociology of work is linked to the social psychology of emotion, or to paraphrase Mills, emotions become commodities in the new teenage workplace of the salesworld.

The Ideology of Service

The service sector has replaced manufacturing as the engine of economic growth in several advanced economies. For example, in the United States, 85 per cent of all new jobs in 1982 were in service industries (*Time,* 1987:48) and as shown in Table 4.5 Australia is the second highest service oriented economy listed:

Table 4.5. Employment in Service - producing jobs in Selected Industrial Nations, 1980

Country	% of jobs
Canada	84.0
Australia	79.3
United States	78.3
Belgium	76.0
Japan	75.1
Italy	73.4
United Kingdom	71.4
France	70.4
Federal Republic of Germany	64.6
Russia	63.7
Czechoslovakia	62.6
German Democratic Republic	52.9

Source: Heskitt, 1986:184 based on U.N. Statistical Handbook, 1983.

According to James Heskett, a Harvard Business School professor, jobs in the service sector can be either boring or exciting. Much depends on what he calls the 'service mentality' and how this is understood by employees. Senior managers demonstrate the positive side of the mentality when they fill in at the counter during busy periods.

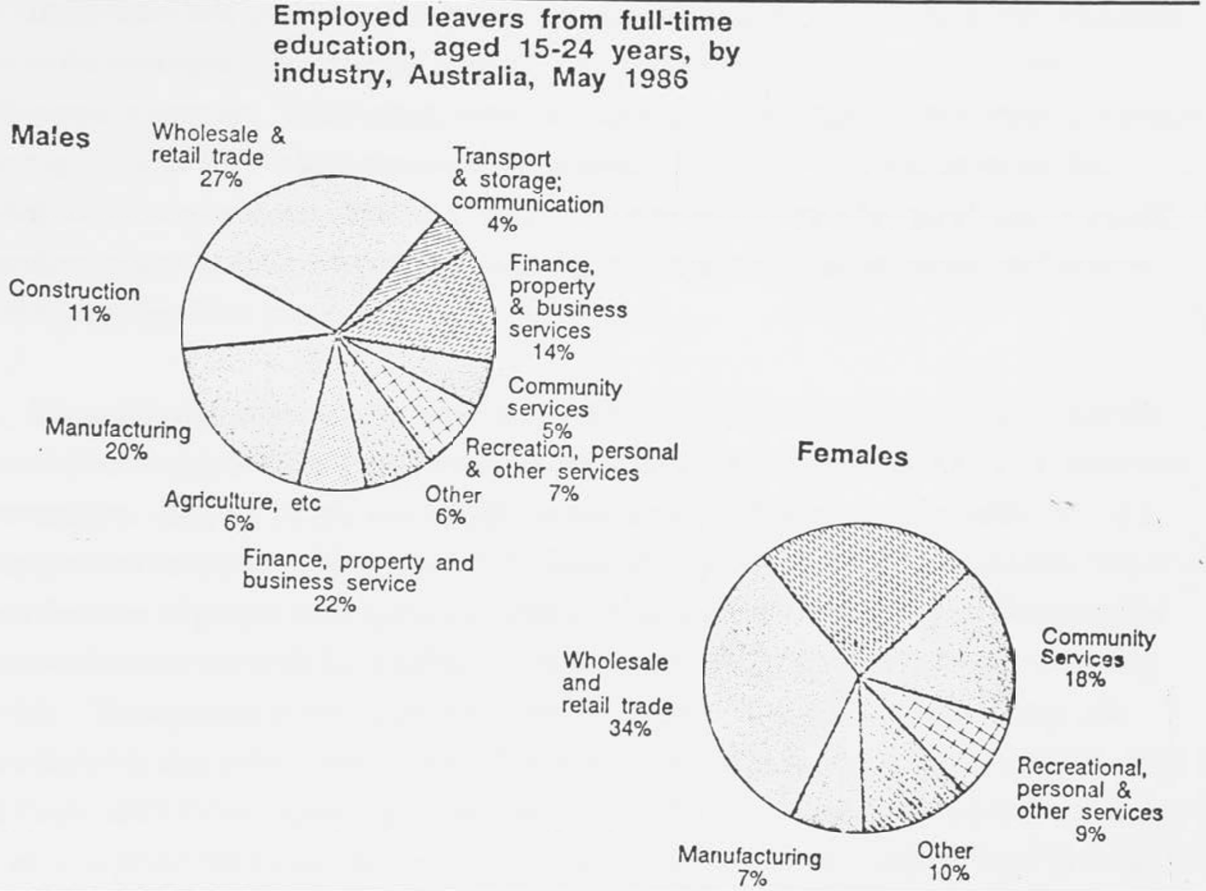
The other side of the mentality is revealed when workers believe giving service is beneath them, a much more common occurrence, according to a *Time* cover story *Why Is Service So Bad?* (*Time,* February 9, 1987). *Time* noted that too many service workers lack pride in their jobs which they regard as deadend. In Australia, Ronald Conway has drawn attention to "...the lack of courteous communication between vendor and consumer in many low level transactions..." (1978:201). Service with a smile goes against the grain of many Australian service workers, perhaps because serving others enthusiastically appears to be incompatible with traditions of mateship and union solidarity.

Heskett argues that success in service industries belongs to managers and employees "who can share the excitement of working with people and who insure that even the most menial of services are performed well, even seeing no more tangible a result than a customer's smile" (1986:134). Performing well in the salesworld is therefore about impression management rather than sales skills like knowing and advising on the product. Vance Packard cites a Boston department store which used an 'interaction chronograph' that recorded notations made of each salesgirl's talk, smile, nods and gestures when dealing with customers so that a picture of her sociability and resourcefulness was provided (Packard, 1963:170). Here personality has replaced skills as the measure of a worker's performance.

Yet educational qualifications are still used as a screening and selection device although the most important criteria for trainees and cadets are attitude and appearance (O'Donnell, 1984:144). Education and skill have become increasingly unnecessary with automation and casualisation; of The Shop Distributive and Allied Employee's Union membership in 1970, 70 per cent were full-timers compared to 35 per cent in 1980. Thus the trend during the 1970s has been to replace full-timers with part-time workers (women) and casual workers (school students). The latter are particularly suitable to management as they are not unionized, are cheap, and can be used in out-of-school hours at peak periods. Moreover, they are young, keen to please and presentable. Appearance and 'niceness', as discussed earlier, are the essential prerequisites of the personality market.

The demands of the new teenage workplace are concerned with the affective domain rather than the cognitive. The Chief Executive of David Jones in Australia illustrated the contemporary requirements of the personality market when he told *Time'*: "We spend a lot of time simply teaching our people how to be nice" (*Time* 1987:53). Being "nice" is what Hochschild means by the phrase 'commercialization of human feeling'. It is an essential prerequisite for workers in the service industry and is manifested in such banalities as 'have a nice day!' which has on at least one occasion been extended by a florist to a wreath-bearing customer on his way to a friend's funeral![7] Hochschild argues that there is a price to be paid when workers embrace the needs of another person as more important than their own. "Each way of being 'nice' adds a dimension to deference. Deference is more than the offering of cold respect, the formal bow of submission, the distant smile of politeness" (1983:168). Women more than men are expected to be nice, deferential and sincere. According to Hochschild it is "a difference in the psychological effects of having or not having power" (1983:169). Not surprisingly therefore, women predominate in the service sector where the mother role attaches itself to jobs in supermarkets and fastfood outlets. Amongst school leavers in May, 1986 for example, about one-quarter of all males and one-third of all females were employed in the wholesale and retail trades as shown in Figure 4.5.

Figure: 4.5



Source: Department of Employment, Education and Training, 1987: Figure 3, p.4.

As mentioned earlier, there is a heavy concentration of school students employed part-time in the service sector. These jobs are generally defined as deadend and are ranked low in relation to other occupations. "At the bottom end of the scale are found not factory jobs but service jobs where the individual has to perform personally for someone else" (Sennett and Cobb, 1977:236). Polls taken in the United States by the National Opinion Research Corporation record, for example, that store clerks were ranked lower than machine operators in factories. Responding to other people's needs by giving service, was considered by most respondents to be less attractive than tending machines. The finding is in stark contrast to the ideology of service expounded by business managers and professors.

Writing about the rapid growth of service industries in the United States, Heskett claims that "they will offer jobs involving high levels of human interaction with significant opportunities for the self-satisfaction that comes from helping other persons" (1986:177). White-collar work in 'good' jobs such as in health, recreation, research and education may provide what Fuchs calls "the possibility of a more completely human and satisfying work experience..." (quoted by Kumar, 1978:205). The reality of work in the service sector as we have seen is far removed from the personalized, humanized, self-satisfying experience described by Fuchs. Rather, the likelihood of face-to-face customer contact has been increasingly displaced by self-service counters in supermarkets, restaurants, banks and petrol stations (Kumar, 1978:211).

Braverman too, questions the enthusiastic publicists of the 'service economy' who lend mass to the conception by including clerical, sales and service workers alongside the professional categories. The former, notes Braverman, are not asked to show their diplomas, their pay stubs, or their labour processes (Braverman, 1974:73). [As Kumar notes, the service sector is notoriously difficult to define. At one level it includes 'good' jobs in health, education, research, trade, finance and so on and at another level there are the 'bad' jobs in the retail and fast food industries.]

There is a vast difference between the professional services offered by doctors and the ephemeral encounters which pass for service between salespeople and customers in shops and supermarkets. Helping people in such jobs involves very different social relations between the helper and the client. The doctor is a professional expert who interprets mysteries which affect the lives of people who do not understand what ails them. Salespeople, like other low status workers do not work in isolation, but need and depend on others for the services they provide. "Occupations in which the individual possesses some degree of autonomy...are more desirable than jobs where a person has to deal with others and respond to them"(Sennett and Cobb, 1977:235-6). Catering is one of the few industries where there is growth, although the work is perceived as low on prestige and high on stigma. Gabriel argues that this is due to the social relations between workers and the customer "who is paying to be served, obeyed and entertained. This gives catering workers a sense of subservience which is not associated with other jobs"(1988:3-4).

Service also has a positional - personal dimension. Professionals enjoy personal status which entitles them to deference whilst lower status workers are treated as a mass because of their *position* in the occupational structure. Personal authority is entirely lacking when the dignity of the person is defined by the low-status job he or she occupies. "Our self-esteem and the opinion that others hold of us is measured almost entirely by what we do rather than what we are"(Jones, 1982:199). Students working in deadend jobs quickly learn this. Roberta, who worked at a fruit and vegetable market, summed up her own perceptions of the job and the way other people see it:

> "...I'm doing something useful - doesn't bother me if I'm just low life" (in Munro,1983).

What is useful about the job for Roberta is the money she earns; the fact that others may see her as low life is not a problem because the job is part-time and temporary. Soon after she left college, she took up primary teacher training in Canberra. Yet there was a trace of resentment about her being labelled 'low life' because of the job she did. She had learnt 'a lot about human nature', 'race attitudes' and in a very personal way about the hidden injuries of class.

Indignities of this kind are typically glossed over by the proponents of the service mentality. Success in service occupations, they argue, calls for accommodation of the obnoxious and promotion of what is nice. Heskett cites research which suggests that "some of the employee attributes of success in high contact (on-line) service situations include flexibility, tolerance for ambiguity, the ability to monitor and change behaviour during the service encounter and empathy with customers"(1984:23) . Translated, this PR gobbledegook means salespeople need to be flexible, willing to tolerate double-dealing and indignities and to be able to manipulate customers. The ideology of service is turned on its head when 'helping' customers (being nice) is not seen as being in the best interest of the workers themselves. A sociology professor, Paul Schervish, told *Time* magazine how the 'them versus us' mentality operates in the large shops and supermarkets: "The situation is adversarial in a peculiar way. The seller acts as though the customer's gain is his or her loss and not mutually beneficial" (*Time*, 1987:49). In the following section, it will be explained how McDonald's, as the quintessential employer of teenage labour, seeks to control subversion in the fast-food industry.

4. Hopping in Hamburger Heaven

"There's not many girls that know grill" (Kate, 17, in Hamburger Heaven).

By 1980 there were 195 Kentucky Fried Chicken outlets, 98 Pizza Huts and 116 McDonald's operating in Australia. The characteristics of the 'personality market' are exemplified in the fast food industry with its product standardization and high degree of labour specialisation. McDonald's is the quintessential employer of teenagers in this industry (McDonald's will also be referred to as Big Mac and Hamburger Heaven in this study). It is the largest restaurant chain in north America, England, Germany, Japan and Australia. Its importance as an employer of teenage labour can be gauged by the fact that one in every fifteen Americans got their first job there (New Society, 1987:4). The youthful, big-sisterish counter staff trained to pay attention to the customer are recruited from the ranks of high school and college students. "Older people couldn't stand the pace...this job, with its clean, dynamic image, appeals to younger people" (Fun Food manager in Gabriel, 1988:97). Teenagers, especially pretty girls, also appeal to management according to a Canberra burger worker:

> "I believe McDonald's rely heavily on the physical appearance of their female employees to decide whether they would be good for the job...The management believe that if they put pretty girls on the front counter, this may induce male customers to come back next time" (Michelle in Morgan, 1980)

According to Michelle, when applying for casual work at McDonald's, the girls are required to state their body weight; girls who are thought to be too plump are sacked. Teenagers still at school are the natural proletariat for work in the fast food industry. As full-time students they have a weak attachment to work, are typically non-unionised and are generally satisfied with the extrinsic rather than intrinsic rewards of work.

McDonald's secret recipe for success is the employment of cheap teenage labour and the production process itself. Levitt (1975) has described the production-line approach to service at McDonald's as an example of entrepreneurial brilliance and as a model for the service industry. Each outlet is run like a factory where workers' skills are reduced to the 'keep smiling' requirement of the personality market. Teenagers have ideal personalities for work in the fast-food industry. They present an image of young, cheerful, smiling people hopping in 'Hamburger Heaven' and promoting the ideals of a consumption - oriented, gregarious lifestyle that appeals to the customers. McDonald's instructions to its young hamburger workers stress rigid standards of grooming, courtesy and behaviour: "They must display such desirable traits as sincerity, enthusiasm, confidence and a sense of humour" (Boas and Chain, 1976:84). Whenever after-school workers complain about wages, working conditions or excessive management control, management uses peer group pressure to turn potential collective action against the firm, towards their jobs. Competition is used by managers to play the kids off against each other. Favourites get the best shifts and there is always the threat of arbitrary dismissal:

> "There's nothing worse than bad managers I can tell you...your job is always on the line: there's so much pressure..." (Wilma, a Year 12 student).

Workers are hired and fired as fast as the hamburgers are made. Managers take themselves very seriously, a point which *Time* magazine noted in a cover story:

> "They have convinced themselves that they're hot-shot entrepreneurs and super-salesmen when what they're really only doing is running a bunch of kids" (*Time*, 1973).

Management is trained to speak of McDonald's employees as people - crew members rather than workers. The reality is that the people are mostly unskilled teenagers who are treated as cogs in the sophisticated production process. Theodore Levitt and his Havard Business School colleagues have argued that management in the service sector needs to incorporate control in the labor process itself through what they call the 'industrialization of service'. The idea is to remove any dependence on the *performer* of the task and to replace this with better organisation where "everything is built integrally into the machine itself, into the technology or the system. The only choice available to the attendant is to operate it exactly as the designers intended" (Gabriel, 1988:10). Gabriel has captured the ubiquitous sense of control in fast food outlets:

> "Seated behind a one-way mirror in the 'control room', the managers have a panoramic view of the store. Computer terminals in front of them can tell them at the press of a button how many portions of chips, burger-specials or milk-shakes have been sold in any given period, how fast each

individual worker has been serving the customers and how much money is in each till" (Gabriel, 1988:96).

Blinking lights on the grills tell the staff exactly when to flip the burgers and specially designed scoops make it virtually impossible to stuff more or fewer French fries into the standard paper bag. There is no room for "'imagination, creativity and a commitment to quality...adaptiveness and flexibility'" which recent reports believe are qualities young workers need in the jobs of the future" (Commonwealth Schools Commission, 1987:9).

McDonald's epitomizes the standardized, premeasured production process of the new teenage workplace. But it would be a mistake to believe that all burger workers experience the alienation usually associated with such routinized work. McDonald's appeals to many teenagers for the very reason that it is a personality market. It provides a certain kind of glamour which other deadend jobs lack. Being a crew member at McDonald's is vastly more prestigious than being a check-out chick. There are uniforms, training and 'rap sessions, specialist language to be mastered and a clean, youthful image. Satisfied crew members may well be victims of false consciousness, but for many working in Hamburger Heaven is a better place than home or school (see Appendix I).

5. Conclusion

It has been argued in this chapter that the school to work transition has collapsed with the wholescale disappearance of jobs for school leavers. The teenage workplace has been transformed by the growth of part-time jobs in the service sector dominated by women and school students. Whilst boys might graduate to management positions, girls are typically trapped in the deadend, monotonous world of supermarket operatives. Sales assistants and check-out chicks have little need to use cognitive skills in work characterised by the affective skills of impression management and the emotional labour of the personality market.

The ideology of service disguises the injuries of positional status affecting workers in the personality market. Having to sell themselves, sales assistants inevitably reject the service mentality imposed by management and adopt a 'them versus us' mentality, directing their alienation against the customer rather than against management itself. Interviews with students working in the personality market indicate that workers try to resist subservience and alienation whenever they can (Munro, 1983). With little to challenge them in the job itself, the boredom of 'just standing around' is alleviated by mimicking 'funny, peculiar customers'. Having fun at the customer's expense is part of the 'them versus us' game that is played when the service mentality has been rejected by workers. Unlike supermarket bosses, McDonald's management has understood how to keep teenagers hopping in Hamburger Heaven. Appendix I explains how this is achieved in the case studies of four burger workers. While this critique suggests that school is a better place to be than at work, students may value their part-time work experiences for the reasons that adults do not.

Insights into how student workers look for, find and construct meaning in the world of work are revealed in three chapters. Chapter 6 examines in a general way the teenager's world of work in the contexts of home, school and work. Chapter 7 focuses on paid, part-time jobs in the secondary labour-market (bad jobs) while Chapter 8 is concerned with school-sponsored work experience in the primary labour market (good jobs). Chapter 5 which follows, outlines the methodology and data employed in the thesis.

Chapter 5

Methodology

As explained in chapter 1, an interpretative methodology has been used in the thesis within an interactionist framework. An ethnographic approach was considered the most appropriate way to discover, understand and interpret the social construction of the world of work by students, teachers, parents and employers. Both qualitative and quantitative data were obtained for this purpose. A brief account of how these data were collected is set out below.

1. Data

The main data were derived from interviews with 21 Stirling College students who were in Year 11 or 12 in 1988. The students were interviewed in the two weeks immediately following their work experience placements. Forty-five students had applied for one week's work experience in various workplaces and forty of these completed a short questionnaire detailing their age, sex, part-time jobs, and work experience locations.

Twenty-one students were selected on the basis of these criteria. As a result, a reasonably well balanced sample was yielded in terms of year, sex, variety of work placements and most importantly, whether or not they had paid, part-time work experience. The latter were divided evenly into non-workers (7), workers who previously held a part-time job for less than 10 hours a week (7), and workers who at the time of the interviews, worked 10 or more hours a week part-time (7). A complete profile of the 21 students is outlined in Appendix II. Some of the students' parents, teachers and employers were also interviewed on the basis of availability. All of the teachers who had visited the students during the week were interviewed as well as some of the students' class teachers.

A wider perspective on the interview data was achieved by questionnaires and informal contacts. A survey of Stirling College parents (n=353) provided the parents' perspective on the curriculum, including the place of work-oriented topics in it (see Appendix III). The views of Stirling College teachers were sought on a variety of matters relating to world of work issues in the curriculum. There was a 65 per cent response rate for this initial survey (see Appendix IV) which was followed up at a subsequent staff meeting and in more informal groups. Employer perspectives were obtained during five week's employment in the Work Experience Unit of the ACTSA when the researcher contacted about 400 employers to arrange work experience placements on behalf of ACT secondary students. Useful data on the nature of work, employer expectations of students, and full-time employment opportunities were obtained in this way. The information confirmed that the work placements of the 21 students in the sample were typical placements. Data from the Scope (1986, 1987) survey on ACT students also indicated that the part-time work experience of the Stirling College sample was similar to that of other government school students, but not non-government students. A summary of these data is set out below.

Figure 5.1 Summary of the Data

Time Sequence	Instrument	Respondents/Informants
Primary Sources		
September, 1987	Survey of parents of incoming Year 11 Stirling College students (see Appendix III).	353 parents
February-March, 1988	Informal telephone conversations with ACT work experience employers/supervisors	approximately 400 work experience employers
May, 1988	Interviews with work experience students (see Appendices II & V)	21 students
May-June, 1988	Interviews with parents, teachers and employers involved with the 21 students in the sample	selected as relevant to the work placements and as available
July-December, 1988	Participant observation of teachers and students at Stirling College	Staff and students involved in the May 1988 work experience program
	Case Studies of two students (see Appendix VI)	Two students, Shaun and Milly
February, 1989	Initial Survey of Stirling College staff (see Appendix IV). Follow-up discussions with teachers	44 teachers
Secondary Sources		
1986-1987	Scope Survey conducted by the ACTSA (see Appendix IX) NOTE: the data referred to in the thesis come from unpublished material available on request from the ACTSA.	Scope (Student choices of occupations and paths in education) survey of about 3,000 Year 11,12 students each year.

Opportunities for Paid Work

Stirling College is one of eight government secondary colleges in the ACT, and while there are minor differences in the communities they serve, they are essentially the same in their staffing and curricula. Stirling College is different in at least two important respects relevant to this study. First, there has been relatively little involvement by the college in work experience schemes for students over the past twelve years. Only two significant work experience programs have been conducted since 1977, this year and in 1984. The present scheme has also involved more teachers than previously as well as more students in a greater variety of workplaces. The current program is therefore of interest since it is essentially an innovation for the college's staff.

Second, the students at Stirling College have had a long and continuous involvement in paid, part-time employment. About two-thirds of the students work part-time at some stage during their two years at College. This is a significantly larger number than at other ACT colleges (Scope, 1987) and has induced Stirling College to accommodate the student part-time work phenomenon by a minor alteration to the timetable.

Part of the reason for the high incidence of part-time work amongst Stirling College students lies in the predominance of service and retail outlets in the college's vicinity. Within walking distance is a community football club where many of the students meet for drinks and the occasional dance. A large neighbourhood shopping centre, replete with fast-food outlets (including a McDonald's), restaurants, bars, a video outlet, a large number of small shops and supermarkets, an indoor sporting complex, a service station and a variety of small businesses including a brothel, employs a number of students on a part-time basis. (The local brothel provides work for at least one college student who works there part-time as a doorman!) A larger shopping complex within five minutes drive of the college also employs large numbers of students, typically on Friday nights and at weekends.

The jobs are typical of the work available to school students in Canberra, namely in the retail and service sectors. Of the 21 students in the sample, 14 have such jobs; half are currently employed for more than ten hours a week, and half are students who do not currently work but did so previously for less than ten hours in the following jobs:

Table 5.1 **Type of Part-time Job held by Stirling College students, 1988**

Girls (9)	Boys (5)
1 private baby-sitter	1 cook
1 clerical assistant	1 milkman's assistant
1 assistant-video shop	1 assistant-fastfood outlet
2 assistants - fast-food	2 shop assistants outlet
2 shop assistants	
2 'check-out chicks'	

With the exception of the two female shop assistants, all of the students work in the local community. All of the jobs are in the new teenage workplace of the secondary labour market which is defined as jobs that "do not require and often discourage stable working habits; wages are low, turnover is high and job ladders are few" (Reich et al, 1973: 359-360).

Opportunities for Unpaid Work Experience

In contrast to these deadend jobs, officially sponsored work experience placements were predominantly in the primary labour market with the characteristics of good jobs - stable work habits, skills, relatively high wages and career ladders. The 45 students on work experience from Stirling College chose to work in the following occupations:

Table 5.2 **Work Experience Placements at Stirling College, 1988.**

Girls	Number (34)	Boys	Number (11)
Teaching and related work	11	Automative industry	3
Media	7	Hotel/Tourist industry	3
Paramedical	6	Teaching	2
Hotel/travel industry	4	Paramedical	2
Science	3	Real Estate	1
Legal/accountancy	3		

With only one or two exceptions, all 21 students in the sample were placed in the workplace of their first choice. Although predominantly in the service sector, the range of work experience placements for Canberra students is impressive. For example, in 1987, the number of occupational areas with placements for boys and girls was 263 and 255 respectively. This represented a significant reduction compared to previous years, although in terms of the numbers of students on work experience in Canberra, there has been a steady increase each year since 1982 peaking in 1987 to 4,545 (Rainforest, 1988:14).

Most of the 21 students in the interview sample have career aspirations closely related to their recent placements, again in stark contrast to their part-time jobs. Gemma, who spent some time in Wollongong before returning to Canberra, was struck by the contrast in opportunities between the two cities:

Did you do work experience in Wollongong?

> "Work experience? (laughing) There wasn't much to do, either hairdressing or shop work, so I said shop assistant and I got stuck in a supermarket. That was slave labour, that was. I was there from 8.30 to 5.30 on my feet the whole time and it was bad, it was really rotten. Canberra has a much greater range of what you can do" .

Wollongong's high rate of unemployment is legendary. Even the employers show sympathy for the unemployed job-seekers as revealed in the following excerpts:

> "I'd say that we wouldn't have one in twenty that you could say .... didn't look like they would want the job or didn't look like they could handle the job. Mostly they try to the best of their ability" (Hospitality, Wollongong) From Thorn and Chapman, 1988:33.

> "The CES sent us along four, I think there were four girls, five, and I thought that all of them seemed keen and willing to work, the ones that came and it's not like what it used to be some years back that they came and they didn't really care whether they got the job or not. But I thought that these girls that came, they were all very interested in working and I could pretty well put on any one of the five (Manufacturer, Wollongong) From Thorn and Chapman, 1988:33.

The difference in opportunities for success in Canberra in contrast to Wollongong is stark. Being successful is an expectation most Canberra parents have for their children and success at work is part of Canberra's culture. The type and variety of work experience available to Canberra's school students is an indication of the city's predominantly service economy. In the absence of a large manufacturing base, the jobs available in Canberra require post Year 12 qualifications, a fact which emerged in the career profile of parents in this study (see Table 6.3 in chapter 6).

2. Methodology of the Present Study

Students from Stirling College were chosen for the study because of the researcher's employment there for more than ten years and because the work experiences of these students were essentially no different from those in other ACT colleges. Familiarity provided easy access and rapport during the interview phase. Interviews were conducted in the fortnight immediately following the week's work placements. Interviews took between 15 and 30 minutes and were recorded on tape. An interview schedule (see Appendix V) was used to guide the questions, but was not followed in any structured way. From the outset, an attempt was made to win the confidence of the informants by conducting the interview as informally as possible. A 'give and take' approach or 'research bargain' (Bryman, 1988:59) was used for this purpose. With each student, the researcher tried to offer advice pertinent to that student's particular history. For example it was suggested to some students that they could see so-and-so about a problem; others were given specific information such as 'you could try Media Australia; they're always looking for volunteers'. In this way the interviews became more like a conversation. More importantly, it was a way of repaying the informants for their cooperation in the manner advocated by Ann Oakley for feminist researchers who are expected to give something of their own views and experiences to those being interviewed (cited in Bryman, 1988:111). Establishing a good rapport in this way also meant that future contact with the work experience students would be profitable for the research.

Immediately after the taped interviews, the notes were written up on computer paper and included mainly verbatim comments. Open coding was used as a form of content analysis of the transcripts. As suggested by Strauss (1987:30), the process involved (1) asking what the data revealed about the topic; (2) minutely analysing the data; (3) frequently interrupting the coding to write a theoretical note; (4) never assuming the analytic relevance of any conventional variable (such as sex and class) until the data show it to be relevant.

This process yielded a large amount of qualitative data to complement the statistical data referred to in the thesis. Both provided an image of social reality - the latter as more static and external to the actor, and the former, as socially constructed by the actor (Bryman, 1988:94). Following Berg (1989) and Bryman (1988), both quantitative and qualitative data were combined to provide "a better, more substantive picture of reality" (Berg, 1989:4).

3. Ethnography

There are several definitions and applications of ethnography. Spradley, for example defines it as 'the work of describing a culture'(1979:3) while Ellen (1984) describes the process as 'subjective soaking'. The thesis was guided by the 'new ethnography' as defined by Van Maanen (1982) and quoted by Berg:

> "(It) involves extensive fieldwork of various types including participant observation, formal and informal interviewing, document collecting, filming, recording, and so on" (Berg, 1989:53).

All of these strategies were included in the thesis. Participant observation was used sparingly because of the reluctance of the college's work experience coordinator to allow free access to the students at the workplace. Observations that were made, had to be almost clandestine with the researcher visiting selected workplaces *incognito* as a member of the public. This was only successful in workplaces open to the public such as nurseries, hospitals and shops. While it was not possible to **participate** in the workplace, participant observation was possible in the college itself. Similar research has been carried out in England by Willis (1977) , Corrigan (1979) and Brown(1987) and in Australia by Frencham (1976), Connell *et al.*, (1982) and Walker (1988). As an alternative to observation, Hamilton and Crouter suggest the interview in which young workers, as well as representatives of the settings in which they live and work, such as parents, teachers, and employers are questioned(1980:334).

The thesis used a modified version of the 'ethnographic interview' suggested by Spradley (1979) to elicit data from students and their significant others. Documents in the form of school assessment reports and work experience evaluations were analysed for students whose interviews suggested that useful leads could be followed up in such documents. Finally, before the interviews were commenced, twenty hours of unedited film[8] on ACT students in work experience placements were reviewed. Extensive notes were taken and the data analysed as described above. The 'video students' are referred to occasionally in the thesis; the main use of the videos was to help the researcher know what to look for when questioning students and employers about their placements.

Apart from these practical properties, ethnography has a theoretical dimension as well. Borthwick and Diamond (1980), for example, have used an ethnographic format for evaluating a work experience initiative for unemployed people. "Ethnography", they write, "draws on the theoretical perspectives of phenomenology and symbolic interactionism so that the researcher explores individuals' perceptions and investigates the ways in which they mutually construct their social reality" (Borthwick and Diamond, 1980:257). In the present thesis, an ethnographic format has been used to discover, understand, and interpret the social construction of the world of work in different contexts by different people. The open-ended nature of ethnography permitted theoretical modifications to be made during the research phase. For example, interviews with some of the students who had worked at, or who wanted to work at McDonald's, suggested that the work there was not perceived by some students as deadend. They saw it as conferring a degree of status and glamour not usually associated with part-time work in the service sector. These views contradicted conventional wisdom about work in the fast-food industry (see for example, Gabriel, 1988). In order to find out more about student experiences at McDonald's, a small group of 'burger workers' was interviewed. These students, although outside the original sample, were able to shed more light on working conditions at 'Hamburger Heaven' (see Appendix 1). There were other examples of cross-referencing of this kind. When leads were suggested by students, teachers, employers or parents, these were followed up with other respondents or in the relevant literature. Thus, a hunt-and-peck form of ethnography was also employed. "In this method", writes Watkins, "the researcher makes a set of integrated observations on a given topic, discerns the patterns and places them in an analytic framework" (1982:107).

The thesis therefore employed both qualitative and quantitative methodologies to account for the collapse of the school to work transition and how various actors have responded to it. Since most of the data is qualitative, some account of the problems of this kind of research needs to be made.

4. Problems in Qualitative Research

Bryman has argued that the most fundamental characteristic of qualitative research is its commitment to viewing social reality from the perspective of the people being studied (1988:61). He identifies three problems associated with research of this kind - the problem of (a) interpretation, (b) the relationship between theory and research, and (c) generalisation.

(a) The problem of interpretation

Following Watkins , a hunt-and-peck ethnography was used "...to construct a social map through which the perceptions, and structuring of the participants social 'realities' might be understood and interpreted" (Watkins, 1982:114). Conveying a sense of having cracked the social and cultural systems of the subjects' worlds needs to be demonstrated rather than asserted. In the thesis, the approach taken was not to assume that categories like 'school' and 'work' were important to students or that the collapse of employment opportunities was understood by them. The ethnographic interviews allowed categories and concepts raised by the students to emerge, although typically within the context of questions put to them. Patterns and themes were derived from these interviews, as well as from observations in school, workplaces and the economy. In this way "the social map developed by the researcher allows the drawing up of meaningful interpretations" (Watkins, 1982:108). In the hunt-and-peck approach to ethnography, the interpretations could always be checked with other respondents or in the literature. The cross-referencing has been referred to above. Thus, as explained in chapter 1, one of the assumptions inherent in an interpretative analysis, is to challenge taken-for-granted concepts, categories and methods (Gergen, 1985a), and never to assume the analytic relevance of conventional variables until the data show them to be relevant. Working by these rules, ensured the integrity of interpretations of the qualitative data in the thesis.

(b) The problem of the relationship between theory and research

The second problem raised by Bryman proved to be problematic in the thesis, at least initially. The research started with the intention "to maintain a sensitivity to all possible theoretical relevances..." (Glaser and Strauss, 1967:194) without being tied down to preconceived theories or hypotheses. This approach was useful methodologically, but less so, theoretically. That is, the idea of a 'grounded ethnography' based on data sampling and data comparison (Battersby, 1981) was a useful strategy for finding 'leads' concerning student work experiences in different contexts, but inductive reasoning alone, proved unsatisfactory. Inductive reasoning was crucial in identifying the mayor **themes** in the data. When it became apparent that many of these themes could be explained by conventional sociological theories, such as socialisation, both inductive and deductive reasoning were used to establish the links between research and theory. According to Berg, these approaches are "two effective ways ... to analyse ethnographic research (that is) inductive content analysis and ethnographic narrative accounts" (1989:76). The first approach was achieved by **open coding** which Strauss (1987:30) has explained in detail. The narrative accounts in the second approach consisted in identifying patterns and themes from the field notes which could be linked to theory. For example, interactionist theory notes how some powerful groups seek to impose their definitions of reality on others (Hammersley and Atkinson, 1983:12). In the case of employers, how they use menial work as a means to control students and initiate them into the workplace could be seen as part of the socialisation process for neophytes. In this way, the ethnographic data could be linked into a theoretical discourse in the manner suggested by Watkins (1982:110).

(c) The problem of generalisation

Finally, according to Bryman, critics of ethnographic research, such as by Willis (1977), argue that such research fails to link the particular with the general. Willis's sample, like the sample in the present thesis, was small and it would be difficult to generalise with any confidence on the basis of such limited data. But with ethnographic research, generalisation is not the same as in more quantitative studies. The justification for ethnographic research lies in its ability "to reveal relationships, spotlight important processes and identify common phenomena" (Watkins, 1982:111). The present thesis is concerned with the detailed study of the world of work for in-school teenagers at a particular secondary college in Canberra. While it cannot be claimed that their constructions of the realities confronting them in the world of work will be replicated elsewhere, it can be confidently asserted that the declining opportunities for full-time, satisfying work occasioned by the collapse of the school to work transition, is familiar to school leavers in societies similar to our own.

How students in the present sample prepare for life after college, is the subject of the remaining chapters.

Chapter 6

Learning to Work

'Fie upon this quiet life, I want worke'
(Henry IV, II, IV).

1. The Origin of Career Preferences

The work of Alison Kidd, which was encountered after the completion of the work experience interviews, suggested how career preferences were shaped for a sample of students in England.

Kidd interviewed a small sample of 15 year-olds in order to test various influences on their occupational decision-making processes. The sixteen teenagers selected for interview were all certain of their career preferences and were pupils of average or above average ability. Kidd recognized the pitfalls in asking young people to report on their thought processes, not least those of post hoc rationalizations, memory, and social desirability (1984:35). Nevertheless, her study yielded categories which were useful in making sense of the data in the present study. In general, the present data confirm Kidd's findings. They suggest that members of the immediate family were more often mentioned as influencing aspirations than were, for example, careers advisers; in general, 'informal' sources were more influential than those who had 'formal' responsibility for careers guidance. The most important outcome was the part played by 'significant others' in the development of occupational preferences and in the transition to work of young people.

Kidd's study made use of decision - making categories employed by various theorists: self (personal attributes), self (rewards sought), opportunity structure, and significant others and other people. With the 21 work experience students, the sources of influence were tapped in the question *'How did you get to be interested in this career?'* Only one student, Gemma, could not answer the question while two or three were vague or unsure. The majority had fully thought out career expectations and aspirations and referred to typically one single source of influence from the categories identified by Kidd. Figure 6.1 outlines the students' career aspirations and an analysis of how these developed follows.

Figure 6.1 Career Aspirations of the 21 students, Stirling College, 1988

Boys		Girls	
Shaun	- Nurse	Gemma	-Lawyer
Lee	-Primary School Teacher	Samantha	-Fashion photographer
Hugh	-Media Work	Mandy	-Horticulturalist
Ivan	-Chef	Christine	-Airline Stewardess
Murray	-Tourist Industry	Nellie	-Accountant
Gary	-Mechanic	Ann	-Nanny
Max	-Officer, Armed Services	Rita	-Public Servant
Michael	-Sound Mixer	Milly	-Diplomatic Corps
		Jane	-Theatre
		Yolanda	-Theatre
		Sally	-Accountant
		Diane	-Occupational Therapist
		Sue	-Chef

(a) Self (personal attributes)

In this category, students referred either explicitly or implicitly to personal qualities, interests or hobbies. For example, Max's role as President of the Student Representative Council (SRC) has provided the opportunity for him to develop 'leadership qualities' which he sees as essential for a successful career in the armed services. Others have had a long-term interest or hobby which they believe they are good at and will enjoy as a career. Mandy's interest in studying horticulture is related to her hobby as a gardener:

> "I just like working with plants, with my hands. I don't like inside."

She also refers to her father's love of gardening although she is vague about what he actually does in his job at Telecom. Similarly, Hugh's interest in media and Michael's hobby as a guitarist for the past ten years are their reasons for seeking work in these fields. Both believe they have a knack for these kinds of jobs. Hugh's recent work experience where he made a video and Michael's voluntary work as a sound mixer with a number of bands have reinforced their aspirations to work in media and music respectively. In Gary's case, his ambition to work as a mechanic is explained by a lifelong interest in cars. Motor technology is also his favourite subject at college, although his performance is below average:

> "He's a lower ability kid, very shy of written work" (Motor technology teacher).

Students like Gary and Hugh, and to a lesser extent Michael, appear to be one-dimensional in their interests and future aspirations having had little experience of the world outside of the teenage world of media, music and cars. In the absence of alternative opportunities, they restrict their goals within these hobby areas. Max, on the other hand, is considering an arts/law degree or becoming a P.E. teacher (work experience) as alternatives to studying at the Australian Defence Force Academy. Max, unlike Hugh and Gary, is a good student whose success in academic work and his prominent role in student politics has given him the confidence to consider a number of careers. He sees himself as having 'leadership qualities', a perception probably shared by the college Principal:

> "Max is a fine young man - purposeful, ambitious, courteous, thoughtful, patient and responsible" (Written reference).

Only a few students thought in terms of alternative careers; most have set their sights on one career. An example of the latter is Ann who worked as a youth worker during work experience and is interested in child care as a career. She has a realistic understanding of her abilities and has lowered her aspirations as a result. Ann, a nineteen year-old Asian girl, believes that her difficulties with written English would prevent her from ever becoming a teacher. She grew up in an orphanage, an experience which she says deeply affected her and has shaped her career aspirations. Her ambition is to become a 'nanny' which she says is motivated by a desire to 'give kids some of the things I missed out on'

The college Counsellor sees her as having '...a very strong sense of self that some might perceive as rigidity, but given the background she comes from, she's very much a survivor!' Ann's strong sense of self did come across in the interviews, as did her awareness of her strengths as well as weaknesses:

> *Have you thought of pre-school teaching rather than being a nanny?*
>
> "Well, I wouldn't mind, but what really gets me is my spelling, it's atrocious. I've done eight months of concentrated English and still I can't spell. I mean I can spell, I've proved to my parents I can spell but like these days you've got to write so fast you don't have time to really think and I need a long, long time to think about spelling...My spelling is atrocious. It's at second grade level...I can offer the basics, but not any more than that."

An excerpt from her written evaluation report of the week at the youth camp reveals her difficulties with written English:

> "I like to be a nany because then I woun't be looking after the children jest for a little wille each day. I probely will bord with the family that would be grat I would wrely enjoy that."

Ann's background explains why she is a 'survivor' in the eyes of the Counsellor. Most students interested in childcare or teaching, are, according to the Careers Adviser, 'drifters' rather than 'survivors'. An example is Lee, who during the interview gave no indication that he was in any way suited to teaching. His interest in the job appears strictly accidental. Asked to explain the reason for his interest in teaching, he says that he is a Catholic and some of his friends are teachers. Students who drift into teaching concern the Careers Adviser:

> "I tried to have the usual discussion I have with kids choosing school teaching because it seems an obvious thing to do when you haven't had much experience of the world and a very safe thing to do. Lee came

across to me as a very conservative, compliant sort of kid who I would advise, and I'm talking as a parent partly I suppose, to expand his options and I'd say that for males and females. It's important that kids don't assume that because they've been comfortable in schools they're necessarily going to find their niche there without thinking more deeply about what it all means."

Teaching was the most popular choice in the work experience placements. Of the 45 in the total group, seven girls and two boys chose teaching at various levels for work experience. As only two of these were among the 21 selected for interviews, it is not possible to say how many actually aspire to teaching as a career. The fact that 20 per cent of the students selected it for work experience, underlines the careers adviser's remarks. Students with little experience of occupational role models apart from teachers, tend to drift into teaching as the 'obvious thing to do'.

(b) Significant Others and Other People

The apparent choice of teaching by so many students is an indication of the importance of teachers as 'significant others' in influencing a student's career decision-making processes in relation to teaching. A good subject teacher can also be a powerful influence in the student's decision-making. Nelly, for example, explains her ambition to become an accountant this way:

> "I just like the work, figures and everything. I've always liked maths even though I have a lot of trouble with it. It's hard work."

She explains how she often spends two hours or more just on maths homework. As a subject, maths has less appeal than business studies which she 'loves'. Good teaching is largely responsible for her enthusiasm about a career in accountancy. She speaks affectionately of her former business studies teacher:

> "He had me for introductory accounting and I think that's what started me going really, 'cos he gets you into such good (work) habits for doing homework and everything. You feel that you want to do it, for him."

For most students school is unable to compete with the glamour of television and the programs which teenagers confess to be addicted to. Students have little difficulty naming the central characters of most television 'soapies' and one can reasonably speculate that some of these characters are 'significant others' for at least some students. A recent report on Australian tertiary education *Windows onto Worlds,* noted that 98 per cent of homes have television and 58 per cent have video recorders. The report referred to the ubiquity of television in the lives of children: "The screen is part of every curriculum, even after it has been consciously excluded from a syllabus" (CRASTE 1987:173). Glamorous occupations in law and hotel management as well as in the entertainment industry may well be based on media portrayals in such programs as 'Dynasty' and 'Dallas' which most teenagers watch. Although no attempt to test this hypothesis was made during the interviews,[9] the subtle influence of media blockbusters was evident in some of the respondents' replies. Milly, for example admits to being a former fan of Dynasty and is an avid reader of 'trash like Jacky Collins and Sydney Sheldon':

> "I love the world of the upper-class; the part I like best in those books is that so-and-so is wearing this and this is what they eat and so on."

Susi's contact with the legal profession during her work experience was 'not all glamour and excitement like television shows present it'. She encountered none of the sensational scandals of the soap operas, only parking fines and traffic offences. Apart from teachers and media characters, parents, relatives, friends, acquaintances and peers were also mentioned as important influences in deciding on careers. In most cases students are able to process information from 'significant others' by matching job requirements with their own perceived abilities or interests. Samantha's interest in becoming a fashion photographer stems from her once meeting a photographer from National Geographic who explained the demanding nature of the job. 'You have to have a good portfolio', is what she believes is necessary for getting into the profession. Another student, Sally, had a similar experience when as a ten year-old she met the mother of a school friend who was an occupational therapist. Since then she has always wanted to do occupational therapy, although she will probably decide on accountancy as a better financial prospect. Shaun explains his 'obsession' with nursing as a family career:

> "Mum and I both like working, and she enjoys nursing - she used to be a nurse, but she dropped out - well, she wasn't a nurse, she worked in an operating theatre just cleaning up, and her father was a nurse. I think he was a nurse during the war, the second world war. It's kind of like it's going down in the family, that's where I've got it from."

For one student, peers at school have inspired an interest in a career in the theatre. As a drama student, Jane's work experience in a community theatre reinforced her intention to work as a stage manager or possibly as an actor. She speaks admiringly of her drama classmates:

> "There are some really good actors at this school and you imagine them on the stage and you think - I'd like to do that too!"

Jane is hoping to study first before getting into theatre:

> "I'm looking forward to uni, to anthropology?"
>
> *Why anthropology?*
>
> "Because I'm basically interested in people. I've always been interested in the origins of things, development, why societies are like they are. It's the way I can find out."

School subjects, like university courses, provide opportunities for many students to develop their personal interests.

(c) Opportunity Structure

After significant others, school subjects rank as an important influence in shaping student perceptions about what they are good at. Examples where an interest in school subjects was directly linked to a future occupation included -

Ivan	- Home science/chef
Rita	- Environmental geography/scientist
Yolanda	- Textiles/theatre design
Diane	- Home science and science/dietician
Sue	- Home science/chef.

All of the students chose work experience in these respective fields and their ambitions were confirmed by the workplace experiences. It would be incorrect to suggest that the love of a school subject alone influenced these career preferences. Sue's case, for example, shows how experiences at school, work and in the family have all shaped her aspirations:

"I've always liked cooking and wanted to be a chef."

Did the work experience teach you anything?

"I didn't realize that butchering was such a big part of apprenticeship. I learnt so much. I do cooking at school and it was good seeing what you'd done in theory actually in practice in the kitchen".

Both her parents are shift workers which has meant that Sue has been a surrogate mother for the rest of the family. She explained how this led to an interest in cooking and in home science as a theoretical subject. Her part-time job at a fast-food outlet was also taken up because of the cooking interest. She worked 20 hours a week, four nights a week in the job but learnt nothing about food. Nevertheless, the choice of a part-time job in the food industry, like her work experience in the restaurant, was part of her overall plan to become a chef:

"You're trying to impress them for a job."

Students are very much aware of the need to have experience, whether in a paid regular, part-time job or in a short work experience program. Whether or not work experience, paid or unpaid, has any significant effect on getting a full-time job, is difficult to demonstrate. What is important is the fact that students believe that experience matters. They also believe that having an interest and an aptitude in a school subject will benefit their career prospects. In this respect, the school curriculum, subjects, as well as extracurricular programs like work experience, is an important part of the opportunity structure available to teenagers. All of the 21 students in the sample were able to be placed in the work experience of their first choice. It was clear from the interviews that students all made their work experience selections with a future career in mind and that most had a fairly well developed sense of self- and occupational awareness. Career preferences with this sample of 21 students, like Kidd's smaller and younger English sample, were based on 'a reasonably clear rationale' (Kidd, 1984:36). Further evidence for this is to be found in the fourth category of the decision-making process.

(d) Self (rewards sought)

Questions were asked about what 'success' means to the students. Most answered in terms of employment and job satisfaction.

Are students optimistic about their future employment prospects?

"Yes, I think so. I don't think they'd be here if they weren't. You see a lot of kids who drop out in Year 11 but come back because it's hard to make it without a Year 12 Certificate" (Max, President SRC. Year 12).

Very few talked about success in other than work terms. Occasionally, an attempt was made to engage students in a discussion of the wider meanings of 'success', but this led to some vague and incomplete responses:

"It's a bit too early for worrying about the future."

What do you want out of life?

"Being happy".

Meaning what?

"Just getting something that you want out of life...I hadn't really thought about it" (Christine, Year 11).

and another student, Jane:

What does success mean to you?

"I'd have to think about that...Happiness..."

Are you happy now?

"Yes (very definite). I'm living life as it is. I'm sort of preparing for life later, I'm not really...it's funny? I think I'll be happy all my life because I know what I'm after, what my goals are and I think I'll be able to achieve them."

Are there any barriers to getting what you want?

"Yes! First thing is money because I want to go to uni first and I'll need the money to put me through."

Jane intends studying anthropology before trying to get a job in the theatre. She is under no illusion about the standards of the profession:

"You have to have dedication. You have to have the skill, to be talented. You can't pretend to be an actor, you really do have to have a flair...dedication, flair and patience, 'cos a lot of the time you don't have work at all".

Like most students, Jane is looking for daily meaning as well as daily bread in a full-time job. Intrinsic satisfaction is also important to Sally who is considering occupational therapy as a career:

"I've got to be able to see something happening from what you're doing. It's no good just going there and doing the same thing with every patient every day and not getting anyone any better and they come back three years later with the same problems. That'd be hard!".

Even low academic achievers in the sample are looking for meaning in a full-time job. Michael has worked part-time mixing sounds for local bands and explains job satisfaction this way:

"You get a lot of satisfaction out of it if the concert turns out to have a really good sound."

and Ivan:

"I just want a career, a job as a chef. It's something I know I can do quite well."

Do you have a flair for cooking?

"I reckon I do...It's something I know I can do quite well."

An aspiring fashion photographer explains her idea of job satisfaction this way:

"Satisfaction to be able to set a goal for myself and to be able to reach it and know I'll be able to reach it. Not being stuck in a job where I can't get any further" (Samantha, Year 12).

Students with and without part-time jobs are aware that work offers both intrinsic and extrinsic rewards and of the difference between good and bad jobs. Virtually without exception, the fourteen work experience students who have had paid part-time jobs see the former as good jobs and the latter as bad jobs to be avoided. Murray has worked in several part-time jobs for the last four years. He has worked as a kitchen hand, plasterer's assistant and an assistant in a gift shop and a shoe shop. His interest in the tourist industry is to escape 'dirty work, like cooking, and cleaning pans'. He says his parents will not let him leave college until he gets a good job. Murray returned to school after the firm which employed him as a dental assistant went bankrupt. He is anxious to leave college and in the week of the interview he intended applying for a 'tourist-type' traineeship in the public service. His work experience at a tourist office convinced him that this was 'an upmarket industry' with the promise of a little excitement.

Jane's job in a speciality shop selling soap has only extrinsic value in that it pays well. She sees her school work as less challenging than her week on work experience:

> "I think the change was fantastic, but the work I was doing there was actually like real work, it wasn't just work leading up to real work. It was challenging, I mean school's challenging, but in not so vital a way. Like in the things I was doing, the people there depended on me to get things done."

Most students want challenging work with real responsibility and a chance to excel. Excitement was also a theme that came up in the video interviews:

Interviewer"*What appeals to you about the hospitality industry?*"

John: "I think it would be an exciting one to go into because you'd be meeting lots of people and ....I can't really answer that question."

and later: "I'd like to be the manager of a whole string of international hotels..."

Interviewer: "*What does hotel management mean to you?*"

John: "Living in the fast lane, making lots of money once I've reached the top and meeting lots of important, famous people and hopefully lots of travel."

One of the most enthusiastic work experience students on video, Lil, had chosen the Canberra Youth Theatre because of a life long interest in theatre. Most of all she wanted to be like the people in theatre - 'wowy, sort of exciting', doing unconventional things like costume design, directing, learning about sound and lighting techniques. Her parents were opposed to her career aspirations and had warned her that work in theatre was low on pay and a lot of hard work.

> "Work experience has made me realize this; I like that sort of lifestyle, I'd like to do it that way."

Whether their aspirations to get into the professions are realistic or not will be discussed at a latter stage. What is clear from the interviews (including the videos) is that the majority of students want good jobs with challenge and responsibility. Those interested in careers in the entertainment and travel industry are seeking a degree of excitement as well, or at least 'something different' as Christine describes her ambition to be an airline stewardess. But to most students, the rewards sought are more prosaic and intrinsic. Having enough money to live on is the most common expression of this kind of reward:

> "It's got a lot to do with the amount of money you earn, I think, whether you can live happily, buy anything you want, not extravagantly, but just be comfortable" (Nelly, Year 12).

A more typical response to the question "What does success meant to you?":

> "Oh. I suppose the right job, getting the right money, happy...." (Rita, Year12).

Like most students, the rewards sought by Rita in a full-time career are a right job to match the self-concept, enough money to live on and have a happy life. Work is essential to their aspirations. Unemployment was never mentioned voluntarily in the interviews, although underemployment, expressed as 'boring' work without challenge or responsibility, was frequently referred to especially in the context of their part-time jobs.

The 21 interviews as well as the video interviews yielded the same categories used by Kidd in her analysis of the processes of career decision- making by teenagers. The students all have clearly defined career aspirations in terms of rewards sought. These have been shaped by knowledge of self, significant others, and the structure of opportunities available to them. Kidd's study emphasized the importance of significant others, particularly the informal influences of family and friends. She recommends improving student access to other people, both inside and outside the school so as "...to encourage awareness of the different ways in which workers went about making their career decisions" (1984:36). Work experience gave some students insights into the career decision-making processes of workers, which for a student like Yolanda proved to be the most useful learning outcome during her week's work experience:

> "I was really exhausted after my week there because it was a lot of intense thinking rather than logical thinking we do at school, lots of psychological stuff."

What do you mean?

> "Just talking about, like, our feelings at this age. We had to think back to our saddest moment, why it was, and what we think about it."

Did this help you personally in your own life?

> "Yes, it did actually. It made me think, listening to them speaking about what happened to them when they were older and left school was really good."

Incidental learning of this kind is an important outcome of work experience as it is in other extra-curricular activities available to students in their local neighbourhoods. School is the site in which these learning opportunities are structured for students and it is to the formal curriculum that we now turn.

2. School Work

Canberra's secondary colleges are often touted as model learning environments for 16 to 19 year olds, (see for example, Anderson *et al.* , 1980). It is of interest therefore to see what Stirling College students think of their college. While job satisfaction was explicitly mentioned by the present sample as a major priority for success in a career, it was rarely referred to, or only implicitly, in the context of school work. Many of the students enjoyed college preferring it to high school, but several expressed feelings of weariness after twelve years of continuous schooling. Yolanda's comments are typical:

> "I need a break from studying. I'm sick of it. When you think you've been at school since you're five until eighteen - thirteen years - it's too long and then to think of another four years on top of that!" (Yolanda, Year 12).

School work makes the same demands as 'real' work. Gramsci believed that school work was an apprenticeship to the world of work. His philosophy of praxis was based on effort, discipline, literacy and even drudgery. "Many people have to be persuaded that studying too is a job, and a very tiring one, with its own particular apprenticeship - involving muscles and nerves as well as intellect" (Gramsci, 1971:37).

For students like Yolanda, school has been a long apprenticeship and they eagerly await the day they can leave. Others, like Samantha, Murray, Lee, Sue, Max, Ricci and Sally hold different attitudes about college life. These students believed that college gave them a sense of responsibility and autonomy.

> "It's challenging at college because you're not forced into doing anything so it makes you work; you can work at your own speed" (Samantha, Year 12).

Students who had previously attended independent schools were very outspoken on this point:

> "At the (...) school everything's plotted for you; you go there at a certain time, you do this class, but here it's just...relaxed!" (Murray, Year 12).

Another boy, Lee, from the same school was critical of the authoritarianism and left because of it:-

> "You get a detention if you don't hand in assignments. Here they don't do anything."

Which is better?

> "Well I never used to do assignments because I was pushed to do them. Here I've done them all!"

Only one student actually complained about the freedom and lack of discipline at college but could also see the advantages:

> "I hate the way you have to be self-motivated 'cause I really do need to realize that something's due in and I've got to get it in whereas at high school everyone was on your back to get work in on time; but I also like the freedom 'cause you do have to take the initiative to get it in and I like the way you're not treated like a kid in college. It's a better environment" (Sue, Year 12).

The President of the SRC was asked about the work ethic amongst his peers:

> "From the outside it looks slack, but fair dinkum students have a lot of work to do especially those doing more demanding courses like physics and chemistry."

Is morale good amongst students?

"Yes kids like coming here."

Do they come for the fun or the study?

> "Fun at first, in Year 11, but it gets more serious towards Year 12" (Max, Year 12 and SRC President).

It has become almost a cliche that the first year of college is about having fun, meeting new people, socializing and learning new subjects, while the final year is about application and hard work. Put another way, Year 11s lose the 'at school' feeling when they start college, but in the second year the novelty wears off. In the earlier study of Stirling College students a single student out of a sample of two dozen said she came to college to have 'just plain good fun.' She was the only Year 12 student in the sample who expressed some joy in learning:

> "College is for kids. I can do all sorts of things because I'm working for me...I like learning about earthy things - animals, agriculture, the art world..." (Ricci, Year 12,in Munro 1983).

With few exceptions, the present sample of Year 12 students are motivated by more instrumental, extrinsic reasons most of which have to do with making the grade, that is, achieving tertiary entrance. Of the 11 students in the sample who graduated in 1988, only two* did not qualify for tertiary entrance. The rest were ranked as follows:

Table 6.1 Academic Results of Year 12 Sample

	Future Career	Ranking in sample	Ranking in ACT	TES	Units Completed	Course Type
Sally	Accountant	1	top 7%	676	40.5	4 T majors, 1 T double major
Jane	Theatre or Study	2	top 8%	667	38.5	4 T majors, 3 T minors
Nellie	Accountant	3	top 13%	645	34	5 T majors, 1 T major-minor
Milly	Diplomatic Corps	4	top 13%	641	36	5 T majors, 2 T minors
Max	Officer-Defence Forces	5	top 22%	609	40.5	6 T majors
Yolanda	Theatre	6	top 22%	607	33	6 T majors
Rita	Science or Public Service	7	top 37%	562	35.5	5 T majors, 1 T minor`
Shaun	Nurse	8	top 43%	543	33	5 T majors, 1 T minor
Sue	Chef	9	top 54%	514	33	4 T majors, 1 T minor, and 1 A major
*Murray	Tourism	-	-	-	34.5	3 T majors, 3 A minors
*Ann	Nanny	-	-	-	37	1 T major, 4 A majors, and 2 A minors

With the exception of Sue, all of the tertiary students achieved above-average TE scores (ie. above 50 per cent of the ACT cohort). It is clear from Table 6.1 that all of the students made good use of their time at the college, completing on average 36 units during their two years. This represents an extra term's work over and above the basic requirement of 30 units. Another indication of their application, and possibly instrumentalism, is the overwhelming predominance of T courses in their certificates. Of the nine students with TE certificates, Sue is the only one to have completed as a non-tertiary course. All nine students, including Sue, completed in excess of the minimum course requirements (3T majors plus 3 T minors or equivalent).

In common with the majority of college students in their final year, these students were serious about achieving the best possible score in order to gain tertiary entrance and eventual access to their preferred future careers. Non-tertiary courses of a purely educational value are not taken by the majority of students who believe that tertiary subjects have more status than A courses, R courses and the newly conceived E courses. Future employment is the main factor which motivates such students and this means getting good jobs which invariably require further education and training. This in turn means getting good grades which the students correctly understand are to be gained by doing tertiary courses. Learning is incidental to making the grade. Non-tertiary courses, which are designed to free students and teachers from the constraints of over-assessment and credentialism, are largely ignored by the students.

The strong impression gained during the present study was that students were interested in the extrinsic, rather than the intrinsic rewards of learning. Very few were genuinely enthusiastic about school work in terms of learning and scholarship. Several students spoke of their keen interest in favourite subjects, but the general level of enthusiasm in school work as such was low. Sally, the most academically successful of the eleven Year 12 graduates, and among the top seven per cent of all ACT students eligible for tertiary entrance, summed up a widespread feeling amongst final year students:

> "College is all right. It's not that interesting. I mean I go to class, do all my work and homework, but there's not much interest."

Much more enthusiasm was expressed about their recent work experience. In common with most of the 21 students, Sally said that her week in the 'real world' was much more stimulating and enjoyable than a typical week at college. It was perhaps inevitable that this should be so. The students were interviewed in the fortnight immediately following their work experience when the novelty of the experience was still fresh in their minds. Other forms of work experience, domestic work, homework and part-time jobs, are routine for most school students and most are blase about them. Yet in spite of this, and perhaps because of it, they are just as important as sponsored work experience as contexts for work socialization. Their significance for students are described below.

3. Home Life and Domestic Work

Questions were asked in the interviews about the home life of the 21 students in relation to parental occupations, domestic chores peformed by students and the time spent on homework and leisure activities. With the exception of six families, both parents were employed full-time; two mothers were described as 'housewives', two worked part-time and two fathers were retired through incapacity and ill health. Virtually all of the fathers were employed in the primary labour market by government as scientists, computer analysts, teachers, police or public servants; only two were self-employed and only one, a nightwatchman, was in a low status job.

Parents typically worked in middle ranking professions with most of the mothers in lower status primary jobs as secretaries and office workers while five worked as teachers (1 secondary, 4 primary). Only three students in the sample had parents who were separated; the remaining 18 all lived at home with both parents. The students therefore typically come from stable, nuclear families where one or both parents are employed in the primary labour market. The majority of families are middle class according to Wild's definition which includes the characteristics of "educational qualifications, the ideology of individual achievement and responsibility ... and considerable mobility confined within the non-manual/manual line at one end and the upper professional zone at the other..." (Wild, 1978:59).

An indication of the high level of educational qualifications of ACT parents is shown in Table 6.2 below:

Table 6.2	Percentage of ACT Parents* with Degrees		
	Fathers	Mothers	Combined
	%	%	%
All ACT (n=3632)	28	13	20
Stirling College (n=306)	22	10	16

Source: unpublished Scope data 1987.

* These are the parents of the 3,632 Year 11 students who completed the Scope survey and parents in the Stirling College Survey (see Appendix 111).

The results indicate that secondary college students come from families where educational qualifications and credentials are valued and where there is almost certainly an 'ideology of individual achievement and responsibility'. Although the percentage of parents at Stirling College with tertiary qualifications is lower than the ACT, it is high by Australian standards. Like college students elsewhere in the ACT, there is a parental expectation for Stirling College students to succeed at school and to get jobs with good career prospects. In the present sample of work experience students, parental occupations were mainly in the mid-professional category as shown below:

Table 6.3	Level of Parents' occupations at Stirling College	
	Mothers(n=21)	Fathers (n=21)
Upper professional	0	4
Mid-professional	11	10
Blue collar	6	4
*Miscellaneous	4	3

*Includes 'housewives', retired and incapacitated workers.

Not surprisingly, therefore, parents appear to be more concerned with their children doing their homework than performing domestic chores. For most students domestic labour was taken for granted and unlike their part-time jobs did not appear to be of much interest to them or their parents. Domestic jobs were described as odd jobs like cleaning, washing up and doing the garden and were not noticeably sex-stereotyped. For example, Mandy's interest in a career as a horticulturalist and her hobby as a gardener, means that mowing lawns and gardening is her job:

> "My dad loves gardening and I suppose because he hasn't got any sons (laughing)...I don't mind doing it."

Homework and Jobs

Parents also encourage their children to have part-time jobs so as to relieve them of paying a substantial allowance. Help with household chores is still expected especially when both parents work. As most of the fourteen part-time workers have working parents, virtually all of them were expected to do some domestic chores ranging from tidying their rooms to looking after the entire family. Sue, whose parents are both shift workers, is responsible for most of the housework - doing the dishes, preparing most meals, washing, ironing and bringing in the firewood. As a result, she has had to give up her part-time job which kept her busy 20 hours a week at a fast-food outlet. Her parents give her pocket money as compensation. Another student, Gary, says that his parents like him working - 'I pay my own way' - as the father is incapacitated and the mother, as the breadwinner, earns little as a cook/cleaner in an old people's home. Ann is the only other student whose parents would like her to contribute to the family's finances. She is also unique in liking domestic work:

> "I love doing kitchen work, I love cleaning up. I know it sounds strange, but I do enjoy it".

Ann believes her parents are putting pressure on her to get a paid, part-time job so she is not dependent on them. Although she never goes out and only rarely asks them for money, hers is a big family and the parents are always short of cash. Being short of cash is a constant worry to most teenagers as well. Their only source of income is from doing household chores for pocket money, or preferably earning regular money in a part-time job.

Furnham and Lewis argue that the habits of using money, more specifically pocket-money, are established in childhood. This early socialization includes deferring gratification and developing a sense of achievement associated with the Protestant work ethic which "leads directly to later success in the adult world" (Furnham and Lewis, 1986:45). All of the 21 students in the present sample were concerned about having enough money. As teenagers on the verge of young adulthood, asking their parents for pocket-money is perceived as less attractive than earning their own:

> "Asking my parents for money is a bit of a hassle. I've got used to working" (Kala, shop assistant, in Munro, 1983:40).

For teenagers, shortage of cash is a major pressure in their lives, since to be adult means to have money to spend. In a study of leisure activities of sixth form students in Canberra fifteen years ago, the author concluded that "...1973 senior students emerge as young people who spend a lot of time around homes - their own and their friends" (Frencham, 1976:5.34). While this is still true for many of the 21 students interviewed in 1988, the preferred meeting places for most are in the discos, taverns and clubs in the vicinity of the college. In 1973, Frencham found that more than 80 per cent of students received pocket money of $1 or more per week. Very few of these students worked in part-time jobs and those who did, worked less than eight hours a week. The economic recession since 1974 has made it difficult for parents to provide a weekly allowance and in fact the term 'pocket money' was rarely used by students. Many parents encouraged their children to earn their own money by working part-time. A typical response is:

> "He's got money for clothes, records, outings, and it's made it a lot easier for us. It's not an insignificant amount of money that he's earned" (Parent in Wilson *et. al.*, 1986:8).

Being a college student carries with it the expectation of being 'adult' which means having some financial independence from one's parents. There is considerable peer pressure on students to have money:

> "It helps you become more accepted by the community too, 'cause there's still that image around if you haven't got a job if your 17 or 18 then what's up with you? That's the way it is in our circle of friends anyway. Everyone in our group's got a job" (Wilma,in Munro, 1983: 41).

It is for this reason that two-thirds of the 1988 sample have or have had part-time jobs, while all of the non-workers have tried unsuccessfully to get one.

Although only one student said he worked part-time to pay his own way in the family, the rest noted that their parents did not expect board but encouraged them to have a part-time job so as to have a degree of financial independence. The seven students who have never had a part-time job all received pocket money ranging from $5 to $10 a week, while those who make their own money generally do not. It is clear from the interviews that students spend their money on clothes, going out and various 'luxuries' which their parents would otherwise provide. All of the non-workers had unsuccessfully tried to get a part-time job so as to achieve a measure of financial independence. Several said they would do anything to get a job and have put their names on waiting lists:

> "I've tried to get a job at Kentucky Fried but that's expecting a miracle!... Mum doesn't seem to know very many people who could offer me a job, you know, like baby-sitting" (Hugh, year 11).

Of the non-workers, only one student believed that having a job would interfere with her studies, arguing that she would be unlikely to spend two or three hours a night on homework if she worked. However, she would like to work a few hours in a record shop or grocer's but homework is always on her mind:

> "I wouldn't mind getting a job because I'd have experience, some money and I'd meet new people but..." (here she mentions homework)

Do you find homework a grind?

> "Yes, I'm always asked out and I say I can't go... I suppose when I want to go out I can, but I don't feel happy if I go out and I haven't done my homework" (Mandy, Year 11).

Mandy is somewhat of a rarity amongst students in her diligence towards study and homework. Most of her peers said they usually average no more than one hour a night on homework, but the hours increase to 3 - 5 before the end of term tests and when assignments are due. Asked whether the part-time job reduces the time they spend on homework, the workers all claimed it made no difference, some claiming that the need to organise their time around the jobs meant that they did more homework than usual:

> "I think with the extra responsibility of working, I'm keener to do school work; I think people with part-time jobs do more homework anyway! (Rita, year 12).

Students like Rita who work less than 10 hours a week in their part-time jobs invariably claim that they spend more time on homework than when they were not working. Statistical evidence (Scope, 1987) does in fact indicate that workers do more homework than non-workers only when their part-time job commitments do not exceed the norm of 8-10 hours a week. Non-workers, however, are more industrious about their homework than students who significantly exceed the norm. Greenberger and Steinberg (1986) cite several studies in the United States which consistently indicate the negative impact of part-time work on homework. Other studies have contradicted these findings. For example, Hotchkiss (1986), analysed the self-administered surveys of over 700 American teenagers and their parents and found no deleterious effects on the teenagers' school performance. In the present thesis, the students' views support these findings.

American students are clearly more heavily involved in working than their Australian counterparts. Greenberger and Steinberg note that well over half of high school seniors work the equivalent of a half-time job, that is, between 17 and 20 hours a week. Their commitment to homework is less impressive, averaging less than one hour a day nationwide. Senior students in Canberra appear to have found a balance between hours spent on homework and part-time jobs. Typically, students spend less than 8 hours per week on homework and more than 8 hours working part-time (Scope, 1987).

4. Success in Life

A strong impression from the interviews was that students overwhelmingly conformed to the middle class values of their parents in relation to the work ethic. It was clear that most had an already well developed work ethic and belief that success in life was mainly the result of individual effort. When asked how they defined success in life, most referred to having a good job which provided job satisfaction and money. While many of the students had worked part-time as sales assistants, none wanted these jobs on a full-time basis. Their preferences are shown in Table 6.4 below.

Table 6.4 Career Preferences of Students in Various fields (n=21)

	%
Trades	24
Clerical	10
Sales	0
Professional	28
Services, Sport, Recreation	33
Other	5
Total	100%

Both workers and non-workers defined success in terms of job satisfaction and money. Having lived in Wollongong last year, Gemma explained how the experience had been a revelation to her:

> "Unemployment is pretty rotten there. They have a lower standard of living; it's difficult to explain, it's a rough atmosphere. Most of them, nearly all of them have working class parents. Here (in Canberra) they're more like office-type positions, more civilized."

'Class' was a term used only rarely by students and in Gemma's case probably resulted from hearing her father (a community welfare officer in Queanbeyan) talk of working class and middle class people. She went on to explain why she wanted to study law:

> "If I can get through, it pays well and one of my ambitions is to have money to buy things I've never had. We're not middle class at all. I'd like to have nice things around me."

What do you think is middle class?

> "Being able to have a nice house...if your parents want to go on a holiday or buy something nice, they can do both, not one or the other."

Like most students, Gemma's idea of success is defined in concrete material terms, that is, having money to buy desirable things. This was expressed in a variety of ways during the interviews:

> "Being able to have what you want when you want it because you've got a good job. I don't know, if you're not enjoying what you're doing every day, you'd be pretty down all the time. You wouldn't feel successful" (Sally, Year 12).

As in Sally's case, job satisfaction was mentioned after money by several students as the most important ingredient for success. A typical response to the question-

What would make you happy?

"Oh, I suppose the right job, getting the right money, happy..." (Rita, Year 12)

Surprisingly, very few students mentioned happiness or discussed success in anything other than pragmatic, employment terms. In the above quotation, Rita did not expand on what she meant by 'happy' and the word appears to have been added as an afterthought. None of the eight boys gave any hint of an other than an instrumental definition of success and were generally less articulate and less forthcoming than the girls. A typical response to the question on success in life -

> "Just to do well what you're doing and enjoy what you're doing" (Michael, Year 11).

Girls more than boys became more animated and loquacious when asked about their recent work experience and future career aspirations. Indeed, the girls were generally more impressive than the boys in the interviews and in fact achieved on average, a thirty point advantage over the boys in the Year 12 tertiary entrance scores (see Table 6.1 above). This may well be an idiosyncracy of the Year 12 sub-sample and may not reflect male-female differences in the college or in the larger sample. This reservation needs to be kept in mind when reading the case studies of Milly and Shaun where the expectations of two of the students, as well as their parents, teachers and work experience supervisors are portrayed (See appendix VI).

5. Conclusion

This chapter has shown how the various socializing contexts of home, school and workplaces help shape the work orientation of in-school teenagers. It has revealed, as Ianni (1989:181) suggests, how families introduce, and peer groups help to define, the places teenagers see for themselves in the adult world of work. These processes are evident in the detailed case studies of two of the students in the sample - one successful (Milly) and the other, one of 'the amorphous mass' of the less successful (Shaun). The case studies in Appendix VI suggest that what these students internalize as their level of social competence is largely derived from how they and their 'significant others' evaluate their performance at home, at school and in the workplace. As we shall see in Chapters 7 and 8, "...this internalised view of both the social reality and of self, has enormous power to shape the individual, his (sic) aspirations and expectations" (Wright *et al.*, 1978:105).

Chapter 7

Paid Part-Time Employment

"I applied to Kentucky Fried Chicken but that was expecting a miracle!" (Hugh, Year 11)

1. The extent and Nature of Student Employment

In the past two decades in Australia, the number of teenagers employed on a part-time basis has increased dramatically from one in fifteen in 1966 to one in three in 1986 (Sweet, 1987:4). Four out of every five of these jobs are held by school students, more than a quarter of whom have part-time jobs while still at school or college (Commonwealth Schools Commission, 1987:13). These facts, combined with increased retention to Year 12, are evidence of the collapse in the transition of students from school to work.

In the ACT, the proportion of student-workers is 46 per cent, due mainly to the much higher retention rate to Year 12 which in 1986 was almost double the national average. Students who continue their secondary schooling after Year 10 are likely to increase their participation in paid part-time employment as indicated in Table 7.1.

Table 7.1 Percentage of students with paid employment in1987 by year level and sex ACT

Year	Females	Males	Total	(No)
	%	%	%	
10	37	38	37	1,498
11	48	43	46	1,655
12	57	51	54	1,507
Total	47	44	46	(4,660)

Source: Scope 1987

Thus in their final two years of schooling, half of all Year 11 and 12 students are engaged in paid part-time employment. Females participate more than males reflecting the disproportionately larger numbers of girls staying on to year 12. They also work slightly longer hours than males as shown in Table 7.2.

Table 7.2 Hours worked in paid employment in 1987 by year level and sex (percentage)

Year	0-8 hours	8-16 plus hours
Females		
10	55	45
11	50	50
12	47	53
Total	49	51
Males		
10	59	41
11	50	50
12	47	53
Total	52	48

Source: Scope 1987

Less than five per cent of college students in the ACT work more than 16 hours a week. The average is about 10 hours for years 11 and 12, which according to students interviewed in the present sample, has a negligible effect on their school performance. They see the jobs as undemanding and unrelated to their real career aspirations.

The Costs of Teenage Employment

Virtually all the part-time jobs in the present sample have no structural links with the careers sought by students on a full-time basis. Part-time jobs are predominantly in the secondary labour market, while future career aspirations for college students are predominantly in the primary labour market. Therefore, part-time work is not a bridge between the two labour markets. Coventry *et al.*., found that the absence of a structural link means that part-time work plays an insignificant role in school to work transition. "For so-called 'connected' youth, the effects of part-time work on their transition from school to work appear to be relatively benign" (1984:107), an opinion not shared by the authors of *When Teenagers Work*. Greenberger and Steinberg have written the most comprehensive account to date of school students who work and conclude that long hours spent in deadend jobs have a detrimental impact on adolescent school work, social behaviour, attitudes and aspirations. Canberra's student-workers reject the proposition that school and work do not mix; they tend to share Coventry's view of part-time work as 'relatively benign'.

Some of the possible social and psychological costs of adolescent employment identified by the authors' were put to a small group of part-time workers at Stirling College. They were asked to respond to the following proposition from *When Teenagers Work:*

"that extensive part-time employment during the school year may undermine a youngster's education; that working leads less often to the accumulation of savings or financial contributions to the family than to a higher level of luxury consumer spending; that working appears to promote, rather than deter, some forms of delinquent behaviour; that working long hours under stressful conditions leads to increased alcohol and (tobacco) use; and that instead of fostering respect for work, often leads to increased cynicism about the pleasures of productive labour" (1986:6).

All of the students disagreed with the general thesis that the experience of part-time work has negative consequences for students. They were particularly scornful of the suggested links to delinquent behaviour and the use of drugs to relieve stress. For example:

"The only way that work would promote delinquent behaviour is with students having enough money to buy alcohol and other drugs, but at the same time work can keep young people off the streets."

Typical responses to the other propositions included:

On undermining education -
"The time I spend working at my job doesn't generally stop me from doing my homework. Instead I have to plan my time more carefully."

On consumer spending -
"Knowing you worked for the money and weren't just given it, gives you a sense of value and helps with handling financial matters in the future". And it helps your parents financially because they don't have to keep forking out (money)".

On cynicism
"I believe working makes kids respect their bosses and their jobs. They do what they're told. Most young people are prepared to do things for their work that they wouldn't be prepared to do at home or at school because they're getting money for it."

These comments were made by students who work an average of 10 to 12 hours a week. According to Greenberger and Steinberg, the social and psychological costs are highest for students who have an extensive time commitment (20 hours or more per week) to their jobs. While this is the norm for American teenagers, it is rare for their Australian counterparts.

2. The Class of '82

'Connected' students are what 'at risk' students are not. There is a possibility that part-time work for the latter is more important in their transition from school to work. In order to test this hypothesis, college students with part-time jobs in 1982 were followed up for the present study. Their work histories since leaving college are outlined below.

The 24 students were divided into two groups based on their tertiary course scores. Half of the sample scored above the 251 cut-off point for entry into the ANU and half scored below. Gina's score of 329 was the highest, and Milo's 121 was the lowest. Only 12 of the original class of '82 could be contacted but fortunately they too divided equally above and below the 251 cut-off point. The dozen include Gina and Milo, who along with the others of the class of '82, have all had to struggle in arriving at their present destinations.

Five years after graduating with an ACT Year 12 certificate, only two of the class of '82 are currently unemployed; one very recently was made redundant and the other, a teacher in Sydney, has been unemployed since getting her teaching diploma last year. All of the 1982 students have come a long way from their initiation into paid work via the part-time job as school students. Only in one case, work as a tennis-coach, did the part-time job have any direct connection with the students' career paths. With hindsight, part-time work was not important in the students' work histories, although in 1982, most said deadend work taught them what they did not want to do in any future occupation. Coventry's thesis that part-time jobs have only a benign influence on 'connected' youth also applies to the 'at risk' students in the class of '82. For the purposes of this present study, the work histories of both groups of students are revealing. Their early work experiences and occupational aspirations were similar to the present sample and to some extent may be useful in predicting the latter's destinations. For this reason, the career profiles of the class of '82 are discussed below, the top half in Figure 7.1 and the bottom half in Figure 7.2.

Figure 7.1. Profile of 1982 part-time workers' Work Histories and Present Occupations (Top half above 251 TES)

Name and part-time job	TE score in rank order	Expected Occupation or area of study in 2-3 year's time as at 1982	Work History and actual Occupation as at July, 1988.
Gina (shop-assistant Dept. Store)	329	Law	Studying economics/law Honours in 1988 at ANU
David (Army Reserve)	307	University - maths/science	Started maths and science at ANU but discontinued to take up a job as a type-setter for 3 years. Currently studying second year arts degree (visual communications) Sydney College of Arts.
Ruth (Shop-assistant newsagent)	300	Journalism	Completed B.A. (Politics, English, Psychology) at ANU and was enrolled part-time in a Barmaid course. Worked for a cigarette company 'peddling fags' while waiting for a proper job in 1987. Presently working full-time in the public service as a Graduate Administrative Assistant.
Roberta (Shop-assistant markets)	287	Theatre or social	Completed a Diploma in Early Childhood work teaching (CCAE) but unable to find work in Canberra. Worked as a teacher in Broken Hill and Queensland. Now in Christmas Island as a teacher.
Donna (Private babysitter)	273	Primary teaching	Completed B.A. (ANU) and Dip.Ed. (Sydney University). Unable to get a teaching job. Working part-time 'childminding' until a teaching post comes up.
Kirk (Garage attendant)	258	Industrial or graphic design	Started an industrial design course (CCAE) but discontinued to take up a professional writing course there, part-time in 1986. Works in Foreign Affairs and studies professional writing part-time.

'The Top Half'

All of the students completed Year 12 in 1982 and planned to study at tertiary institutions after college; all six started tertiary courses in 1983. The top two students, Gina and David are still studying as is Kirk, who had the lowest T.E. score of the six. With the exception of Donna, all three of the remaining students completed a degree or diploma in fields outside of their initial career interests. Donna qualified as a teacher but has so far been unsuccessful in getting a permanent job. After obtaining temporary work as an early childhood teacher in NSW and Queensland, Roberta this year finally got a permanent teaching post in Christmas Island. Ruth also had a long wait. During 1987 she was an unemployed graduate working part-time 'peddling fags' for a cigarette company. Early this year she took up a position as a graduate Administrative Assistant in the Public Service and like Roberta, was unsuccessful in achieving her first career preference. David and Kirk have both changed their original intentions and are studying new courses in visual communications and professional writing respectively. Only one student, Gina, appears to be well on the way to fulfilling her original ambition to qualify as a lawyer.

The brief work histories of these six academic achievers show that the transition to good jobs in the primary labour market is not an easy one. Even with a degree or diploma behind them, access to a career and a full-time job is not guaranteed. Three students have had to leave Canberra to study or work interstate or overseas. The students were aware of this during their final year at college when it was noted that: "Having experienced deadend work in the part-time job market, they see little alternative but to gain further qualifications and credentials. Whilst these do not guarantee good jobs, further study offers hope, and more importantly, 'shelter' in more humane, less threatening places than in the precarious world of marginal work" (Munro, 1983:59). These six students in the top half of the sample are today reasonably satisfied with what they have achieved. Gina and David are still studying and with the exception of Donna, the rest all have secure jobs with career prospects. Donna's school and post-school history underlines the difficulties confronting well qualified young people in the job market. In 1982 she was enthusiastic about becoming a teacher:

> "I just love kids .... I think I'm going to be a good teacher."

During her college years she babysat neighbours' children just for the experience and was paid half the professional rate. She also participated in a Community Involvement course at a local primary school where she hoped to get more experience in teaching. In the light of her present situation as an unemployed teacher in Sydney, her supervisor's report in 1982 was prophetic:

> "Now that you are certain that you enjoy teaching - and that it is a demanding occupation! I hope you will get enormous satisfaction from finally meeting your own class...."

My own comments which followed turned out to be equally prophetic: "With a tertiary entrance score of 273 Donna is almost certain to be accepted by any Teacher Education faculty; whether she actually meets that first class is another matter" (Munro, 1983:26).

With the exception of Donna and David, the 'connected' youth in the top half of the sample all asked for and received a college reference. Some excerpts:

Gina - a justified reputation for scholastic prowess ... has attributes that will make her tertiary career one of distinction'.

Ruth - 'a charming, vivacious, talented and intelligent young lady...'

Roberta - 'an extremely capable individual'.

Kirk - 'an extremely capable and hard-working student'.

Good academic achievers like these students have little difficulty attracting favourable references from college teachers. The students have internalized the values of the college's scholastic culture by achieving good grades and having high career aspirations. It has been argued that structural inequality is built into the tertiary selection process whereby students with intelligence, interactive competence and sometimes physical attractiveness are the winners (Munro, 1983:61). Students with good tertiary scores, 'connected' students, have their self-esteem further enhanced by favourable written reports and references from teachers. It was significant that with the exception of two students, none of the 12 in the bottom half of the 1982 sample obtained a college reference. Ironically, these students were most 'at risk' and one would expect that they would have sought a reference to enhance their employment prospects. None of the six who were followed up for the present study had a reference. One can only speculate that low academic achievers believe that teachers evaluate them for their academic, rather than personal qualities. In any event, they did not have the confidence to ask for one before they left in 1982. Their fortunes since then are set out in Figure 7.2 below.

Figure 7.2 Profile of 1982 part-time workers' work histories and present occupations (Bottom half below 251 TES)

Name and part-time job	TE Score in rank order	Expected Occupation or area of study in 2-3 year's time as at 1982	Work history and actual occupation as at July, 1988.
Lela (Waitress)	238	Unspecified university course	Began teacher training at an ACT Catholic Teachers' College. Discontinued the course in 1985 when she got married. Has worked part-time teaching handicapped children. Has two children of her own and is now occupied looking after them.
Ben* (Tennis coach)	234	Professional tennis	Spent 1983-4 playing tennis on the overseas circuit. Did a 2 year Tafe course and qualified as a draftsman. Since 1988 has worked as a draftsman in an architect's firm in Canberra.
Bart (Milkman)	193	Army	Worked part-time at Customs while awaiting a decision on his army application. Failed to get into the army and joined the Federal Police. Resigned to work as a sales manager for a building firm in Melbourne.
Annie ('Check-out chick')	166	Unspecified university course	After working as a sales rep for a soft drink company and a winery, worked as a 'gaffer' in the hospitality industry in a Snowy Mountain's hotel. Since 1988 employed as a security officer at the Canberra airport.
Mac* (Milkman)	162	Apprentice bricklayer	Did a bricklaying course at TAFE but could not get an apprenticeship. Worked with his uncle at a car dealer's (general maintenance) for four years but was recently made redundant. Unemployed for the past month.
Milo* (Car wrecker)	121	Public service or apprenticeship	Resigned his electrician's apprenticeship and worked for 2 years as a foreman. He is in his fourth year at Tafe studying for a Builder's Certificate and works on a building site.

*Non-tertiary students who did not enrol in college courses suitable for tertiary entry.

'The Bottom Half'

In contrast to the 'connected' students in the top half of the sample, these six students were less certain in 1982 of their post-school destinations. Of the two who had tertiary aspirations, only Lela started a tertiary course at a Catholic Teachers' College in Canberra. Marriage and motherhood compelled her to discontinue her studies although she hopes one day to complete her teaching diploma. The remaining five all changed their original intentions. Ben, a talented tennis player, played competitive tennis for two years on the international tennis circuit but has settled down to a regular job as a draftsman. Only one of the students, Mac, is presently unemployed. His ambition in 1982 was to get an apprenticeship as a bricklayer and he duly enrolled in a TAFE bricklaying course but was unable to get an apprenticeship. Even modest aspirations were difficult to fulfill in the early 1980s:

> "With more people seeking apprenticeships it's now easier to enter the medical profession than it is to become a mechanic" (Brisbane *Sunday Sun,* 30 January, 1983 page 15).

When the class of '82 left college, it faced an employers' market. Employers were in a position to demand inflated credentials for ordinary jobs. As one Goulburn employer told Susan King:

> "...a lot of employers have silly expectations. They (the employees) have to do dockets so they should get a high pass in the HSC in maths or something like that. In a nutshell now, and they can do it, they're looking for the best they can get.... they can do this because the labour market....allows them to pick and choose" (King, 1983:38).

Mac needed all the help he could get to finally obtain a job. Through his uncle, he found work maintaining cars at a local car dealer's but after four years was retrenched. As a non-tertiary student during his college years, Mac failed to make a favourable impression on teachers. Even in his best subject, motor technology, his course score of 38 was low and his term report negative:

> "Mac needs to put more effort into the written side of the unit. His assignments and test work are the weak area of his assessment. Grade D."

For Mac, academic school work, like the written work in motor technology, had little meaning. Teachers evaluated his competence within a scholastic framework. Not surprisingly, he, like the other 'at risk' students, did not apply for a college reference.

His part-time work on the milk run revealed a different personality:

> "I've got a big responsibility...he (the boss) trusts me a lot; I know all the customers by name, it's a big responsibility, remembering all the orders" (Mac in 1982).

Teachers have little awareness of students out of school or of their non-academic skills. For example, remembering more than 100 customer orders without a 'street map' is a measure of an individual's work competence. A comment in a school reference on a student's work potential could be important, especially for the lower academic achievers. There is in fact provision on the college reference pro-forma for comments to be made about part-time work experience. Mac, like the others in the bottom half, did not seek one. Yet, for the 12 in the sample who did, only two referees made mention of part-time work experience.

Mac's story has been outlined at some length because he is typical of the student who passes through the college relatively unnoticed by the staff. There is evidence that non-academic students like Mac, with skills and competencies of a non-scholastic nature, are presently enrolling in greater numbers in ACT colleges. More will be said of the implications for this in chapter 9. For the moment, the examination of the remaining students in the bottom half will be completed.

Annie's ambition to complete a university course was never fulfilled. In 1982, she was unclear about what course she would study. Her main aim was not to end up in a supermarket which she had experienced as a 'check-out chick'. She had repeated Year 12 in 1982 with this in mind but her low course score (166) did not qualify her for tertiary entry. After leaving college, she relied on her personal qualities in the affective domain to get various jobs in sales and in the hospitality industry. Annie is proud to have achieved her current job as a security officer without any formal training. Academic work had never appealed to her at school and she now believes that the cognitive demands of college were irrelevant to the 'people handling' skills needed in her present and past jobs. Annie is a firm believer in the power of personality - being able to present oneself favourably to others - in getting and holding down a job. On-the-job training, rather than formal training in a TAFE college or university, is to her the best way of learning to work. Her confidence in these methods has made her into a 'rolling stone' and she plans to quit her present secure job for something different at the end of the year.

Another student with an undistinguished record at college is Milo, whose course score of 121 was the lowest in the original class of '82. He distinguished himself by being one of only twelve students in the total Year 12 cohort of 300 who did not receive a Stirling College Certificate.[10] His ambition after leaving college was to do 'something clean' like the Public Service, or failing that, an apprenticeship. He did in fact get an apprenticeship as an electrician but quit after a disappointing experience with his boss - 'He didn't teach me anything!' Milo returned 'unofficially' to college just to be with friends. At the time, the episode was described as follows: "Milo's story is representative of students most 'at risk' in finding an occupational role after college... He has not qualified for entry into the Public Service and it is unlikely that he will be in a position to compete for the limited apprenticeships available in the ACT.... At least for the short-term, the 'clever' students can escape the bad job - unemployment cycle by continuing their education. For non-academic students like Milo, this is impossible; it is highly likely that he will stay on at the car wreckers (part-time job) or go on the dole. College has provided only a temporary refuge from this reality" (Munro, 1983: 53-54). Five years later, it seems that Milo has settled into a regular work pattern, studying at night for a TAFE building certificate while working during the day on a building site.

For the three students most 'at risk' in the class of '82, Mac, Annie and Milo, college seems to have been largely an irrelevance. All could have pursued their trades immediately after Year 10 at a Canberra TAFE. The fact that so many non-academic students like these choose college rather than TAFE has to do with the way these institutions are perceived by the students. College is believed to be more relaxed and humane; TAFE colleges are perceived as competitive and more importantly, authoritarian. Colleges are about general education while TAFE institutions are concerned with specific training. Mac, Annie and Milo might well have made smoother transitions to work via TAFE. Increasingly, students like them are enrolling at secondary colleges rather than at TAFE colleges. Secondary colleges are as a result introducing new TAFE-like courses to cater for them. The implications of these reforms will be discussed in Chapter 9.

The class of '82 was followed up primarily to find out whether or not there were any structural links between the students' part-time work experience and their work histories during the past five years. The conclusion reached by Coventry *et.al.* that part-time work for 'connected' youth is insignificant in the school to work transition was confirmed for both 'connected' and 'at risk' school leavers. Coventry *et. al.*, acknowledge that part-time work experience does assist students in other ways to engage in full-time work. A more recent study in Victoria identified these as social skills, knowledge of social processes and personal development such as responsibility, confidence and use of time (Wilson *et. al.*, 1986). The development of these personal skills was for Mac the most important outcome of his job on the milkrun:

> "The boss trusts me a lot" (responsibility).
>
> "It gives me something to do....to pass the time so you don't get bored" (use of time).

Such learning outcomes may well be more important than formal credentials for low academic achievers like Mac, Milo and Annie. In any case, it would be a mistake to believe that part-time work has an insignificant or benign role in helping students in their transition from school to work. Although only one student in the class of '82 (Ben) and one in the present sample (Sally) had part-time jobs related to their future career aspirations, the experience of paid work on a regular basis is far from insignificant.

While their part-time jobs were unrelated to their individual career aspirations and present occupations, there is a relationship when group comparisons are made. The 'connected' students (top half) all aspired to and are presently working in or studying towards professional work. In the case of the 'at risk' students (bottom half), two had university aspirations which were not fulfilled while the remainder had lower aspirations. All of the 'at risk' students were destined to take up jobs which are either semi-professional or blue collar. Whilst both groups of students had similar part-time jobs in the secondary labour market, their aspirations and destinations were either in the primary market (top half) or secondary market (bottom half). These are shown in Figure 7.3 below.

Figure 7.3 Part-time Jobs and Future Careers

'Top half' of sample	Part-time Job	Actual (July 1988) or Eventual Occupation
Gina	shop assistant	Lawyer
David	army reserve	Media professional
Ruth	shop assistant	Graduate Administrative Assistant (Public Service)
Roberta	shop assistant	Primary school Teacher
Kirk	garage attendant	Journalist or Public Servant
Donna	private babysitter	Unemployed primary teacher
'Bottom half' of sample	**Part-time Job 1982**	**Actual (July 1988) or Eventual Occupation**
Lela	waitress	Home duties
Ben	tennis coach	Draftsman
Bart	milkman	Sales Manager
Annie	'check-out chick'	Security Officer
Mac	milkman	Unemployed auto worker
Milo	car wrecker	Builder's labourer

Figure 7.3 indicates that the semi-professional and blue collar occupations of the 'bottom half' are similar to their part-time jobs in that they are mainly in the secondary labour market, whereas the 'top half' all have trained for professional careers which are totally unrelated to their part-time work. This suggests that part-time work may be more useful to 'at risk' students, that is, lower academic achievers who seek employment rather than tertiary entry. Having part-time work experience as a 'check-out chick' could conceivably be more useful to Annie, the security officer, than to Roberta as an aspiring teacher. Such experiences would be especially more important in the case of the class of '82 who had not participated in a sponsored work experience program. They at least provided some insights into the kind of work some of them experienced after leaving college.

In the 1988 sample, all of the twenty-one students have had work experience and fourteen of them have part-time employment experience. The role of part-time work in the everyday lives of these students is described in the next section.

The importance of having a part-time job was most obvious for the seven students without a job. For those with jobs, little enthusiasm was expressed about the jobs apart from the money they provided, but nevertheless all students had a story to tell about their experiences. These have been grouped under a number of themes which were common to the experiences of the 1982 and 1988 samples.

The Class of '88

In the present sample, two-thirds of the 21 students have part-time work experience: seven have previously held a part-time job of less than 10 hours a week and seven currently work for 10 or more hours every week. The remaining seven have all tried unsuccessfully to get a job. All 21 students have recently participated in an unpaid work experience program and were interviewed about their experiences in both paid and unpaid work.

3. Why Teenagers Work

Fourteen of the 21 work experience students have or have had paid work experience in part-time jobs. These jobs are in the secondary labour market, and with the exception of one job (Sally's), all are unrelated to the students' future career aspirations as shown in Figure 7.4 below. Their work experience placements are by contrast predominantly in the primary labour market and with the exception of five cases (*below), are all the same occupations to which the students aspire in the future.

Figure 7.4 Part-time job compared to Career Aspirations

	Part-time job	Career preference	Work Experience Occupation
Nellie	Babysitting	Accountant	Accountant
Ann	Shop assistant	Nanny	* Youth worker
Rita	'Check-out chick'	Scientist	Scientist
Milly	Video outlet assistant	Diplomatic Corps	* Public Relations
Jane	Shop assistant	Stage management	Theatre Manager
Ivan	Kitchen hand	Chef	Chef
Murray	Shop assistant	Public Service-tourism	Travel Agent
Yolanda	Fast-food assistant	Costume design-theatre	Costume Designer
Diane	'Check-out chick'	Dietician	Dietician
Sue	Fast-food assistant	Chef	Chef
Gary	Milkrun	Mechanic	Mechanic
Max	Shop assistant/supervisor	Military	* P.E. Teacher
Michael	Fast-food assistant	Sound mixer	* Mechanic
Sally	Clerical assistant	Accountant	* Occupational therapist

Sally's Good Job

Sally is the only student among the fourteen with a part-time job who works in what could be called a 'good' job with real responsibility requiring a degree of mental skill. She works from 4.30 - 9.30 pm on Friday night and on Saturday from 10 am to 5.30 pm in a local supermarket. As a seventeen year old, she is entitled to overtime after 12 noon on weekends in addition to the regular payment of $5 an hour. The rate is the same for all teenagers at the store, despite the fact that her work in the cashier's office is more responsible and skilled than what she previously did as a 'check-out chick'.

Why do you work there?

For the money! And it's interesting. I meet a lot of people there."

She explains how management asked her to work in the office because as a 'check-out-chick' her tills always added up and she was always available to work when required. Sally saves half her earnings and has invested the money so as to buy her own house one day. Money is important to her and for this reason she will probably chose to do accountancy rather than occupational therapy which she believes does not pay as well. And besides:

"I enjoy working with figures. I'm all right at it and it's interesting for me."

Hers is the only case in the sample where part-time work has been more relevant than unpaid work experience in relation to career aspirations.

Money

Unlike Sally, the other part-time workers are primarily motivated by the extrinsic rewards of money. Rita's comments are typical of these students:

"I'm a check-out-chick" (laughing)

Do you like it?

"Not really, but I like the money."

Rita earns $6 an hour and double that on weekends making about $90 a week most of which goes on clothes, going out and the rest towards saving for a holiday. The 'check-out chicks' and shop assistants are the most dissatisfied of the part-time workers. For most, the money and the financial independence it provides, is the only compensation for what they regard as boring and deadend work. Having money gives them more status as adult consumers. Corrigan notes a contradiction in relation to the Smash Street Kids who —

> "... collectively represent a market to be exploited ... Thus on the one hand they are treated as adult consumers, and on the other as children" (Corrigan, 1979:150-151).

The seven students who are presently working an average of 10 to 12 hours a week earn on average $60 to $72 a week. These are not large amounts, but for teenagers, they do provide a measure of financial independence and spending power. Only one student, Gary, needs to work. His father is incapacitated and his mother works as a cook/cleaner so that Gary is encouraged by his parents to work:

"I have to pay my own way".

For the rest of the workers, the money is spent on satisfying wants ranging from 'going out' to running a car, or just 'raging':

> "My pay allows me to 'rage' on a Saturday night .... at least half the week's pay is spent each Saturday night and the rest on odds and ends, the canteen, clothes and gifts" (Cathy in Morgan 1980).

Pocket Money

Students without part-time jobs receive pocket money ranging from $5 to $20.00 a week. For example, Mandy, who gets $10 a week and does domestic chores like washing up and mowing lawns ('for pleasure'), would like to have a job:

> "I wouldn't mind getting a job at a record shop or Freddy Frapples because then I'd have experience, some money and I'd meet new people but ..."

Mandy sees a part-time job as a potentially useful credential, but fears it would affect her home studies.

Do you need more than your $10 pocket money?

> "Not really. I don't smoke. I buy clothes and occasionally records, that's all."

Students find it undignified asking their parents for pocket money, a term associated by them with dependent childhood. For this reason alone, having a part-time job is important to teenagers. All of the seven non-workers in the sample have tried to find a part-time job, and with one exception, have done so with their parents' encouragement. In Mandy's case, her reasons for wanting a part-time job include the four concerns identified by Wilson and Wyn (1987:11) as the essential properties of the concept of 'livelihood' - material, social, real world and participatory concerns. While Mandy is not engaged in a struggle for livelihood at this stage in her life, she has touched on all the issues which concern students who do not have a paid, regular part-time job. To them work means more than money (material concerns); it provides the opportunity for doing something useful (participatory concerns), for meeting new people (social concerns) and for gaining experience in adult practices (real world concerns). Thus for both workers and non-workers in the sample, money and material concerns were important but not to the exclusion of other more intrinsic factors. Both the extrinsic and intrinsic rewards to students of part-time employment are discussed below.

Materialism

In a recent newspaper series entitled '*Money is their god*', journalist Robert Haupt (1988) described the aspirations of five teenagers in different parts of the world. Haupt was struck by the the materialism of the youngsters in Japan, Britain, Germany, Singapore, France and in the USA. The American student was the most materialistic:

> "Jeff works hard. While the school workload is markedly lighter than in, say, Japan...there is that feature of young American life, the part-time job. Over summer Jeff cleaned windows for $7 Aus. an hour. Now he runs video tape rentals at a liquor store which is only $6 Aus. an hour but is evening work, 5-9 pm Friday, Saturday and Sunday."

Jeff explains why he works:

> 'I spend, let's see, probably about $50 a week, maybe. Forty goes on the truck, $10 on personal expenses. I don't get any allowance. My mum, she believes in self-reliance, and she's raised me to be fairly independent."

Jeff's story is typical of the American adolescent's addiction to paid work documented in *When Teenagers Work.*

Greenberger and Steinberg argue that there has been an increase in teenage materialism since the 1960s. "More than half of all working teenagers (average 20 hours per week) use the bulk of their earnings for discretionary spending" (1986:75). They suggest that teenagers who work do not learn the value of money, but rather to value money unduly. The idea was put to Sue, whose previous involvement of 20 hours a week at a fast-food outlet, is the most extensive in the sample:

When kids earn a lot of money, do they become materialistic?

> "It depends on the person. Some kids I know just get their money and blow it all on going out or drinking it, whereas other people are saving their money for a particular thing."

What do you do?

> "I saved a fair bit when I was working. I'm saving for a car and I also bought a sewing machine, camera, walkman, clothes and so on."

These are consumer goods which parents would otherwise be asked to buy. It is not surprising therefore that all the workers said their parents approved of their working.

Getting a Part-Time Job

While shortage of cash and the desire to be financially independent of parents are the most important reasons students give for wanting a part-time job, they are not motivated by extrinsic rewards alone. Part-time work does fulfill most of the psychological and social needs cited by Anderson as central to a healthy personality: "... income, identity, the structuring of time, social intercourse and intrinsic satisfaction..." (1982:59). Elsewhere, Anderson and his colleagues argue that for many students getting a job symbolizes growing up (1980:66). According to Musgrove, even part-time jobs "...give a sense of usefulness and importance to the concerns of the grown-up world." (1968:122-3).

As 17 and 18 year-olds in the final years of schooling, students seek these symbolic outcomes of getting and holding a job. Twenty-five years ago, Hollingshead's study of young Americans in Elmtown noted that "desirable part-time jobs are obtained by arrangement between adults rather than through the adolescent's own initiative." (1967:272).

In the present study, with only one exception, all the students who work or have tried to get a job, have used their own initiative. Hugh is the exception:

> "Mum doesn't seem to know many people who could offer me a job, you know, like babysitting."

Even Hugh has since made two attempts to find a part-time job. He is a member of Independent Video Club and does media studies at College. He explains how he saw an advertisement for a graphic designer and thought he might earn some money doing a job he knows something about:

> "But they wanted someone to make coffee - pretty basic stuff and I didn't take it. But the interview was worth it for the experience. That was mainly why I went 'cos that was the first time" (Hugh, Year 11).

His second attempt was even less successful:

> "I applied to Kentucky Fried Chicken but that was expecting a miracle!"

Several of the non-workers had unsuccessfully applied for a job at a fast-food outlet which to teenagers, has more status than most of the typical jobs available to them. But any job, good or bad, would be accepted by most since their interest in part-time, casual work is purely extrinsic to the job itself. At least this is what those with jobs claim. *'Why do you work?' 'For the money!'* is the usual pattern. Non-workers who are keen to get a job are sometimes looking for more than money. Samantha's response is typical of many students:

Why do you want a part-time job?

> "Just to gain experience mixing with adults and working, because it's hard. I'm normally pretty shy."

Don't teachers as adults have the same effect?

> "Teachers are much easier to get along with because they're friendly and you're in a relaxed relationship."

After more than a decade of schooling, the role and status of student become firmly attached to the seventeen or eighteen year-old. Students in their last year of college are understandably eager to enter the 'real world'. Having *played at* being young adults as the college calls them, they see part-time employment as an opportunity to *be* adults, working for money with adult workers.

Adult Practices

'Experience mixing with adults' is a common aspiration amongst students seeking part-time jobs. Working with adults was one of the major benefits of part-time work for teenagers identified by a recent study of two dozen Year 9 and 11 students. "Through part-time work", the authors argue," young people are able to engage in adult practices in a way that most do not encounter at school. This point was made regularly by people in each of the groups interviewed" (Wilson *et.al.*, 1986:15). Among the benefits reported by the students were (1) responsibility, (2) confidence (3) knowledge of social processes and (4) knowledge about work.

Greenberger and Steinberg have questioned the value of teenagers working in the 'new teenager workplace' which they argue is age-segregated and "...no longer a source of extensive interaction with adults" (1986:85). Their point is that the unskilled nature of teenage work does not require adult supervision nor formal training. Recent Australian studies have also confirmed the American experience (Coventry, 1984; Wilson *et.al.*,1986). The absence of adults or practical skills does not mean that teenagers are denied the experience of adult practices as defined by the student-workers themselves. Performing one of the most deadend jobs available to teenage boys, Mike as a 'night-filler" believes *'the job isn't creative and you cannot take pride in a piece of work you've done, because you've done nothing specialized or skilled.'* Packers and fillers do routine packing and shelving that leaves no room for imagination. Only the boss, who starts early and finishes late, has a degree of responsibility (locking up) a task which in the context of a deadend job, is seen as important to Mike:

> "In the very near future I will become night-filler boss and will welcome the extra responsibility - possibly because it gives me a feeling of identity as well as meaning more money" (in Morgan, 1980).

In another study of teenage workers, the authors point to the power of work to confer adult status on young people:

> "Part-time jobs, of a secondary labour market kind, provide little technical skill development and are unlikely to facilitate long-term career prospects. On the other hand, working is valued because it represents adult status and offers young people an opportunity to assume adult roles through their identification as contributing members to a work-oriented society" (Coventry *et.al.*, 1984:94).

Even in deadend jobs, students like Mike the 'night filler' seek to construct an identity, a feeling of being grown up and responsible, whenever the opportunity arises. It is not so much working with adults that matters, but rather the opportunity to assume adult roles. To paraphrase W.I.Thomas: If students define work tasks as real, they are real in their consequences.

This was also a theme in some of the work experience interviews.The students on sponsored work experience clearly had a purpose in what they were doing and for some, even menial tasks took on an exaggerated importance. Here is John, a Year 12 student describing his responsibilities in the hotel trade:

> "They gave me a lot of responsibility. The porters would often let me do whole linen runs by myself. I thought that was pretty good. They'd let me go out, go into all the rooms and take all the linen out, put them in the trolleys, come back to housekeeping and they'd be sitting here waiting for me .... so they trusted me ..."(Video interviews)

This is anticipatory socialization in action, where the actors "take on the values of the non-membership group to which they aspire, find readier acceptance by that group and make an easier adjustment to it" (Merton, 1968:319).

A menial task like this, which the regular staff was relieved not have to do, was gratefully taken up by John because he saw it as involving trust and responsibility, not exploitation. No doubt in time the novelty would wear thin, but during a week long placement out of school, the opportunity is welcomed because it represents adult status. Whether the work is paid or unpaid is not important; being out of school in the 'real world' is what students value. For example David's work in the army reserve where he does 'lots of really stupid things like running around the bush on exercises ' is seen as a valuable learning experience:

> "You learn a lot about yourself and other people; they treat you as equals. You find out how to get on with others, and about self-discipline." (David, Year 12, Munro 1983).

As defined earlier, this is Merton's anticipatory socialization in action.

Socialization

> "Socialization to the world of work (involves) both cognitive learning and at least minimal internalization of appropriate norms" (Goldstein and Oldham, 1979:4).

When Teenagers Work is the most comprehensive account to date of the negative socialization effects of paid work experience on students' lives. According to the authors, it is the nature of jobs available to teenagers, not work per se, that is at fault. "Most youth can profit, presumably, from good work experience in suitable amounts. None will profit from an overdose of low-quality work experience that deprives them of their full measure of identity development" (Greenberger and Steinberger 1986:9).

The authors acknowledge that early work experience advocates had put their faith in work experience placements not associated with naturally occurring jobs that have become the deadend jobs of the 'new teenage workplace.' Unfortunately, according to Greenberger and Steinberg, many work experience placements organised by schools are in these blind-alley occupations. Whether sponsored by schools or found by the students themselves, deadend jobs have negative socialization effects for their incumbents.

> "Jobs that are clearly recognizable as 'adolescent' jobs, and that have little connection with the occupations youngsters will enter as adults,are unlikely to serve as effective bridges into enduring employment" (Greenberger and Steinberg, 1986:215).

In an earlier study, Greenberger *et.al.,* (1982), examined the effects on learning, initiative and autonomy, and interaction with others, of six typical 'adolescent' jobs - food service work, retail sales and cashier work, clerical work, manual labor, operative/skilled labor, and cleaning. They found that only clerical work provided significant learning opportunities but along with cleaning jobs scored low in providing opportunities for initiative and autonomy. Food service and retail jobs provided the most opportunity for interaction with others. In another article, Steinberg (1982) suggested that the socialization outcomes of part-time employment are a mixed blessing. Results indicate that working seems to affect young people in ways consistent with claims made by both critics and proponents namely, poor work attitudes (cynicism, acceptance of unethical practices etc.,) versus an improved work ethic (eg.

pride in the successful completion of a task). In the light of their more comprehensive findings listed above in *When Teenagers Work,* these findings pale into insignificance.

The implications of this research for Australian part-time workers are, according to Wilson *et.al.*, "suggestive rather than conclusive" (1986:18). They point out how American teenagers work much more (20-24 hours a week) compared to their Australian counterparts (9-15 hours) and as Greenberger and Steinberg acknowledge, it is the 'overdoes of low quality work experience' which is harmful to part-time workers.

As mentioned above, Greenberger *et al.*, (1982) found that clerical work provided the most opportunities for learning. The other jobs they studied, like the jobs of Sally's thirteen peers in the sample, provided little opportunity for challenging, mental work usually associated with jobs in the primary labour market. But to say that jobs on a milkrun or in a fast-food outlet are devoid of learning opportunities of any kind is to ignore the experiences of the students themselves. As we have already seen, student-workers value their part-time jobs for the money they provide and for the opportunities to work with adults. Even the negative socialization that is associated with extensive part-time employment (a rarity in the sample), can be a useful learning experience for students. Put another way, the job may be bad, but the learning experience good. In deadend jobs, students are exposed to the conditions and discipline of paid work, which by definition are different from unpaid, sponsored work experience. Reeders has suggested that organising students' experience of work would undermine precisely what it is that they value about it - the chance to make some money, work out fiddles, mimic customers and to muck around (1986:34). Sponsored work experience, because it is associated with the school, may not have the same appeal. In the present sample, students have been exposed to working conditions in both paid and unpaid work. With only one exception (Sally), they characterised part-time jobs as 'deadend' and their work experience placements as 'real' jobs. For most students, this was the essential difference between the two. More specifically, the ever present awareness of stigma and conflict in bad jobs was what distinguished them from their work experience placements in the primary labour market.

4. Learning about Work

(a) Good jobs and bad jobs

One of the most important insights students get from working part-time, is the difference between good and bad jobs. All of the students interviewed in the sample have no intention of continuing in the jobs after college. Most of them aspire to work in the primary labour market as shown in Figure 7.4 above.

Are kids aware of the difference between good and bad jobs?

> "Yeah, I think they are 'cos hardly anyone would come to college because you wouldn't have to just for a deadend job. I don't think they'd come if they didn't want something better" (Diane, Year 11).

Exposure to deadend jobs on a part-time basis motivates many students to seek good jobs with career prospects after college:

> "It made me realise that I need something more challenging for myself in a full-time career" (female shop assistant, in Munro 1983).

Max works as a supervisor at a local department store where he clears registers, counts the money and does lots of packing *'which the girls can't do!'*

He has had the job for a year and works more than ten hours a week, mainly for the money. Max quickly realised that a job in a department store is deadend:

> "Unless you're on the management side it's just too tedious. I've
> realized how boring it is actually having to work there full-time.
> You notice that when you work in the holidays - it's all right around Christmas time when its busy but during the week there's sort of
> nothing to do - it's boring."

(b) Stigma

Ten of the fourteen part-time workers have sales jobs and all see the work as boring and without challenge or intrinsic interest. A typical response is:

> "I really hate it... I never want to be a shop assistant."

One student argued that some jobs are labelled 'bad' by society and it is this which stigmatizes the worker. Suzie's job as a cleaner suited her needs perfectly:

> "It gave me a lot of leisure time."

She worked from 5.30 to 9.30 pm and would have kept the job indefinitely had not a new firm taken over the contract. She was always aware that the job was held in contempt by 'society':

> "I feel that if society did not place so much emphasis on 'good' jobs - meaning jobs like the public service and other middle class occupations - cleaning could be a pleasurable occupation for most people" (Suzie in Morgan, 1980:9).

Other students, however, are more skeptical:

> "It's a shithouse job. I just don't like the conditions or the type of work" (Harry, laundromat in Munro, 1983).

Some are aware of the stigma of unskilled work but attempt to rationalize it:

> "I'm doing something useful - doesn't both me that I'm just low life" (Roberta, fruit market in Munro, 1983).

At the time of the interview, Roberta's ambition was to work in the theatre or to do social work. She made an excellent impression during the interview and one had no doubt about her potential to succeed in either career. (She eventually combined the two by becoming a primary teacher!). On a 'nice-obnoxious' scale, Roberta is on the far left. Her description of herself as 'just low life' therefore came as a shock to the interviewer who has since learned why she said it:

> "Our self-esteem and the opinion that others hold of us is measured almost entirely by what we *do* rather than what we *are* " (Jones, 1982:199).

Many of the students in part-time jobs are aware of their low status: "I'm just a 'check-out chick'", was Rita's way of putting it. This is itself a learning experience:

> "If you don't do well at school, you end up in some boring job that drives you crazy - that's if you get a job!" (HSC student in Munro, 1983).

(c) Conflict

A third theme that came out of the interviews, was the theme of conflict usually in relation to bosses. Interestingly, there were no complaints about employers from any of the 21 work experience students nor did any student note any significant sources of conflict in their workplaces apart from minor personality clashes amongst co-workers. Conflict, especially with bosses, was reported more often by the paid part-time workers.

Sue worked for more than 20 hours a week at a fast food outlet. Working four nights a week adversely affected her school work. She cut back to two nights but the boss offered her more money and pressured her to stay on thereby forcing her to quit. Her grades have since improved. She explains how she practically managed the place during the boss's frequent absences:

> "I felt exploited and over-worked, but I didn't have the guts to confront him - something I'd do now!"

Students, particularly teenage girls often feel helpless when confronted by a dominant adult. Like Sue, they sometimes know they are being exploited but do not know what to do about it. Another girl, Collette, who worked at a fruit and vegetable shop experienced subtle and not so subtle exploitation. At 16, she was paid the minimum hourly rate from 8 to 9.30 on Friday nights but was required to be there at 7.30 and to leave at 10 pm. More disturbing to her was the boss's 'over familiarity' which she said left her with a bad impression of 'ethnic bosses':

> "Physical appearance was important to the manager (an Italian man of around forty-five), but this was just his requirement because he fancied himself as a 'lady's man'. I found getting along with him to be the hardest part of the job and disliked his over familiarity" (Collette in Morgan,1980:23).

Colleagues can also be a source of conflict in part-time jobs:

> "The full-time staff really resent us. There's a lot of nastiness towards us 'cos I guess they just figure we might be more successful .... since

most of us are in Year 12, we're sort of thinking about careers" (Max, Year 12, department store).

He explains how most resentment comes from the full-time teenage girls of 16 who refer to the older casuals as 'kids'. Max believes that most left school in Year 9, feel trapped in a deadend job, and resent the advantages of college students.

Conflict is also experienced in customer-contact jobs, which in boring sales jobs, can be a blessing in disguise. Several sales assistants say that they like to watch and mimic customers to help pass the time. Customers offer a source of emotional release from the boredom of 'just standing around', in much the same way that students bait teachers when school work has no meaning. Compared to school, the routines of shop work are much more inflexible and the customer, unlike the teacher, is 'always right'. Mills has diagnosed the salesgirl's dilemma with characteristic percipience:

> "Caught at the point of intersection between big store and urban mass, the salesgirl is typically engrossed in seeing the customer as her psychological enemy, rather than the store as her economic enemy" (Mills, 1951:174).

Students who work in shops are taught that the customers are always right:

What did you learn in the job?

> "Getting along with customers, how to be polite when you're feeling down, talking to strangers.... (Sue, Year 12).

It may be subversive to suggest that the school should teach Sue to see 'the store as her psychological enemy'. But the themes outlined above, 'good jobs versus bad jobs, stigma and conflict', cry out for discussion in the classroom and for inclusion in the curriculum. It was clear during the interviews that students were pleased to be able to talk about these issues and several responded favourably to the idea of integration when asked if they would like to see their work experiences 'formalized' as part of the curriculum. However, students appeared willing to have their school-sponsored placements discussed openly in class but were less willing to see their self-initiated part-time jobs formalised in this way. Part of the reason for this may be due to the widespread student perception of part-time employment as an entirely different experience and separate from the curriculum in a way that sponsored work experience is not.

School Work and Part-Time Work Compared

Students were asked to compare their part-time jobs with their school work and to describe its effects on their performance, for example, missing classes or not completing assignments. No student believed their part-time jobs had negative consequences for their school work. Most students found it difficult making any sensible comparisons between part-time employment and full-time schooling. They were asked specifically which was more important and which more enjoyable. College is universally perceived as more important in shaping their future life chances, while most also believe college is more enjoyable. While students may complain of homework, assignments and the bookishness of school work, they see their subjects as infinitely more challenging than the mindless routines of most workplaces to which they are exposed. Apart from 'being able to add up' or 'reading instructions', students could see no connection between what they learned at college and did in their part-time jobs. From the students' perspective, they are separate worlds -- school has an academic, bookish culture while the personality market of the new teenage workplace is an affective, rather than cognitive domain. It is for this reason that part-time work tends to be marginal to schooling, although there are increasing signs in the 'new vocationalism' that the social skills of the personality market are being incorporated in the curriculum (Cohen, 1984). More will be said of this issue in Chapter 9.

5. Conclusion

In concluding this chapter, a final point needs to be made about the meanings students attach to their part-time jobs. Holding down a job, no matter how deadend, means more than financial independence. It is especially important to students who have tried unsuccessfully to find a part-time job:

> "I applied to Kentucky Fried Chicken but that was expecting a miracle!"
> (Hugh).

The meaning that comes from having a job is not tied to money and material earnings alone, although these are important. Having their own money provides a sense of being grown-up and confers a certain status on student-workers. Students with good jobs are esteemed by their peers. For example, being a McDonald's crew member has more status than being a check-out chic. Sally's good job is an example of how a student-worker looks for and finds meaning in a part-time job. Sally's reasons for working as a cashier are:

> "For the money *(material concerns).* And its interesting. I meet a lot of people there *(social concerns)*....I enjoy working with figures *(real world concerns).* I'm all right at it and its interesting for me" *(participatory concerns).*

These four concerns, as identified by Wilson and Wyn (1987), represent the meanings she attaches to the job. Sally is one of the lucky student-workers who look for and find meaning in their jobs. Most students are compelled to 'construct' their own meanings in jobs that are essentially meaningless. As we have seen in the present chapter, these students have engaged in the construction of various social interpretations of their world of work. Some examples of the meanings they attach to the jobs are given below:

> 'I know all the customers by name' (responsibility).'It gives me something to do' (use of time).
> 'I have to pay my own way' (independence).
> 'It gives me a feeling of identity' (identity).
> 'It gave me a lot of leisure time' (leisure).

'I'm doing something useful' (participation).

'How to be polite when you're feeling down' (emotional labour).

In the next chapter, the social construction of 'real work' in work experience placements is discussed and compared to school work and part-time work.

Chapter 8

Sponsored Work Experience

'When I first went to the creche, the first problem I found was how to open the gate. How was I to know you had to pull the rod on the top to open the gate?' (Murray, Year 12)

1. Work Experience Placements

This chapter will examine the significance of sponsored work experience in the occupational socialization of college students. From the students' own perspectives, work experience in mainly good jobs in the primary labour market reinforces their already high career aspirations and expectations. It will be argued that the latter are realistic in the light of the opportunities available to students in school (curriculum and work experience opportunities) and in paid work in part-time jobs. Self-evaluations and the role of significant others in these contexts are also used by students in shaping their post-school ambitions. Senior secondary students who are about to leave college construct their concepts of 'real work' on the basis of their experiences of work in school, family and workplace contexts. 'Real' work is associated with jobs which offer career prospects and the opportunity to avoid the stigma, authoritarianism, conflict and unsatisfactory personal relationships with colleagues and employers that they may have experienced in a deadend job. As Broom *et al.* note, "there is considerable agreement amongst Australian youth about the symbolic and material rewards that go with different jobs (1980:13).

School-sponsored work experience is the best known and most widely used school to work transition program for Australian secondary students. Although the numbers participating have declined in recent years, work experience programs still outnumber all other forms of work preparation for young people. As shown in Table 8.1 work experience participation greatly exceeds participation in training programs.

Table 8.1 Work Experience and Training Programs in Australia

	1986-7	1987-8
Number in Work Experience	87,940	62,000
Number in Training Program	17,130	25,800
Total	105,070	92,800

Source: Wilson, 1987:5.

There is also a high participation rate by Canberra's government school students in work experience sponsored by the ACT Schools Authority. About 90 per cent of Year 10 students and 27 per cent of Year 11 - 12 students are involved in at least one week - long program during their secondary education. Between 1982 and 1987 more than 20,000 students participated, averaging about 3,500 each year with a slightly higher female participation rate of 12 per cent (Rainforest, 1988:14).

Employers in most industries in the public and private sectors in Canberra are willing and able to provide a week's work experience for more than 4,000 students each year. In the early stages of the research, about 400 local employers were contacted to arrange placements for ACT students on behalf of the Work Experience Section of the ACT Schools Authority. A small number (33) was unable to participate in the 1988 program, and only a single employer was critical of the scheme and refused to cooperate in the future. I gained the strong impression that employers were genuinely willing to help students, believing that a week's work experience would benefit the students' employment prospects in the future. The following view is representative of employers of work experience students, though not necessarily of full-time employers:

> "We have a social responsibility to help these kids get work experience. In any case, I've got kids of my own" (Employer, accountancy firm).

Work placements are primarily chosen by the student with boys dominant in computational, technical/engineering, manual/practical and outdoor occupations, while girls prefer to work in artistic/creative, clerical, helping/community, and personal contact occupations (Rainforest, 1988:7). The most popular placements for ACT boys and girls in 1987 are shown below.

Table 8.2 Occupations with 50 or more work experience placements in 1987 ACT Schools Authority Work Experience Program

Boys			Girls		
Motor, diesel mechanic	178	(16)	Teaching-primary	168	(25)
Cook, chef, caterer	42	(75)	Clerical work	165	(48)
Defence Forces, RAAF	77	(15)	Child care	143	(3)
Carpentry and joinery	70	(1)	Travel Agency	119	(11)
Defence Forces, Army	67	(21)	Animal work	106	(17)
Computer programming	62	(9)	Hotel/motel management	105	(34)
Sales - sporting, leisure goods	61	(7)	Teaching - pre school	90	(1)
Ranger	56	(19)	Nursing	74	(7)
Architecture	53	(12)	Banking	63	(22)
Panel beating, spray painting	52	(3)	Sales -- clothing, fashion	58	(7)
			Teaching - special, remedial	50	(3)

Note: The numbers in brackets show numbers of the opposite sex in the placements; only for cooks, chefs and caterers do females slightly outnumber males in the male dominated list.

Source: Adapted from Statistical Summary, 1987 Work Experience Programs, ACTSA.

In 1987, as in previous years, patterns of work experience closely reflected existing patterns of employment in Canberra, and traditional career expectations and aspirations of students (Rainforest, 1988:7).

Work experience has been defined as "schemes on which people experience work tasks in work environments without taking on the full identity of a worker" (Watts, 1983:3). Eggleston notes that unlike 'real' work, work experience cannot offer pay and tenure, essential to the identity of a worker (1982:8). Watts has described the difference between the part-time jobs available to students and their sponsored work experience as a difference between juvenile and adult work. In the present sample of 21 students, a further contrast between paid and unpaid work experience is apparent. The 14 students who have had part-time jobs typically worked in the secondary labour market; their work experience placements on the other hand were generally primary jobs as shown in Figure 8.1 below. The eight students who were interviewed and filmed on video by Film Australia are also listed.

Figure 8.1 Work Experience Placements for Males and Females

Females	Worksite	Males	Worksite
Gemma	Solicitor's office	Lee	Primary school
Samantha	Photography centre	Hugh	Media centre
Mandy	Nursery	Shaun	Hospital
Christine	Travel agency	Ivan	Community club
Nellie	Accountant's office	Murray	Travel agency
Ann	Youth camp	Gary	Auto workshop
Rita	Science laboratory	Max	Secondary school
Milly	French embassy	Michael	Auto workshop
Jane	Theatre company		
Yolanda	Theatre company		
Sally	Hospital		
Diane	Hospital		
Sue	International Hotel		
Video Students			
Val	ACT E.A.	Simon	Botanic Gardens
Jenny	Australian Army	James	Motor Cycle Wreckers
Lil	Theatre company	John	International Hotel
Susi	Legal firm		
Helen	Public Service		

Sally was the only student whose part-time job as a clerical assistant had any direct link with future career aspirations. In contrast, work experience occupations were generally closely linked with future career plans. There were only three exceptions* as shown in Figure 8.2.

Figure 8.2 Work experience and Careers

Students' work experience occupation and first career preference

Work Experience Occupation		First Career Preference
	Girls	
Gemma	Lawyer	Lawyer
Milly	Public Relations	Diplomatic Corps
Nelly	Accountant	Accountant
*Sally	Occupational therapist	Accountant
Rita	Scientist	Scientist
Diane	Dietician	Dietician
Samantha	Photographer	Fashion photographer
Christine	Travel agent	Airline stewardess
Mandy	Horticulturalist	Horticulturalist
Ann	Youth worker	Nanny
Sue	Chef	Chef
Yolanda	Theatre costume designer	Theatre costume designer
Jane	Theatre manager	Theatre manager
	Boys	
*Max	P.E. Teacher	Officer-Armed Services
Lee	Primary school teacher	Primary school teacher
Hugh	Media producer	Media producer
Shaun	Nurse	Nurse
Ivan	Chef	Chef
Murray	Travel agent	Tourist/Travel agent
*Michael	Mechanic	Sound mixer
Gary	Mechanic	Mechanic

While it is true that one week of work experience cannot develop in students a full identity as a worker, it acts as an important agent in the occupational socialization of students whose experiences of work are typically confined to school work and domestic work or to the secondary labour market of casual, part-time jobs. In the case of these 21 work experience students, two-thirds (14) have experienced the latter, whilst in their work experience placements virtually all were exposed to white collar occupations in the primary labour market. How they evaluated their week in these jobs is the subject of the following section.

2. Student Evaluation of Work Experience

All of the 21 students responded positively to their week's work experience. They were asked at the outset of the interview for their evaluations. *How was it?* Typical responses were 'It was great', 'I loved it' 'OK' and so forth. There were no negative responses although positive evaluations varied from very enthusiastic to lukewarm. Despite some gentle probing, it was difficult to find any student who had any serious misgivings about the week's placement. Questions were asked about co-workers, supervisors and conflicts involving themselves or regular staff. The students registered no complaints at all about any of these matters. The fact that the interviews took place in the fortnight immediately following the week's work experience may have contributed to an unusually high and universal praise of the program.

Watkins' ethnography of Victorian Year 11 students during a fortnight's work experience found that some students witnessed instances of both formal and informal resistance in the workplace. He argued that far from being positively inducted into the discipline or work, students learn how workers resist employer attempts to control them. "They (students) become, in fact, participant observers who see at first hand, aspects of control and contestation in the world of work" (Watkins, 1987:28) . No such instances of conflict, apart from minor 'personality clashes', were reported by the students in the present sample. While conflict with customers and employers was raised during discussions of paid part-time jobs, it was not an issue during work experience. This is not surprising given that the majority of the placements were in the primary labour market. Furthermore, Watts notes that subjective evaluations of the effectiveness of work experience programs in the UK are "...impressively high, and are likely to be matched by few other educational experiences" (1983:87). Shilling correctly points out that it would be surprising if students did not 'enjoy' a week's work experience more than school since they are comparing a week's work with a lifetime of school (1987:418). Watts also recognises Festinger's caution that people in general tend to be predisposed to evaluate their experiences positively, as a way of justifying the time they have invested in them (Watts,1983:87). Using Watts' typology of work experience objectives to evaluate what the 21 students got out of their week's placements, the students' comments are summarised in Table 8.3.

Table 8.3 **Student Evaluation of Work Experience**

Work Experience Objectives	Dominant outcome for 21 students
(1) Motivational	
(a) general	1
(b) specific	2
(2) Social-educational	
(a) life skills	0
(b) knowledge and understanding of self	1
(c) knowledge and understanding of society	1
(3) Vocational	
(a) orientation ie. understanding	4
(b) extension ie. broadening	5
(c) sampling i.e. testing	5
(4) Anticipatory	*
(5) Placing	
(a) self	2
(b) employer	n/a
(6) Custodial	n/a
Total	21

*Note: Watts points out that there is some overlap between this category and 3a. The comments made by the four students in the sample could be grouped under either. Subcategory 3a was used because the comments generally included elements of 3b and 3c and would therefore be better placed under the general 'vocational' category. These comments were extracted by a content analysis of the field notes.

Work Experience as Vocational Guidance

Table 8.3 indicates that two-thirds of the sample evaluated the success of the work placement in vocational terms. Students either increased their understanding of what a job entailed, or broadened the options they were considering or sampled a job before committing themselves to it. Very often it was a mixture of these sub-categories. In Nellie's case, elements of sampling and extension are evident in her comments, with the latter having more prominence:

How was the week on work experience?

> "I really loved it!... I was in a good mood every night... I had done some work experience in a primary school (peer teaching) but it was too competitive. With the public service, it was much better and I really liked the people I was working with... I previously thought of doing accountancy with private enterprise, but the public service doesn't look too bad now."

Whilst vocational elements were emphasised in the students' comments, most indicated motivational and social-educational values as well. Mandy's work in the nursery helped her see the link between school and work:

What do you need to be successful at college?

"Motivation. A certain amount of skill, background in subjects.
I think you have to want to do it, because you need to do well."

Did work experience help you here?

"Yep. I learnt that it's good to get qualifications or you're stuck in the potting shed!"

Here she referred to a number of migrant workers who had been employed in the potting shed for the past thirty years. Several students referred explicitly to being motivated by their encounter with working in good jobs. Contrast Rita's remarks on her regular part-time job and her week in the botany lab:

"I'm a check-out chick (laughing)."

Do you like it?

"Not really, but I like the money."

How was the work experience?

"It was great!... I worked in different departments helping the lab assistants."

Did it help you decide on a career?

"Yes. I found out what uni subjects I'd need to do... To do a science degree I'd need to be in the top 40 per cent."

One can only speculate if working in the botany laboratory did actually make any difference to Rita's school work. She did say her chemistry made more sense although her grades remained the same. More importantly, her final Year 12 tertiary score of 562 (top 37 per cent) will qualify her for a place in the ANU's science faculty. Work experience may have contributed the crucial three per cent needed for tertiary entrance but there is no evidence, except in the geography course, that her grades improved in the second year following work experience. What can be safely concluded about students like Mandy and Rita is that work experience in school-related disciplines made a difference to the way they perceived their school work. Social-educational values were also mentioned explicitly as the most important outcome by two students, and by several others as secondary outcomes. Some examples:

> "I sort of had doubts that I could do a job like that (youth worker)...doing the camp proved that I could... "(Ann)
>
> "I never realised how many motorbikes were involved in accidents. It made me think, being a bike rider myself" (James, video interviews).

Work experience in good jobs with career prospects generally gave students useful vocational knowledge; motivational and social-educational outcomes were less important for work experience students. For part-time workers, however, it was often the social-educational and motivational outcomes that were most important; for example, learning about adult practices, the difference between good and bad jobs, stigma and conflict were mentioned more frequently, than vocational concepts. Much of what students learn in the secondary labour market is incidental since they do not expect to get anything other than money out of the work. Virtually all of the students discussed their part-time jobs in terms of extrinsic satisfactions, while their unpaid work experience placements were described as intrinsically satisfying. Several students explained how they enjoyed working through their lunch hours and the idea of payment was never mentioned by any of the 21 students. On the other hand, it is rare to find a part-time worker who would be prepared to do the job for nothing. It is clear that the paid jobs available to school students are typically deadend, while in Canberra at least, the jobs provided by work experience employers are in the main desirable ones in the primary labour market.

Not surprisingly, student evaluations reflect these differences between good and bad jobs. As mentioned earlier, students are typically positive in their evaluations of their work experience placements. When negative comments are made, they usually refer to jobs in the secondary labour market. In a recent study by Shilling (1987), for example, of the 24 fourth year students on a week's work experience, half were negative while of the remaining half, seven were positive and five neutral. Negative comments related to either unsatisfactory social relations at work or the labour process itself. The examples quoted by Shilling as representative of negative experiences were in retail, a butchery, a hotel and catering firm, and a carpet fitting and laying business. Positive evaluations, on the other hand, came from students working in more up-market placements which included a nursery, a computer store, a secretary's office and a building maintenance firm. Evaluations in the present sample confirm that when the jobs are perceived as good and when the quality of contact they have with adults is high, the students' evaluations are positive.

Herein lies the potential for work experience programs to provide the basis for critical reflection by students of the world of work. Watkins accepts that while work experience has become part of the conservative educational mainstream, "...it still involves contradictory elements through which contestation might develop" (1982:ii) Similarly, Simon (1983) in Canada and Shilling (1987) in the UK have suggested the counter-hegemonic potential of work experience. Shilling argues that the unsatisfactory conditions encountered by several students in his sample during work experience are likely to be the same conditions they will experience as full-time workers in the secondary labour market (1987:417). Of the 24 students in Shilling's sample, eight rejected the area of work they had previously considered for a full-time job after their exposure to the jobs during work experience. Shilling points out that the students did not reject the validity of work experience as an extracurricular activity. Indeed, for these students, the insights gained during their placements were probably the most useful knowledge they acquired during their secondary schooling.

In the present sample, only four students changed their minds as a result of the week's work experience; none had done so because of any bad experiences they had during the placement. The absence of conflict for the Stirling College students does not mean that their work experience was unproblematic or that they would not benefit from the 'critical reflection' advocated by Cole (1981), Simon (1983), Shilling (1987) and Watkins (1982, 1987). The fact that work experience is recognised as a legitimate educational activity and has been domesticated as part of the conservative mainstream is itself problematic. For Stirling College students, work experience has these characteristics. As work experience placements are predominantly in the primary labour market, the question must be posed as to whether the students are being 'prepared' for work quite different from that which they are likely to experience as full-time workers. It is true that the majority of these 21 students aspire to careers related to their work experience placements in the primary labour market. It is equally true as shown in Chapter 7 with the class of '82, that school leavers with a Year 12 certificate are not guaranteed jobs in the primary labour market unless they are prepared to continue their education at tertiary level. The alternative is underemployment in deadend jobs or unemployment.

It is highly unlikely that college students are aware of these possibilities. Unemployment was never raised by any of the 21 students in the sample and most were optimistic about their future employment prospects. When asked about their specific career preferences, the numbers divided evenly between optimistic (6), pessimistic (6) and unsure (6). (Comments for three students could not be located in the field notes). Some representative examples:

> *Are there any obstacles to your getting a job you want?*
>
> "I may have to go to uni or the film school...I plan to write a few letters to Channel 7...." (Hugh, Year 11 media work, cameraman).

The general tone of Hugh's comments throughout the interview, especially concerning his success in the media production unit, were indicative of his optimism about eventually getting work in the media industry. Max was pessimistic about his prospects in getting a place at the Australian Defence Force Academy, but had other options (P.E. teaching or an arts-law degree) if his ADFA application was unsuccessful. He saw the obstacles as:

> "Just the overall competition of ADFA. There's a lot of people who want to do it - I've heard that 1000 applied and 40 got in" (Max - army officer).

A third of the students were unsure about their prospects:

> "I just haven't thought that far ahead" (Rita, Year 12 scientist).

In a few cases, it was difficult to know if the student was uncertain or pessimistic. In Jane's case, for example, the obstacle is being able to finance her studies, not academic ability since her T.E. score is among the top 8 per cent in the ACT. She is both uncertain and pessimistic:

> "Yep. First thing is money. I want to go to uni and I'll need the money" (Jane, Year 12 - actor or anthropologist).

The next section will examine whether exposure to good jobs in the primary labour market encourages unrealistic expectations in the students as well as other outcomes reported by the students themselves.

3. Aspirations, Expectations and the Nature of Work

> Science teacher: "On the whole they seem to choose areas they'd be well suited to."

They seem to know, don't they?

> Science teacher: "They sure do!"
> (Excerpt from an interview with a college science teacher).

The choice of work experience placements by the 21 students which are closely linked to their first career preferences is an indication of their aspirations to get good jobs with career prospects. Gemma was the only student who had doubts about her chances. The long study involved in getting a law degree is to her a real barrier:

"I'm pretty slack really. I don't go home and pour over my notes which I'd have to do if I did a law degree."

Did you find the work experience in the solicitor's office challenging?

"No. There was lots of secretarial work and a lot of waiting around. Basically I was just observing."

Did you enjoy it?

"I liked the outside work. Going on courier runs was the most enjoyable part".

Going on courier runs is one of the jobs in legal work which employers regard as mundane. For Gemma, being outside delivering documents was a way of meeting people and a break from the paper work (filing, photocopying) which she did not enjoy. During the interview, the film 'Paper Chase' was brought up. Gemma had not seen the film about the Harvard Law School and seemed a little surprised to hear that studying law was so competitive. Clearly, she had little understanding of the legal profession and neither is she enrolled in legal studies at the college. Nor did the week in the solicitor's office teach her much about the job apart from accidental insights:

Did you learn much during the week?

"I'm pretty observant and so I picked up a lot just talking to barristers. And I met a QC. They got me to clean out the board room and there was a QC and a barrister there and so I just started talking to them. I just thought that's the way to find out about things."

What she did learn was that getting a law degree is a hard grind and that being a lawyer might be beyond her. Interestingly, she was the only student who made no voluntary remarks about the development or origins of her career interests. Only the experience of living in Woolongong had affected her decision-making in a very general way. She is determined not to end up in a deadend job: "That was slave labour that was... It (shop work) was bad, it was really rotten. Canberra has a much greater range of what you can do". More than anything, it was this that led her to choose the solicitor's office for work experience and to consider studying law after she leaves college.

The remaining twenty students were more sure of their choices. Most believe their aspirations are realistic and expect to get jobs eventually in the relevant careers.

Ivan is typical of the low academic achiever at college who is making the most of what limited skills he has. During high school he worked one day a week in a community club kitchen and since then has wanted to become a chef.

Why a chef?

"Just for a career, a job. It's something I know I can do quite well" (Ivan, Year 11).

He remembers exactly the $42.69 less $2 union fee he was paid for the 9am to 2pm shift. The idea of becoming a chef originated in his home science class at high school where boys outnumbered girls. Ivan's favourite subject at college is also food science and he believes he has a flair for cooking. His home science teacher comments on his ability in the subject:

"He's got the interest, the flair will probably come later. At the moment he's very conscientious and will do anything you want him to do."

How was he on work experience?

"He was extremely happy. The whole kitchen knew him and what he was doing...He's a little slow, but he takes it all in eventually. They were all good to him."

Has he a future as a chef?

"If you're persistent and conscientious - yes - that's what they'll pick him for. He's going to be reliable, he's going to be punctual because that's very important to him. He'll be more than a kitchen hand."

Ivan's job in the kitchen is one of the few secondary jobs in the work experience placements. Whether the jobs were in the primary or the secondary labour markets, the experience was useful to the students in gauging future employment opportunities. Exposure to adults working in the primary labour market provided several students with a better understanding of what was involved in getting a good, career-type job:

"It's made me more conscientious and made me want to work harder so that I can become a lawyer.... You've got to be in the top seven percent to be a barrister or solicitor and the way I was going I wasn't. I had to pull my socks up" (Susi, Video interview).

Working with migrant women who have spent thirty years in the potting shed at the nursery taught Mandy the importance of credentials:

"I learnt that it's good to get qualifications or you're stuck in the potting shed... I don't want to work in the potting shed for thirty years! I couldn't stand that!"

Similarly, students with part-time work in deadend jobs consistently say that exposure to menial work has inspired them to work harder so as not to get trapped in the secondary labour market. But are their expectations justified? Is hard work and an awareness of the need for credentials enough to ensure that their generally high career aspirations will be satisfied?

Given the nature of the predominantly white collar employment opportunities in Canberra, it is not surprising that senior secondary students aspire to work in the primary labour market. In this sense, their aspirations realistically reflect the structure of opportunities. Furthermore, their aspirations are a reflection of their parents' occupations, which as we have seen, are predominantly in the primary labour market. "Obviously occupational aspirations depend on family background, school experience and actual or perceived ability, but it is also clear that the high occupational aspirations and expectations of Australian youth reflect prevailing norms about what is good and desirable in work roles" (Broom *et al*.,. 1980: 13). As we have seen in Chapter 7, part-time workers learn at first hand the difference between good and bad jobs. Their exposure to good jobs during work experience further enhances their understanding and contributes to the desirability of finding good jobs in the primary labour market.

About 80 per cent of participants in ACT work experience placements rate work experience as a useful exercise in planning their future careers (Scope 1987). While the recent one-week work experience placement only affected the aspirations of four of the 21 students (they changed their minds), all of them found it a useful exercise in vocational guidance. The Scope survey also indicated that work experience in part-time jobs affects future career aspirations. This is shown in Table 8.4:

Table 8.4 Most Popular 'First Choice" Jobs

Part-time work status	Female	Male
Non-workers	17% artistic, literary professionals (Y.11-12)	14% business professionals (Y.11-12)
Part-time workers (16 hours or more per week)	11% clerical/sales(Y.11) 14% miscellaneous jobs not listed (Y.12)	22% trades (Y.11-12)

Source: Scope 1987

Table 8.4 indicates the traditional sex-typed choices of jobs for females (artistic, literary and clerical/sales) and for males (business and trades). More importantly, non-workers have higher career aspirations than workers; the former aspire to careers in the professions while the latter have more modest ambitions. These students work on average in excess of 16 hours per week and inevitably spend fewer hours on their studies than non-workers. In the present sample, with one exception, no student has worked more than 16 hours per week; the effect on their studies, according to these moderate workers, is minimal.

A further difference between the Scope survey and the Stirling College sample is that for the latter, there are no significant differences in aspirations for workers and non-workers; undoubtedly this can be explained by the vast difference in sample sizes (Scope n=6,300; Stirling College n=21). What can be confidently asserted is that the typical student who works 8 to 10 hours per week has the same high aspirations as non-workers. In 1986, for example, the numbers of Year 12 students preferring careers in the professions outnumbered the remaining ten categories combined: 1,400 professional compared to 1,300 other (Scope 1986). It can also be assumed that the difference between good jobs on work experience and bad jobs in part-time employment is not lost on students, nor for that matter on employers.

According to Reeders, employers require neophytes in part-time jobs to perform unpleasant duties as a way of assessing their attitudes and willingness to work (1986:33). Work experience supervisors also used menial tasks as a way of initiating students into the work placement. Even in good jobs on work experience, employers gave students the jobs regular staff try to avoid.

Menial Work as an Initiation Rite

Menial tasks were experienced by most of the 21 work experience students. The unintended humour in Simon's response is fairly typical of what happens in work experience placements:

> "I thought they'd give me all the menial tasks like shoveling dirt, cleaning up dirt, putting dirt back in pots, that sort of thing and when I got here I found that that was right, I did have a lot of menial tasks. 'I don't like this, I'll give it all to Simon'" (Video interview).

Simon said that this was really not a problem as he was used to it at his greenhouse at home. Experience of menial tasks convinced him that he wanted to do something more than work in horticulture, probably botany where "I can identify the plants that these people grow".

Work which was regarded by regular staff as menial was eagerly performed by students anxious to gain access to what they thought were promising careers. John's enthusiasm for work in the hospitality industry is highlighted in his interpretation of menial work as a measure of staff trust and responsibility rather than their exploitation of his willingness to please:

> "They gave me a lot of responsibility. The porters would often let me do whole linen runs by myself and I thought that was pretty good."

Helen, an articulate and well-spoken Year 12 student with the presence and confidence required in public relations work, was disappointed but philosophical about having to do menial tasks:

"Photocopying played a big role. I was outside in the corridor doing a lot of photocopying" (Video interview).

She accepted these tasks in an office where the professional journalists had skills she lacked. Her expectations had been unrealistic, expecting journalistic chores, and talking to clients instead of the 'grime work' which she found pretty frustrating.

Nevertheless, Simon, John and Helen all enjoyed the experience of working and cooperating with adult workers and wanted to pursue careers in these fields.

Although there were no reports of employers exploiting cheap student labour during the week, doing menial jobs was part of virtually every student's experience. Some examples:

"I potted tulips for a display, raked leaves (laughing), did cuttings, went out to collect large cuttings, seeds, watering and basically everything that was possible outside" (Mandy, Year 11).

"I answered the telephones all the time, worked the photocopier, then they gave me tests to learn me how to do tickets and things and on the last three days I was on the counter issuing tickets and working on the computer" (Murray, Year 12)
.

In the month when initial telephone contact with employers was made to arrange work experience placements, it was striking how many employers excluded 'counter work' dealing with the public and general customer contact from the tasks which work experience students initially perform.

What do you get them to do?

"Sweep the floor, just like at the hairdressers; they also put water in the vase. They don't have the experience to serve customers but maybe towards the end of the week they can serve a few customers" (Florist shop proprietor).

Or as a theatre manager explained, there is a necessary progression from menial to technical tasks:

'Kids think they can come in and do the lighting for a show that night. That just doesn't happen. Our approach is to say on the first day they come in, 'that's the floor - sweep it!' They have to see that the job's about a lot of boring, menial work before they start on the technical stuff."

The manager explained how students graduate from floor sweeping to fixing extension leads, to doing lighting on the last day. "Kids who won't clean floors are sent back to school!"

In this case, sweeping the floor is unrelated to the more technical tasks which follow. The 'necessary progression' has nothing to do with developing a skill as a prerequisite to the performance of a more complicated task. The key word is 'necessary' not 'progression'. It is not necessary for students to learn a skill (floor sweeping), but rather an attitude (obedience) if they are to succeed on work experience.

Employers sometimes mentioned the willingness to perform menial, mundane chores as a criterion for success on work experience. As Murray's supervisor at the Tourist Bureau noted:

> "He was willing to do some of the 'dirty jobs' which many work experience students shy away from. He showed genuine interest and enthusiasm."

Rita's employer described her as "cooperative, interested, with no qualms at all about doing menial jobs like transplanting seedlings". Rita's mother describes her as "a very well disciplined and punctual person. She's had a lot of work experience and part-time work". In other words, Rita knows what she has to do to be successful as a worker.

It was evident in the interviews that students were well treated by their work experience employers, provided they pulled their weight. Like Rita, all of the students with experience of work, whether paid or unpaid, school work or domestic work, know about the discipline of work.

What does it take to be successful on work experience?

> "Just getting on with people you're working with, being punctual, showing that you're interested in what you're doing and asking questions...."

And for Sue:

"Willing to take orders and listening to what they ask you to do."

Employer expectations were put bluntly by the owner of a car wrecker workshop:

> "I just think that the kid should put his nose to the grindstone and have a go....they should work and don't play games....because if they wanna play games they can do that at school" (Video interviews).

According to this employer, school is for kids who want to play games; real work occurs outside of school.

'Real' Work

Typically, students on work experience graduate from their initiation into menial jobs to 'real' work. Nelly spent the first day in the public service doing filing but then graduated to more responsible work using the computer to write up assets and accounts. She worked on her own a lot but got plenty of help and encouragement from her supervisor.

> "I really loved it...I was in a good mood every night, even though I was working really long hours from 8.30 to 5 with just half an hour for lunch."

Like many of the students, Nelly worked in an area directly linked to her career aspirations, in this case, accountancy. Sue's experience in a hotel kitchen was similar:

> "We were on our feet for 8 1/2 hours straight with only half an hour for lunch...Everyone was really nice. It was good that they treated you like an adult not like some kid that had come in and really patronizing. They got you to do what they would do and if you had trouble with it, they'd explain it again."

Both Sue and Nelly were doing the work of the full-time staff and were trusted with responsible jobs. Nelly in fact filled in for an absent public servant and did her quite responsible job for most of the week. Her interest in accountancy at college provided an opportunity for her to show initiative on a number of occasions.

For Sue, initiative was of a lower order:

Were you able to use your initiative?

> "On the first day we made open Danish sandwiches, then later they told us to arrange some celery how you'd think it would look good. Otherwise, there wasn't much opportunity to show initiative."

And for Rita:

> "Yes, to a certain extent. I had to classify toadstools and mushrooms and they just left me to do that on my own using all different text books" .

The most satisfied students were those who were allowed a degree of autonomy, a chance to use some initiative:

> "They let me do everything. I made splints for people with RSI. I actually made them myself for them to actually use. I thought that was good, they let me do these things" (Diane, Year 11).

But for most students, just being out of school in a workplace, gave them a sense of doing 'real' work. Some students identified with what it was like to be a full-time worker:

> "I lived like they (theatre group) did for a week. I became very tired. I did many promotions around Civic.... the show got on the road which was a thrill to see .... and I did learn a lot about the people; I did literally live with them ...." (Lil, Video interviews).

Ann lived in with staff during her week at the youth camp. She participated in all of the activities - games,preparing meals, craft evenings, map reading, bush walks - "I learnt heaps about the soil and the environment."

What did you get out of the week as a Youth Worker?

> "I sort of had doubts that I could do a job like that. Doing the camp proved that I could and that it was actually what I wanted to do ... to be there with the kids every day, like a nanny."

Routine tasks in an out-of-school context often took on an exaggerated importance. For several students these mundane jobs were the most important learning outcomes of the work experience. Some examples:

In a nursery:

> "I learnt little things like how to push a trolley the right way without it jack-knifing on you and practical things" (Mandy, Year 11).

In a hotel kitchen:

> "I learnt a lot, speed, different ways to cut meat, preparing food, this and that" (Ivan, Year 11).

In a tourist bureau:

> "I learnt what a good day's work is, responsibility, how to use the telephone properly - it's improved my telephone manner" (Murray, Year 12).

In an auto workshop:

> "I learnt how to fill up time, like if you're not doing anything you can always clean up the bench or use your initiative" (Michael, Year 11).

Whilst Ivan and Murray may have learned useful skills, it would be difficult to justify a week's work experience for the purpose of learning how to 'push a trolley the right way' (Mandy) or 'clean up the bench' (Michael). It is also difficult to believe that such activities constitute 'skills' which prepared students for the world of work. Even if it was accepted that senior secondary students needed to *learn* how to push a trolley, clean a bench or sweep a floor, it would be unreasonable to justify a week out of school for such dubious learning outcomes.

Routine tasks, because they were performed in the real world of work, were done cheerfully by the students. In the last example, Michael went out of his way to fill in time. At college, his industrial arts teacher describes him as "not very well motivated, a slow kid" who would not voluntarily clean up the college workshop. Routines associated with school work at college are not perceived as real work by most students.

4. School Work compared to 'Real' Work

This was a topic about which the 21 students were eager to comment during the interviews. Responses revealed how students construct their notions of real work as opposed to school work from their experiences of part-time jobs and in their work experience placements.

In Michael's workplace, it is most probably an accepted practice in the workshop for apprentices and work experience students to fill in their time with odd jobs that need to be done.

This is something most neophytes accept as part of the job, yet at school, it would be resisted. Why this is so is part of the problem faced by teachers trying to motivate students in the classroom or workshop. The students rarely see themselves as anything other than passive students, without real responsibility. In Michael's case, the roles of student and worker are clearly separated. In one of his part-time jobs with a rock band, he is responsible for the sound:

> "You get a lot of satisfaction out of it if the concert turns out to have a really good sound."

Likewise, he enjoys his job at McDonald's:

> "It's a good atmosphere, you have to work as a team."

Michael is therefore no stranger to the concepts of job-satisfaction, skill and team work. Yet his school work lacks the application and dedication he gives to his outside interests.

Do you think students like yourself who work for McDonald's, want to do well for the manager, but not for school or for the teacher?

> "No, because I've got to show my parents and myself that I've done well otherwise I get really ashamed if I just get Ds and Es."

Have you shown your reports this term at home?

> "No, I've lost them!"

The industrial arts teacher has the last word on Michael:

"He's got a pleasant smile and looks well presented but there's nothing behind it. He just sits there and smiles at you!"

The Meaning of Authority

In watching the students taking instruction in various work situations (video interviews), it was striking how explanations of even simple, mundane tasks were followed with intense interest by the students. An army officer's ponderous description of a compass was received with passive though concentrated attention. Using the same technique in a classroom, a geography teacher would be less successful. Basic instruction in a number of routine tasks like making a bed, setting a table, screwing a nut and potting a plant were followed with an interest rarely seen by classroom teachers. It is interesting to speculate why classroom instruction rarely achieves this kind of interest. One of the video students suggested a reason for this:

> "I think school is slacker than work experience because at school if you don't want to do the work you just sit there, you muck up but on work experience you can't really muck up .... they'll just tell you to go home .... The whole idea of work experience is to learn something, to see what the job's like so if you really want to learn you must concentrate; but at school even if you (don't) want to learn, the teachers make you learn and do the work they give you" (Valery, Year 10).

Or as another student succinctly stated:

> "Work experience is a job. Once you're in the workforce you have to do the job right, otherwise you get the sack" (James, video interviews).

Bosses have more control over students than school teachers. Paid work, unlike school work, imposes a different kind of social control:

> "Since I've been working I've really had to listen for the first time in my life. If the boss tells me to do something, then I have to get it right the first time. It really makes you concentrate on what people are saying to you" (Kim, shop assistant).

For some students, the difference between school and work was not the authority of bosses and teachers, but rather the level of trust and responsibility:

> "The main differences are the responsibilities given to you; they give you important documents .... you can't lose them or anything - whereas at college .... they still treat you as a child in most cases" (Sue, Year 12, legal firm, video interview).

To James, the casual, unstructured atmosphere of the cycle wreckers was preferable to school work at college:

> "There's not as much authority. People aren't breathing down your neck to get something finished .... In work experience I was praised for doing something well; I was given encouragement while I was doing it. At school you're sorta left on your own and if you really need help you really

have to ask for it and ask for it many times. Here you'd just have to ask one question and the answer's given straight to you" (James, Year 12, video interviews).

These views taken from the video interviews were not representative of the 21 interviewees. College students generally prefer college to high school, again because it is perceived as 'slacker', which some students translate as a more relaxed and some as responsibility:

"College is slacker than high school but I think that's good, because if you want to work you can work and if you don't, you just don't. It's like my maths teacher or someone said - 'you're masters of your own destiny' - so you sort of learn how to be responsible" (Mandy, Year 11).

Relationships at School and Work

It ought not to be concluded from these few examples, that college teachers are perceived as 'slack' by students. At least one girl referred to both the power and powerlessness of teachers. Like many serious college students, Jane is fearful of failure and especially of tests and assignments:

Do kids ever think they get a rough deal in assessment?

"Oh yes, for sure! But you're not meant to think that way. It's the teacher who's always right!"

Do students expect their work to be assessed?

"Oh, yeah.... they often won't do the work if it's not going to be assessed."

Here she implies the power of teachers whose authority students believe they are not supposed to question; at the same time she identifies the limitations of their power without the social control of assessment. Assessment is one of the few weapons available to teachers. Grades function like wages for work, as an incentive for effort. "Grades are the major institutionalized variable of the college campus. As the institutionalized scarce variable of the community, grades come to be a measure of personal worth, both to others and to one's self, just as money does in the larger society" (Becker *et al*.,., 1968:55).

As grades function as a kind of currency, they affect the relationship between students and teachers just as wages dictate employer - worker relationships. In a survey conducted amongst the college's staff and students (Munro, 1983), teachers consistently played down the importance of assessment and grades; they placed much more emphasis on personal counselling and individual welfare matters. Student views were in stark contrast to the staff perspective, with students rating assessment and grades high in importance, and counselling/welfare matters low. Students are realistic about teacher expectations. While teachers try to soften the concept of assessment with the language of - 'negotiation', 'learning contracts' and so on - students know they have to meet deadlines, attend class, be punctual and perform according to the 'contract':"...To do well in college, one must have the qualities students attribute to adults: the ability to manage time and effort efficiently and wisely, to meet responsibilities to other people and to the organizations one belongs to, and to cope successfully with the work one is assigned" (Becker *et al.*, 1968: 31).

At this level, students see little difference between work at school and in the workplace:

Is school work like real work?

(After a long pause) - "Yeah, you're expected to be there" (Sally, Year 12).

What does it take to be successful on work experience?

> "Willing to take orders and listening to what they ask you to do" (Sue, Year 12).

Isn't that just like school?

> "Probably, but there's less pressure at college, but on work experience you're trying to impress them for a job whereas at school it all seems so far away" (Sue, Year 12, in a hotel kitchen).

On a different level, as Sue remarks, there is no immediate pressure to perform at college. It is, as many students report, a 'relaxed atmosphere'.

Relationships are crucial in influencing a student's work performance. They typically prefer a 'relaxed atmosphere' whether at school or at work. Authoritarianism is rejected at college and unwillingly tolerated in the workplace. Friendly relationships are part of the college ethos and students are on first name terms with teachers:

How do bosses compare with teachers?

> "Teachers are much easier to get along with because they're friendly and you're in a relaxed relationship" (Samantha, Year 11).

The friendly, informal use of first names was singled out by a home science teacher as a dilemma for students and employers in the food industry. She pointed out how college does not prepare students for the authoritarian atmosphere of the big kitchens. Ex-students have told her how head chefs prefer to recruit non-college students who are younger and more subservient:

> "They now realize that people who have been through college don't work well in saying Mr whoever or Mrs whoever, and you have to be really subordinate when you go into it; it's really strict and disciplined."

College, on the other hand, is relaxed and informal. Teachers believe the most important objectives for the college are those concerned with caring and personal development, rather than performance (Munro, 1983:14). The home science teacher points to the contradictions students encounter at work:

> "We try to build them up at college, but they don't get much encouragement at work - they're slapped down there!"

The interviews suggest that most students are not work-shy either at school or in the workplace. Furthermore, they respond well to fair treatment. Several work experience students like Milly (French embassy), Jane (theatre), Nelly (public service), Murray (tourist bureau) and Max (secondary school) all mentioned working long hours or through lunch breaks because the work had to be done. These students, as well as others, cheerfully worked beyond the call of duty because they were treated with respect. In the context of a discussion on this point, one of the students told how a woman friend, a night cleaner arrives at work as late as possible and leaves as early as possible.

> "As soon as 5.30 comes round, she gets this feeling of dread. All the cleaners feel the same way. They all get out of the building dead on 10 pm."

One of their complaints was being sexually harassed by the boss. The complaint was 'laughed off' by the female employment officer.

Students are therefore aware of what relationships at work and school ought to be. As we have seen in Chapter 7, many have experienced the stigma and conflict associated with deadend jobs in the part-time labour market.

As a trolley boy, Milo was at the mercy of his boss's whims:

> "I had a bloke down at the (shop) - it's the only reason I quit - he was um - well - he wasn't much older than me but he was pretty high up - he's been working' there a long time and treating' me like rubbish. I just confronted him one day and quit" (Milo, in Munro,1983).

No work experience student, either in the 21 interviews or in the video interviews complained of unreasonable treatment commonly experienced in part-time jobs. Nor did anyone report unsatisfactory relationships with teachers. There were two exceptions which applied to boys who had transferred from Catholic high schools to the college. They complained of the authoritarianism of dominant teachers in relation to homework and assignments. At his Catholic high school, Michael said he was always in trouble for not doing homework and assignments. After a poor performance in the first term tests at college, he realized that no one would make him do the work. As a result, he has turned over a new leaf:

> "I've already completed an assignment that's not due in for another nine weeks!"

Theory versus Practice

While college is preferable to both government and non-government high schools for most students, the week on work experience was generally rated more enjoyable and more 'relevant' than college. Students typically define the difference as one between 'theory and practice.' Here are Michael's perceptions:

What was the best thing you did on work experience?

> "Pulling apart alternators, really interesting work. The whole operation of the electrical work of a car is really interesting".

Do you do this at college in motor technology?

> "You learn about it, but you don't actually do it on the car itself" (Michael, Year 11).

He explains how the class learns about batteries, the theory behind them, but not how to pull them apart, which he believes is the best way to learn about them. Michael's emphasis on needing to know 'the whole operation' would be acknowledged by motor technology teachers; in the classroom, however, the instruction would come across as dry theory.

One of the video interviewees distinguished between theory (classroom, pen and paper) and practice (seeing places, explaining and fixing):

> "The main difference was like on work experience you got to see places and you weren't stuck in like one classroom with a pen and paper and all you do is write theory .... someone will always be there to explain what computers do, what he's trying to fix or ...." (Valerie, Year 10, electronics workshop).

This was a common perception of students, that school was theory and work was practice. It was described in different ways by Murray and Gary:

> "You do something, it's not just sitting down. You don't get bored!" (Murray, travel agent).

Gary finds motor technology at college difficult and not like the work in the auto workshop:

> "The theory side is pretty hard. In first term we just did all theory work, no practical work at all."

What do you mean by theory?

> "Just writing, just listening."

Didn't that help when you were on work experience?

"Yeah" (without conviction).

What did you like about the week's work experience?

"Pulling down machines, not writing about them. It's a lot easier to understand. Pulling down a machine yourself is satisfying and enjoyable because you learn about the machine, how it works and things like that."

His motor technology teacher describes him as 'a lower ability kid, very shy of written work':

"He handed in an assignment (checking the mark sheet) and got 24 out of 30. He did quite well but only got half marks for the first test and 4 out of 30 in the second test. He just didn't do it, but you can't tell me that's an accurate reflection of his ability."

Gary ended up with a D (the second lowest grade) for the term, despite his good attendance and interest in the subject. Like many non-academic students, the teacher explains, Gary's problem is that he is 'work shy'.

The teacher sees the problem in terms of Gary's poor academic performance (work shy), not as Gary himself suggests, as a question of relevance: 'Pulling, down machines not writing about them' is what distinguishes work (practice) from school (theory).

Yet the motor technology teacher sees it differently again:

"I'd be disappointed if having been out in the workplace, they don't come back to college and see a bit more relevance in what they're doing at College."

Do you realize that several students can't see the link between the subject at school and what happens at work?

"In motor technology there's a direct relevance. It's fundamentally obvious!"

[During the interview with the teacher, I was conscious of the large sign on his office door: *This department functions on courtesy and good manners!]*.

Relevance

Gary and his teacher are probably both right. The teacher can see the relevance of school work to workplace practice, but the student cannot. Significantly, several students could see no connection between school work and work during work experience, even in placements where a direct link could be expected. Hugh, for example, could see no connection working in a media resources workshop with what he does in media studies at college. After some discussion, Hugh acknowledged a possible connection between *Writing 1* and script writing in the media unit, but was not at all convinced that *Media Studies* at college had anything to do with what media people actually do, namely filming and making videos:

> "With *Television 2,* it's mainly theory, just listening to him sorta talk away and then you've gotta watch videos and describe characters but not much filming .... because the school can't afford the proper equipment."

Even for a home science student, work in a kitchen was largely unrelated, but not necessarily irrelevant:

How does home science compare with what you did in the kitchen?

> "In home science we had to look up various recipes whereas on work experience we saw some of the things being prepared."

Was the kitchen work relevant to the theory work in home science?

> "Not a lot.... what we did was mainly just preparing vegetables but we know how to do that anyway. They just showed you what they wanted and you just copied back. But what you do in class is what nutrients are in this, what minerals in that, but you wouldn't actually need to know that unless you were in a higher position" (Sue, Year 12).

A revealing difference in the cognitive domain between school and work was noted by Yolanda who described her work in the theatre thus:

> "It was a lot of intense thinking rather than logical thinking we do at school - lots of psychological stuff..."

'Intense thinking' really means talking about things that are meaningful to the students or are real problems that have to be solved. While school work can often engage students in this way (for example, in literature), the issues often lack spontaneity and immediacy, and hence become trivialised in the stilted atmosphere of the classroom. They become important only if they appear on test papers, as Nelly's teacher explains below.

Teachers are at pains to differentiate between specific vocational education (skill) and general education (principles). They believe the latter is what a college education ought to be about. Nelly's business studies teacher visited her during her work experience as an accountant in the public service. The teacher, who describes Nelly as 'a very logical person and therefore well suited to accountancy' sees at least one source of conflict between learning at school and at work. She explains how business studies at college is about 'principles, general concepts and theories' which lose their relevance if not encountered by students during work experience:

> "Nelly has been on about this since she came back from the public service. She's always asking 'what's the relevance of this and that' and wants to know if it's going to be assessed. I can see a real problem here. Kids don't

see the point of learning anything that is either not going to be assessed or they think has nothing to do with practice" (Business studies teacher).

'Relevance' is defined by students in different ways. For students like Michael, Valerie, Murray, Gary, Hugh and Nelly, it has a specific, practical meaning. Others, like the business studies and industrial arts teachers, define it more broadly as does Roberta:

"Everything is relevant in its own way - how to learn, how to study, how to understand concepts" (in Munro, 1983:51).

Diane, like Sue, sees school work as unrelated to work, but not irrelevant:

"A lot of work we do in school is unrelated to what we do at work but you've got to know it".

Mandy's point of view is different again:

"Kids with clear goals are more motivated and see their subjects as an investment for the future".

Non-academic students are more likely not to see the point of most college subjects, even when the link with work is 'fundamentally obvious'. For them, 'relevance' is for now, not for an unspecified time in the future. Ann's experience as a youth worker illustrates this. She worked 'non-stop' on the 'Sunship Earth' project with sixth graders teaching them about the earth:

"I learnt heaps about the soil and the environment."

Do you think you should have done geology or geography at college?

"No. I think it was just right. It wasn't one subject, trying to force you to learn that one subject; it was learning everything - gently..."

It was integrated?

"Yes, it was good. I got no briefing so it was a real learning experience."

Map reading, finding one's way along bush tracks, reading the soil and so on, were all relevant because they were 'real learning experiences' to Ann. In a geography class at school she would see them as dry abstractions, unrelated and irrelevant to her life.

Murray's experiences in two different workplaces illustrate how the 'relevance' of school subjects can be imaginary or real. After a lot of thought and a little tongue-in-cheek, Murray is able to compare school subject skills with his work at the tourist bureau. He was required to speak properly (English), mount a window display (art) and issue tickets (maths). He explains that the tickets are issued automatically by computer but some have to be individualized which requires maths skills. He saw more relevance and apparently got greater personal satisfaction working with pre-schoolers during a community involvement program organised by the college:

> "The children (well I don't know how to say this, so it does not sound like I have a big head) the kids loved me and I loved them. The teacher let me help her with art, craft, reading and feeding.... I enjoyed my 40 hours at the creche and learned a lot about children and children's behaviour...." (Written evaluation report).

5. Unpaid and Paid Work Compared

Murray's evaluation was part of a regular Community Involvement course conducted each term as a registered (hobby) course at the college. Apart from Murray, of the eleven Year 12 students in the sample, only Sue has participated in the course. Community Involvement has some of the features of the conventional work experience placements but differs in two important respects. First, community involvement is run for two hours a week over a twelve week period instead of a full week; second, it is assessed and recorded on the students' certificates. In this last respect, it has more status than work experience which is neither part of the regular time-table nor assessed for certificate purposes. If 'being on the time-table' is a measure of a subject's status, work experience ranks low in the college's curriculum. It is essentially an extra-curricular activity, which, like part-time work, is marginal to the real work of the college. It is true that work experience placements are made during the school term, although during a student-free week when teachers have no classes. In this respect, work experience is only marginally more connected to the curriculum than part-time work which is entirely separate. It is nevertheless recognised as a legitimate part of the curriculum. With part-time work, however, there has been virtually no attempt, according to Freedman, "...to utilize the work experience of students finding their own jobs" (1963:512). Twenty-five years after Freedman made this observation, it is still officially sponsored work experience which receives most of the attention in the academic literature. Not surprisingly, teachers also are more positive about sponsored work experience and community involvement placements than about the jobs students find for themselves; however at Stirling College there has been a noticeable change in teacher attitudes since 1982 when the first survey was completed. These changes will be analysed fully in Chapter 9. For the remainder of this chapter, the student perspective on sponsored sponsored compared to paid work will be examined.

During the interviews, the students were asked *-How did work experience compare to your part-time job?*

This was not a question which yielded varied or interesting responses. Only one of the fourteen students with part-time employment saw the job as more challenging and useful than the recent work experience placement. Sally's job at a supermarket was the only one in the sample that could be described as a good job (see 'Sally's good job' in Chapter 7).

Unlike most supermarket jobs, Sally's as a cashier did have a direct link with her ambition to become an accountant. Her tertiary entrance score of 676 (top 7 percent in the ACT) was the highest in the Year 12 sample and she will almost certainly gain entry to any university accountancy course of her choosing. Given her mathematical ability and accountancy aspirations, the work experience placement in a hospital did not turn out to be as useful to her as it was for the rest of the sample.

As we have already seen, students generally were very positive about the vocational knowledge they had acquired during work experience and less enthusiastic about motivational and social-educational outcomes. The reverse is true for part-time work. As part-time jobs are generally perceived as bad jobs, they lack vocational usefulness to students. On the other hand, the jobs score high on motivational and social-educational outcomes, although often in a negative sense. Thus, many part-time workers are motivated to avoid deadend work and aspire to careers in the primary labour market. A typical comment from a female shop assistant:

> "It made me realise that I need something more challenging for myself in a full-time career."

Likewise, even bad jobs can provide good learning experiences. One parent described how his son...

> "...has learnt how to relate to other people in a work environment. He's appreciated what it's like to start at the bottom, because you can't get much lower than a trolley boy, and I think it's all good training" (in Wilson *et al.*., 1986:10).

While it is probably a mistake to believe that what parents, teachers or employers think is good for students is reciprocated by the students themselves, there is ample evidence in the present sample to suggest that part-time work is valued by students for its social-educational potential. Students on work experience remain students, while at work in the supermarket or at McDonald's they have a different status as members of staff. While the jobs may lack vocational relevance, they are closer to the 'real thing' and may have a greater impact on students for this reason. The difference was explained by one student in these terms:

> "When you're on work experience it's just a certain amount of time and it doesn't matter...But when you're working (part-time) you're sort of, you know you have to please the customer and do everything right because you're getting paid for it...You know that you're working there" (Wilson *et al.*, 1986:15).

The fourteen students in the sample, with one exception, were all more enthusiastic about their work experience placements than their part-time jobs. Their enthusiasm can partly be attributed to the timing of the interviews which took place in the fortnight immediately following the week's placements; students were inevitably more disposed to talk positively of good experiences and to remember the good things just after the program ended. By comparison, schoolwork and part-time work were described in more prosaic terms. It was as if the students were comparing the latter with a refreshing holiday experience; they were singularly unimpressed with the prospects of a new term at college. Under such conditions, it is not surprising that work experience in mainly primary jobs should be evaluated more positively than part-time work in secondary jobs. While work experience was a novelty for most of the students, they were blase about their after-school jobs. This is not to say that part-time work is not imporant in the everyday lives of students. As we have alrady noted, part-time work satisfies many of the 'livelihood concerns' identified by Wilson and Wynn (1986): material, social, real world and participatory concerns. It is interesting to speculate on the relevance of paid and unpaid work experience to these categories:

Figure 8.3 Part-time and Sponsored Work Compared

	Ranking of	
Livelihood issues	**Part-time job**	**Sponsored work**
Material concerns	High	Low
Social concerns	High	Low
Real world concerns	High	High
Participatory concerns	High	Low-high

Clearly, Figure 8.3 is highly speculative; nevertheless, it would be difficult to reject the proposition that paid part-time work even in deadend jobs, is more relevant than sponsored work experience to the livelihood concerns of school students. As we have noted in Chapter 7, college students are not engaged in a struggle for livelihood while they are still at college. Only one student in the present study (Gary) and one in the 1982 cohort (Bill) used their earnings to pay for board and lodgings. Yet the experience of working for a boss, for money on a regular basis as an adult worker with set responsibilities does provide students with insights into the realities of a working life. While sponsored work experience teaches students about a specific occupation or workplace, part-time work is a better preparation for the realities of work in general. It is undoubtedly, as suggested in Figure 8.3, a better preparation for 'life'.

As noted in Chapter 7, the class of '82 have all had to struggle to get to where they are today. None of the dozen students followed up five years later, got their present jobs without further study; four of the students are still studying. Most of the sample have worked part-time to support themselves during their studies. Furthermore, part-time work may be more important to low academic achievers than to the so called 'connected' youth, many of whom aspire to tertiary education and professional careers which are completely unrelated to their experience of work on a part-time basis. On the other hand, the 'at risk' students who do not aspire to tertiary study or professional careers are more likely to be able to use their part-time work experience to get their first full-time jobs. Although there is no hard evidence of this in the present study, the fortunes of the class of '82 described in Chapter 7 bear this out.

These students had been selected from a large sample of about 250 students on the basis of their participation in part-time work in 1981-82. The present sample was selected from a much smaller cohort of 45 students who had participated in the sponsored work experience program in early 1988. The work experience students are therefore not as representative of the student body as the part-time workers in the original study. In that study, the 24 studens could be grouped evenly into high and low academic achievers on the basis of their tertiary entrance score. It appears that the Year 12 class of 1988 is atypical. Their tertiary entrance scores and career aspirations are generally higher as shown in Figure 8.4 below.

Figure 8.4 Profile of Year 12 Work Experience Students 1988

	TE Score	PT job	Career Aspirations
Sally	676	Cashier	Accountant
Jane	667	shop-assistant	Stage-management or ANU Arts
Nellie	645	babysitter	Accountant
Milly	641	Video-outlet assistant	Diplomatic Corp
Max	609	shop-assisant	Military
Yolanda	607	Fast-food assistant	Costume designer-theatre
Rita	562	'Check-out chick'	Scientist
Shaun	543	n/a	Nurse
Sue	514	Fast-food assistant	Chef
Murray	n/a	Shop assistant	Public Service
Ann	n/a	Shop assistant	Nanny

For these students, most of whom intend continuing their studies at tertiary level, work experience in primary jobs was more important vocationally than their part-time jobs. This was noticeable in the interviews where much richer data was yielded during the discussion about the sponsored work experience placements. For most of the fourteen students, work experience was enjoyed while their part-time work as well as school work were endured. The former was a novelty while the latter are part of an everyday grind for most college students, particularly Year 12 students in their final year of secondary schooling. More importantly for the present sample, the work experience placements were virtually all in the primary labour market, whereas their part-time jobs were mainly deadend. Despite the apparent irrelevance of the latter to the students' career aspirations, the importance of part-time jobs may lie in their motivational and educational potential.

A final point needs to be made about the employment opportunities available to the two cohorts of ACT school leavers in 1982 and 1988. The unemployment rate for teenagers (15-19 years) and others in the ACT and Australia is shown in Table 8.5 below.

Table 8.5 Unemployment Rate (%) in March 1983 and March 1989 in ACT and Australia

	% of unemployment for:			
	15-19 year olds ACT	15-19 year olds Australia	All ages ACT	All ages Australia
March 1983	25.4	24.3	9.3	10.4
March 1989	16.2	15.3	5.6	6.7

Source:ABS Labour Force Catalogue 6203 adapted.

Whilst the general rate of unemployment in the ACT was lower than the national figure in both years, teenage unemployment was higher in the ACT than in the rest of the country. As argued in Chapter 4, the plight of ACT school leavers merits special attention. In what is essentially a one-company town, the jobs available to Year 12 graduates, particularly the less academically successful, are severely restricted. The struggle to obtain stable, full-time employment by the class of '82 has been described at the beginning of this chapter. One further case study from the class of '88 reveals how the struggle is a feature of post-school life for those in the bottom half.

In the course of writing this chapter, a colleague explained how her 18 year-old son was finding it difficult getting employment now that he had left college. He left at the end of 1988 having completed a tertiary package with a teriary entrance score too low for him to be offered a place at a CAE or university. His employment-job search history reveals how much of a struggle it is for a school leaver in the academic bottom third to find any kind of job in the ACT. Details are set out in Figure 8.5:

Figure 8.5 Rex, Age 18

ACT Year 12 Certificate, 1988, Lake Ginninderra College.

Courses:	English -	T major	Mathematics -	A major
	Legal Studies -	T major	Science -	A major
	Photography -	T major	Motor Technology -	A minor
	Drama -	T minor		

Rank in ACT: Top 70 per cent

Previous Part-time work:

Type of job	Hours per week	length of service
Take away	15/20 hours	12 months
Woolworth	20 hours	15 months
Console operator at service station	30 hours	6 months
Takeaway Chicken Coop	10 hours	3 months

Since leaving school - December 1988 to May 1989

Jobs applied for	How he applied	Response
Commonwealth Bank	In person	Letter said no
St George Building Soc.	In person	Nil
Used car salesman	By phone	Interviewed & phone call to say no.
Waiter/reception Lakeside Hotel	By phone	Interveiwed & still waiting for reply
Porter, Hyatt Hotel	In person	Nil
Computer operator, Fernhill	By letter	Still waiting
ACT Schools Authority, Industrial Arts Assistant	By application	Still waiting
Brickies labourer	In person at 30 or 40 sites.	No work available
Builder's apprentice	By phone	No work
Labourer at CCAE	By letter	Still waiting
Bruce Tafe Trade Assistant at Fyshwick	In person	Temporary job of three weeks.
Building Firm	In person	Finally employed as a labourer.

Rex had three years of part-time work experience averaging just under twenty hours a week. He therefore had little difficulty getting the typical casual work available to school students. As a low academic achiever, his tertiary score precluded him from doing the further study which is now a prerequisite for any kind of decent job. Like hundreds of other school leavers in his position, his only choice was to 'get on his bike' and look for a job. As we can see by his job-searching, he started with white collar work and finally secured an unskilled, blue collar job. Rex considers himself lucky since many of his school friends are still waiting. Many of these ACT school leavers have a Year 12 certificate which they now realise is useless if it does not qualify them for further study. Having a year 12 certificate with a score below the tertiary cut-off point is the fate of about half the Year 12 cohort in Canberra each year. It is these students for whom the competitive academic curriculum of a secondary college is of least practical use. For those who go on to tertiary study, it is at least a necessary credential and a basic preparation for further academic study. For the majority, like Rex, it has prepared them neither for study nor for work. Whether they are destined for further study or not, all students, according to Anderson see education in vocational terms:

> "Whatever their class background and scholastic attainment level, students adopt a vocational viewpoint when evaluating their schooling. They want their schooling to be practical and job-related" (Anderson, 1986:309).

6. Conclusion

Student comments in the present chapter strongly support Anderson's point. Their work experience in the 'real world' doing 'real work' highlighted for students the difference between school and work which they saw in terms of theory versus practice. Most students viewed the week's placement as a form of vocational guidance. Many employers also saw it in vocational terms, that is, as a way of initiating students into the 'realities' (menial work, routine tasks, the authority of bosses, good and bad jobs) of work. For students, school work and work experience (both paid and unpaid), are part of the pre-vocational socialisation process which help shape their career aspirations and expectations. The fact that what students learn in the workplace remains separate from the formal school curriculum has prompted a number of writers to advocate including work experience as the subject of critical reflection in the classroom. This issue is taken up in Appendix VII. The next chapter deals with recent initiatives to vocationalise the curriculum in ACT secondary colleges and elsewhere.

Chapter 9

Curriculum and the World of Work

> "The industry-education nexus is always present but becomes an 'issue' in times of economic recession" (Fiddy, 1983:7).

1. The College Curriculum

School leavers in the 1980's are confronted with declining full-time employment opportunities in the primary labour market (good jobs) and increasing part-time work in the secondary labour market (bad jobs) characterised by underemployment in the new teenage workplace of the service sector. Whilst youth unemployment has attracted a great deal of attention from academic researchers and educational policy makers, underemployment and its consequences have been almost totally ignored.

As we have seen in Chapter 3, underemployment was considered more of a problem in the 1930's than it is in the 1980's. Chapter 6 outlined the socialising contexts of the teenager's world of work - the home, the school and the workplace, the latter consisting essentially of paid work initiated by the students themselves and the unpaid work sponsored as work experience placements by the students' school. Whilst teenagers have always performed domestic chores at home and scholastic tasks at school, work experience, especially paid work, is a relatively recent phenomenon.

When these two forms of work experience were described in Chapters 7 and 8, the underemployment experienced in the largely secondary labour market contrasted sharply with the potential for high levels of job satisfaction reported by the students in their placements in jobs with good career prospects. The college's formal curriculum reflects these differences between good and bad jobs and between employment and underemployment as shown in Figure 9.1.

Figure 9.1 **Links between the Curriculum and the World of Work**

Good jobs	Bad jobs	No jobs
(Primary jobs)	(Secondary jobs)	
full-time employment	underemployment	unemployment or leisure
further study	service sector jobs	
T courses	A and E courses	R courses

Collins expresses the relationships in Figure 9.1 thus:

> "Education prepares students in the skills necessary for work, and skills are the main determinant of occupational success. That is, the hierarchy of

educational attainment is assumed to be a hierarchy of skills, and the hierarchy of jobs is assumed to be another hierarchy" (1979:7).

Just as students aspire to having good jobs with secure career prospects, so they choose tertiary courses which will give them access to the further study needed to gain entry into the better - paid professions. Secondary college curricula in the ACT are predominantly tertiary-oriented. For example, of the 48 courses taught at Stirling College in 1988-89, 36 are tertiary and 12 are accredited. There are also about 40 registered or hobby courses offered each term. In addition, a small number of the newly conceived E (employment) courses is being developed. With only 12 accredited courses out of a total of 48 courses, 70 per cent of students not destined for tertiary students have their choices effectively restricted to 25 per cent of curricular offerings.

The proposed E courses are unlikely to improve the balance given teacher preference for the higher status tertiary courses and resistance to what they see as a trend towards vocationalism. A similar situation exists in all other ACT secondary colleges although in several colleges E courses are more prominent in the curriculum than they are at Stirling College. In their curricular offerings, there is little variation from one college to another. Most offer an unbalanced mix of tertiary and accredited courses in the ratio of about three to one and all students seeking tertiary entrance are required to take three tertiary courses to every two non-tertiary courses in their two year course package. In this way, secondary colleges favour the academic student and function as matriculation colleges for the top 30 per cent who commence tertiary studies after Year 12. (Note: In 1984, about 32 per cent of ACT Year 12 graduates continued their studies at Universities or CAE's; for Stirling College, the participation rate was only 22 per cent).[11]

As the majority of Year 12 students do not matriculate, the Year 12 certificate has little value, particularly if the student has completed tertiary courses. Such courses are defined as having 'a high level of conceptualisation' by their developers and are usually thought of by teachers as being beyond the reach of the non-academic student. College teachers typically describe courses on calculus, Shakespeare or organic chemistry as too difficult for the average (non-academic) student. Non-tertiary accredited courses in woodwork, typing and basic English and mathematics for example, are perceived as more relevant to the 'needs and interests' of such students. Students, however, are unable and unwilling to see enrolment in non-tertiary courses as in their best interests. First, they are unable to take non-tertiary courses because there are relatively few offered and second, students are unwilling to start courses which they believe have low status in the college curriculum. Whereas T courses provide access to further study and good jobs, non-T courses are perceived as offering access to jobs in the secondary labour market, or in the case of R (hobby or leisure) courses, as preparation for leisure. In this way, the curriculum corresponds to the 'world of work' as shown in figure 9.1 and as argued in a recent Marxist work:

"The reproduction of educated workers means that at each educational level appropriate skills, attitudes, behaviours, and expectations are inculcated that correspond to a particular level of occupation" (Carnoy and Levin, 1985:62).

2. The E (Employment) Course Initiative

A recent curriculum response in ACT colleges to the declining employment opportunities confronting school leavers in the ACT is the E course. As already mentioned, these employment-oriented courses are relatively few in number although several colleges, including Stirling College, are in the process of developing them. What is important about E courses, is the way they have found their way into the college curriculum, despite much resistance from teachers and parents who see the concept as a form of narrow vocationalism (Green, 1988) and as having an unsound philosophical base (Board Minutes, 1988).

The idea for E courses came early in 1988 from the newly appointed Chief Education Officer, who in his first newsletter of the year, explained what he called the 'general ideology' behind the concept. It was, he argued, a 'response to Australia's present economic situation' and an attempt to 'raise the overall empowerment through education of every child' (Willmot, Feb 1988). Elsewhere in the newsletter, the CEO pointed to a problem (challenge to him) facing ACT Colleges which E courses might alleviate - a 90 per cent student retention to Year 12. This meant, he wrote, "...that our secondary schools will no longer be concerned with offering students only preparation for higher education". In a later newsletter, the CEO argued that E courses would offer "...a better and more empowering introduction to the world of work...." (Willmot, Dec 1988). In that document, the E course was defined for the first time as:

"... an accredited Year 11/12 course designed to provide the knowledge and skills relevant to a particular area of employment."

The newsletter went on to suggest that E courses were likely to be concentrated in the quartenary and quinary industries and refers to courses being developed in tourism, computing, hospitality, child care, technical drawing, information management, design/craft and business management. [The list does not include, prostitution, massage parlours, gambling and so on, which Jones (1982:145) cites as examples of 'bad services' in these industries] . Teachers have criticised even the 'good services' in hospitality and tourism promoted in E courses as inappropriate in a secondary college; college teachers see them as employment-oriented courses conventionally associated with TAFE. The CEO has acknowledged that E courses constitute a TAFE curriculum but 'are clearly embedded in Year 11/12 pedagogy' (Willmot, 1988).

The ACT Teachers' Federation initially opposed the introduction of E courses and the drift towards vocationalism in ACT public education which they represented. It devoted two editions of its journal to a lengthy refutation of E course ideology by one of its members who attacked E courses as 'outrageously deceiving' because they would not provide jobs as their name implied. "Now , the so-called non - academic students, about 70 per cent of those at college, will have something that offers them pathways (to the future)" but in fact "...will narrow further the options available to students" (Green,1988). Green suggests that E courses and the drift towards vocationalism represent the ACT Schools Authority's response to the increased retention of students to Year 12. Until the advent of the E course, "...the great deception of colleges...has been to cater for the 30 percent who might enter tertiary institutions" (Green, 1988). Now, the non-academic majority of 70 per cent has increased in real numbers to a point where they cannot be ignored; hence, the development of vocational courses to cater for these students.

This appears to be the thinking behind the push to vocationalise the curriculum. Tertiary (T) courses will attract the top 30 per cent of college students who aspire to tertiary study and careers in the primary labour market, while accredited (A) and employment (E) courses will cater to the non-academic majority destined for the world of work. It is here that the 'pathways' come to a deadend since many of the initial entry jobs traditionally available as initial employment to school leavers have disappeared (see Chapter 4). It is not surprising that the main focus for E course development has been the hospitality and tourism industry. Several colleges have written and are teaching E courses in bar-tending, catering and restaurant service, all of which are amongst the lowest status jobs in the service sector. As noted in Chapter 4, the underemployment experienced in these jobs offer a stark contrast to the advantages and life chances of the good jobs that have disappeared since the collapse of the school to work transition. It was this deficiency that prompted one Stirling College Board member to warn that it would be "...a cruel deception for this college or any other, to offer a range of certificate generating E courses to students in the expectation that successful completion will lead to employment" (Board Minutes, May 1988).

Teacher opposition to E courses was inevitable, given the way the ACTSA attempted to impose them on colleges ,and its failure to provide a convincing theoretical or philosophical basis. College teachers have indicated their continued opposition to what they consider to be a half-baked idea emanating from one source, the CEO, Eric Willmot. ACT teachers have flippantly christened E courses 'Eric' courses after their founder and have generally not jumped on this recent bandwagon. Most Stirling College teachers are opposed to them and only one course (Small Business Management) will be adopted from another college in 1989 as part of the curriculum. If they do not support the concept in practice, do they at least support it in principle? A staff survey early in 1989 asked this question and yielded the following response: Yes 9; No 22; Unsure 7; No answer 6; (total 44). Other responses revealed strong resistance from teachers against what they perceive as an attempt to vocationalise the curriculum (as the CEO stated - a Tafe curriculum embedded in a Year 11/12 pedagogy). Slightly less than a quarter of the staff surveyed are planning to develop E courses or are willing to include 'work/employment' concepts or a careers/skills component in their existing courses. Whilst teachers agree that their teaching subjects could be more employment

- oriented, they are reluctant to vocationalise the curriculum any further. This is shown in Table 9.1.

Table 9.1 Teacher views on employment -oriented subjects (n=44)

QUESTIONS	RESPONSE YES	NO	UNSURE	NO
Is your subject employment-oriented ie, relevant to a particular area of employment?	21	11	4	8
Should it be more so?	6	21	4	13
Could it be more so?	19	11	2	12

Because teachers in secondary colleges write their own courses, they are inclined to develop a feeling of ownership and control over course content. They are therefore reluctant to submit to pressure from various lobby groups (eg. multiculturalism, language across the curriculum, health education and in this case, world of work advocates) to include their particular concepts in their courses. In reply to the above questions, the English faculty provided a written response, which in part read:

> "We are gravely concerned that pressures to 'vocationalise' *our* (emphasis added) curriculum could lead to the development of band - aid work experience components ... without regard to the integrity of those courses".

Apart from the ownership issue, these teachers are critical of offering work - focused units masquerading as English units. Here they are condemning the bandwagon motives of such courses as well as the superficial (band - aid) treatment of student work experience which does not address fundamental questions like unemployment, technological and social change, gender equity, and other issues pertinent to the world of work. The English teachers, like the rest of the Stirling College staff, are not opposed to making the curriculum more relevant to the world of work; they are however reluctant to embrace ideas (like E courses) which are imposed from outside the college and which appear to have no sound educational or theoretical basis.

3. Teacher Views on Student Work Experience

The hasty and clumsy attempt to introduce E courses by the ACTSA has had an unintended and positive effect on other areas of the curriculum which have hitherto been relatively marginalised by teachers, namely career education and work experience, including both naturally occurring jobs and sponsored placements. In 1982, Stirling College staff revealed less enthusiasm for combining school and work than they did in 1989. In the early survey, teachers indicated that they were opposed to a work - oriented curriculum and were suspicious of employer-led attempts to compel "...the education system to provide 'factory fodder' or 'labour input' to the employer" (Gutman, 1982 :63). In the 1989 survey, teachers rejected their employer's E course initiative, but not the concept of linking school with the world of work. Whilst they are opposed to the narrow vocationalism represented by E courses, they are more favourably disposed towards conventional work experience activities than they were in 1982. This is shown in Table 9.2

Table 9.2 Teacher support for students working part-time.

	1982	1989
	%	%
Support for students working in part-time jobs.	87	93
Support for changing the timetable to allow student to get to work on time.	50	77

In the first survey, teachers had little interest in and less knowledge of what students experienced in their part-time jobs. The general impression was that part-time work had negative consequences for a student's school work. In the 1989 survey, more than three-quarters of the Stirling College staff claimed that they either did not know of any effect (40 per cent) or that there was no effect (35 per cent) on a student's school performance as a consequence of working part-time. Whilst these results are similar to the 1982 findings, the present staff are generally much more supportive of students working part-time. Many see paid part-time work as more useful to students than either sponsored work experience or the college's curriculum in learning about the world of work. Table 9.3 illustrates this belief:

Table 9.3 Teacher views about the value of part-time work

	%
Students learn more about the world of work in	
paid part time jobs	57
on work experience	37
at college	6
total	100
Overall, the effect of student involvement in part-time employment is	
positive	47
negative	14
neutral	20
don't know	19
total	100
The positive outcomes are associated with	
social skills	16
job skills	16
getting a full-time job	15
the work ethic	13
career knowledge	12
adolescent social life	11
five other items combined	17
total	100
The negative outcomes are associated with	
class attendance	22
study habits	18
homework	27
term grades	8
extra-curricular activities	25
Total	100

Although teachers believe part-time employment is more useful to students than work experience in learning about work, the latter is valued more for its educational potential. As shown in Figure 9.3 the negative outcomes of students working part-time are associated predominantly with schooling. When extra-curricular activities are not counted, there is only a minority of teachers (16 per cent) who see part-time work as having a positive effect on school performance; 33 per cent believe the effects are neutral, 26 per cent say they don't know and 25 per cent believe the effects are negative. These findings probably explain why teachers are unwilling to utilize student-initiated work experience in the curriculum (Freedman, 1963). In the present survey, for example, only 57 percent of respondents favoured class discussion of part-time work compared to 86 per cent for sponsored work experience. The latter is accepted almost universally by teachers as a legitimate part of the curriculum; for example, 39 of the 44 respondents supported the principle of a one-week block release and all but one of these supported the idea of briefing and debriefing students before and after their placements. The support appears to be in principle only, as only two-thirds of the respondents were prepared to spend class time discussing or evaluating the students' experiences.

Furthermore, teachers expressed a general lack of confidence in their ability to advise students about careers and work experience. Exactly half the sample felt confident to give advice on careers (28 per cent) and work experience(22 per cent), while the remaining half did not. Most of the latter believed that careers advice should be given by the careers adviser, a staff member engaged full-time for this purpose. On the other hand, only a small minority of teachers believed that the world of work (eg. work study, work preparation, work experience) should remain entirely separate from the curriculum. Just over 60 per cent of respondents wanted such topics integrated in the curriculum.

Since very few suggestions were made in the open-ended question as to how integration might be achieved, the issue was followed up at a subsequent staff meeting. Small groups discussed and reported back on topics such as integrating work experience in the curriculum, evaluating work experience (including part-time work) and ways to enhance student employability. This latter theme was used as the basis for further discussion by staff which yielded a number of practical suggestions for integrating world of work activities in the curriculum. These will be discussed in Appendix VII.

In the present thesis, the perspectives of employers, parents and students, as well as teachers, were sought about 'world of work' issues. Space does not permit a full description of the findings. These are included in Appendices III and IV of the thesis. In brief, the conclusion is that there is general agreement between employers and parents, students and teachers on the inclusion of 'the world of work' in the curriculum. Most will agree with Wilson and Wyn that:

"...the desire amongst young people themselves to achieve a livelihood means that schooling will continue to have marginal credibility, as long as it is seen to have only marginal relevance to the world of work. It is appropriate, perhaps even necessary, to explore a new form of curriculum which takes work in all its forms as the basis for the development of knowledge...and skills..." (1987:118).

4 . The Needs of Students

Evans and Poole (1987) studied the concerns of a large number of Australian adolescents and found that they were most concerned with jobs (37 per cent), and education or education hurdles (28 per cent). The authors believe that education and jobs are viewed as instrumental in achieving a sense of control over oneself. The authors have attempted a classification of life skill areas in which social relationships, personal development and career skills were central. Personal skills, autonomy and self-development were regarded by the respondents as the most necessary life skills. On the basis of these findings, the authors recommend the integration of life skills in the curriculum at a time when many writers have condemned their incorporation into British education. For example, Atkinson *et al.,*. argue that social and life skills embody the classic approach to social 'pathology', a tendency to blame the victim (1982:122).

Similarly, Gleeson outlines the narrowness of 'SLS' (social and life skills) training which " emphasises individual adaption and survival: society as such is not thrown open to question other than in the narrowest of terms" (1985:65). The CCCS goes further and claims that curriculum initiatives such as SLS are attempts to impose a conception of skill based on appropriate social dispositions on schools and colleges (CCCS1981:145). Whilst SLS training does not play a major part in the curriculum of Australian schools, conventional work experience is frequently used to introduce students to the 'realities' of the workplace. Work experience, both paid and sponsored, is seen by teachers, students, parents and employers as a good preparation for life. In this, they are similar to SLS and various life skills and survival courses designed to make schooling more relevant. How then do students experience the realities of work during their exposure to paid and sponsored work experience?

Students and the Realities of the Workplace

"Work-experience conveys the ideology that through certain rational and 'scientific' procedures, taken for granted and natural in the workplace, students will achieve their best possible life outcomes" (Watkins 1982:275). The reality of menial work in many jobs was put by a number of employers in the present thesis:

"Kids who won't clean floors are sent back to school" (Theatre manager).

"(Kids) should work and don't play games....because if they wanna play games they can do that at school" (car wrecker manager).

Students accept these realities without question:

What does it take to be successful on work experience?

> "...being punctual, showing that you're interested in what you're doing and asking questions" (Rita, Year 12).
>
> "Willing to take orders and listening to what they ask you to do....you're trying to impress them for a job...." (Sue, Year 12).

Students quickly learn the right way to behave:

> "If the boss tells me to do something, then I have to get it right the first time" (Kim, shop assistant).
>
> "...you have to do the job right, otherwise you get the sack" (James, video interviews).

Watkins points out that students on work experience "take on the posture of idealised workers who do not question (the way things are)"(1982:262). The main effect was therefore to reinforce the dominant hegemony of the workplace (Watkins:1982:252) or in simple language, the 'realities of the workplace'. As Stronach has argued in Britain, work experience under the MSC represents "a massive state intervention in (youth) socialization" (1984:60).

Students and 'Job Skills'

A second reason for the push behind school-work programs according to Simon is the need to have students develop 'general work attitudes and skills appropriate to the realities of the workplace. Simon argues that these general skills are part of the new vocationalism which, in the face of widespread deskilling, has given new meaning to the concept of 'social skills'. These have been variously termed 'life skills', 'job skills', 'human relations skills' 'coping' or 'life management skills' and 'social and life skills'. They include 'skills' like the ability to get along with one another, the ability to keep smiling in adversity and other behaviours required of workers in the personality market (see Chapter 4). What is disturbing about these meanings argues Simon, is the way they have been mystified into the realm of 'skills'. He refers to the work of Gintes and Bowles (1975), who identified five personal attributes that enhanced an individual's ability to gain employment. These included 'productive affective personality traits', 'proper self-presentation' as well as a number of ascriptive traits. These were said to be part of the hidden curriculum of schools; Simon notes that a decade later schools have become responsible for inculcating 'productive affective personality traits' and 'proper self-presentation' (1983:239). Such traits are no longer hidden and are seen as part of the preparation of students for the 'realities of the workplace', for work in the new teenage workplace of the personality market.

Gleeson has also argued that behavioural objectives associated with life skills training, once part of the hidden curriculum, have now surfaced as *the* curriculum (1986:382). He examines the 'official' thinking behind life skills training and concludes that its ideological significance is that it projects the learner as a flexible entity, capable of being employed or re-employed in a variety of jobs or settings (1986:389). The MSC places much emphasis on what Gleeson (1989) calls 'the politics of personal effectiveness', which is no more than learning to 'be polite and helpful', to 'behave in the right way' and to 'resist provocation'. Life skills of this kind are social skills of the most pedestrian kind and while Gleeson believes they are unrelated to productive work, they are in fact the 'basic skills' required in the new teenage workplace.

How far schools actually promote the values of the personality market will be examined later. For the moment, an attempt will be made to assess what 'job skills' students acquire during work experience. A distinction needs to be made from the outset between paid and unpaid work experience. In their paid, part-time jobs students work for money and expect little else. As indicated in Chapter 7, students exposed to work in the predominantly secondary labour market learn how to survive the effects of stigma, conflict and job dissatisfaction. Typical responses to the question '*what have you learnt from the job?*' include:

> "Part-time work has made me more cynical; it's exposed me to a lot more, to a lot of different people" (in a newsagent).
>
> "You learn a lot about yourself and other people...You find out how you get on with others and about self-discipline" (in the army reserve).

People-handling skills are the skills which students typically learn in their part-time jobs. Skills are confined strictly to the affective domain and it is rare to find any opportunities for cognitive skill development in such jobs.

Just as it would be unreasonable to expect that work in the personality market of supermarkets and fast food outlets would develop anything other than people-handling skills, it would be a reasonable expectation to suppose that unpaid work experience in the primary labour market would offer much more in the way of job skills. In the present sample, students did in fact rate vocational outcomes as the most important outcome during their week's placement. A list of what students mentioned as job skills they acquired during the work experience placement was extracted from the field transcripts. The column on the left in Figure 9.2 are skills which could conceivably be taught at school; those in the column on the right are more likely to be found in the workplace.

Figure 9.2 Job skills acquired on Work Experience

Mental	**Unique to the workplace**
Explain maths to children Write a film script Understand the environment Set up a cross-country race Think intensely Write a nutrition assignment	Fill in for an absent accountant Contact sponsors
Manual	**Manual**
Process negatives Cut meat in different ways Prepare flowers for a display Help the lab assistants Pull down machines Prepare a meal for the staff Use the telephone properly	Make beds Confirm a number of bookings Make splints for people with RSI
Miscellaneous	**Miscellaneous**
Wait around a lot Fill up time	Do things voluntarily

Students were not asked to list specific job skills but rather to respond in their own way to the question - '*Did you learn anything worthwhile?* (Prompted with - '*knowledge, skills, insights?'*) In most cases the 21 items listed above were the first-mentioned examples given; in some cases they were the only job skills referred to. What is important is that all 21 students could name something they did on work experience that for them represented worthwhile learning. The items have been further subdivided into crude mental/manual categories. Most of the skills could be taught within various subjects at college while those which would normally be learnt in the workplace are predominantly manual job skills.

Looked at in this way, work experience placements appear to offer fewer unique opportunities for learning job skills than the classroom. Here the students would disagree. For example, to them, the miscellaneous items in both columns would be more tolerable at the workplace than at school since the novelty of the former more than compensates for the boredom of just 'waiting around, filling up time'. Listening to a very pedestrian lecture on map reading by an army officer, held much more interest for Jenny (video interviews) than if it had been given by an enthusiastic geography teacher at school. Apart from the novelty of the setting (an army classroom), the lecture is directly related to their daily routine in the field and is not perceived, as lessons usually are, as divorced from the real world.

For these reasons, the examples listed in both columns can be defined as job skills only within the workplace context; 'making a bed' for John has a different meaning if it is to be performed at his own home or in a hospital or hotel during work experience. While many of these tasks, whether performed at work or at school, appear mundane to adults, students define them as real work. Their social construction of work is shaped by the opportunities available to them to develop skills irrespective of how trivial they may be to others.

The Social Construction of Skill

How skills are socially constructed depends on the strength of unions, the power of employers, the power of government and the lack of strength of groups unrepresented in these structures (Pocock, 1988: XII-XIII). Underemployment provides an incentive for the social construction of skill at its most ludicrous. For example, Wellman describes how containerization has deskilled US dock workers to the point where 'mental work' has become more important than physical labour. The mental work involves knowing the etiquette of the workplace. "Knowledge of informal etiquette is absolutely essential for working on the waterfront" (Wellman, 1986:166). These skills include 'doing the right thing', 'working right' and 'watching the game' where workers signal one another under noisy conditions without attracting the attention of supervisors. Here is an example of where an endangered species of workers fights to survive by constructing a new definition of skill in the face of massive deskilling of their traditional craft.

Braverman (1974) recognised the phenomenon by pointing to the classifications of skill which indicate that the proportion of workers called skilled or semi-skilled has grown since the turn of the century suggesting a massive upgrading of the workforce when in fact workers required less skill and knowledge to perform the work. O'Donnell believes that the social construction of skill occurs typically in men's work "...in the context of the industrial ability of male workers to forge job classifications which represent differences in pay, conditions and status" (1984: 20). There are numerous examples of how work done predominantly by women has been defined as unskilled, while similar work employing mainly men, rates as more skilled (eg. dressmaker/tailor; child attendant/car attendant). Whilst male workers have been more active in defining skill to their advantage than female workers, there are some recent indications of a peculiarly female construction of skill (see Hochschild's (1983) thesis on 'emotional labour' described in Chapter 4).

More important than worker initiatives to maintain skill levels, is the power of employers, industry and education authorities to determine what skills workers will need and how they will be rewarded. According to the CCCS (1981), a new definition of skill, 'generic' skills, has become the catchcry of the new social pedagogy of British schools. If school leavers cannot be guaranteed jobs, they will have to be prepared for the nothingness of unemployment or the meaninglessness of underemployment or enforced leisure. In the absence of any need for traditional technical skills, social skills become dominant in the workplace and are eventually reproduced in the classroom. How industry, government and education structures collude in redefining the skills requirements of school leavers is discussed below.

5. What Employers Want

As one British study argued, the needs of industry' cannot be easily identified as the 'requirements of capital' as there are many different, co-existing capitals (CCCS 1981:21). Jamieson recognised this difficulty in trying to describe the schools-industry movement in Britain in the 1980's. He notes how the movement has attempted to promote certain skills, attitudes and knowledge inside the school system which are designed to change the education system in one way or another. Skills, he argues, are not skills at all, but either attitudes or knowledge known as 'social and life skills' (1985:27). According to Jamieson, these include the attitude of young people towards work and employment and knowledge of the reward structure of industry. The latter encompass a heterogeneous collection of social and life skills - presenting well at interviews, listening to and following instructions and interpersonal skills in the workplace.

What industry needs and wants, therefore, are good workers, flexible, obedient, submissive and with 'a willingness to carry out mundane tasks' (Williams, 1979: Vol 1:109). Social life skills (SLS) training and its various derivatives are designed to produce workers for the fast-growing service sector described earlier in Chapter 4. Cohen has analysed what this means for British school leavers: "(For) youth labour is now to be socialised in and through the discipline of impression management.... Training in so called SLS is essentially training in behavioural etiquettes...." (1984:114). This kind of pre-vocational socialisation also occurs in general subjects, an example of which was found in a Queensland text book used by girls studying commercial studies:

> "The art of good grooming may be rated on a par with the basic skills of a good secretary".

The book also advises the girls to be uncritical of their bosses:

> "Naturally, you will not point out his mistakes...Don't stare when he stops to collect his thoughts; keep your eyes on your notebook" (quoted by Taylor, 1984:10)

These kinds of etiquettes are still featured in commercial studies textbooks used widely in Australian secondary schools. The *Australian Standard Typing* (1989) for example, contains several extracts similar to those quoted by Taylor. The book is used at Stirling College and the secretarial studies teachers are aware of the hidden messages but believe they do not have the time to discuss the extracts with their classes. One teacher believed that the students do actually internalise the messages because they are only involved in passively typing the scripts.

Whilst personal appearance and deportment have been associated with typing and shorthand classes for decades, Wringe argues that the new vocational skills are penetrating every classroom. The skills are not saleable or transferable skills, but rather about personal and social characteristics such as grooming, punctuality and cooperativeness. Industry, he writes, requires docile workers and a workforce that is "...increasingly flexible and tolerant of boring and tedious activities" (Wringe,1988:59). While being punctual, tidy and respectful might be a common requirement of a large number of different occupations and therefore generic rather than specific skills, they are, according to Wringe, "... highly specific to a particular *level* of employment, namely the lowest, and for this reason may act as a barrier to pupils' mobility or the adoption of more elevated ambitions" (1988:67). It is for this reason, he notes, that most economically successful people in society acquired limited vocational skills but a good, general educational background. Vocational skills are good enough for other people's children, but not for those who pay for their offsprings' private education.

Efforts to vocationalise the curriculum in many countries are based on the underemployment problems of school leavers. Referring to the vocationalising of education at an international level, Lauglo and Lillis argue that vocational policies are designed to help school leavers obtain a livelihood as well as to become more productive in the work obtained. But they add: " Behind this rationale lie strong political instructions to use vocationalised programs as a means of lowering occupational aspirations to more 'realistic' levels as well as to meet lower-level manpower needs (Lauglo and Lillis,1988:9). Trends towards vocationalising the curriculum have been comprehensively reported in Britain (cf the MSC) and in the United States (cf CETE). There is also increasing evidence of similar developments in Australia, particularly in the ACT. These are discussed below.

Interpersonal Skills in the Workplace

In Australia, White has pointed to the current notion of skill which requires workers to be flexible, adaptable and disciplined. "Increasingly general 'transferable skills' are being linked to training based upon particular concepts of 'employability' relating to the personal attributes of the young person, rather than to specific industrial skills" (White,1989:11). White argues that ATS participants are mainly concentrated in clerical, office and retail work where this kind of training is emphasised. The 'skills' are 'impression management' and 'personality development' which stress the teaching of self-control and the regulation of one's public behaviour as an essential feature of one's skill enhancement (1989:12). Interpersonal skills are now explicitly linked to employability in the service sector.

The National Training Council (NTC) of Australia believes that interpersonal skills training should begin in the secondary school "...as part of the general move in society for schools to be more occupationally oriented...." (NTC 1986:141). The Council studied customer service requirements in three employment areas - finance, government, tourism and leisure. The last mentioned is of most interest in the present study since it is the hospitality industry that is touted as an employment growth area for ACT school leavers. The jobs included in this category by the NTC included: accommodation, hospitality, transport, travel agents, entertainment and recreation. The skills required for good client service were an appropriate attitude and empathy towards clients as well as "courtesy, warmth and friendliness" (1986:85). The report cites a British study of waiters in prestigious hotels which suggests the kind of 'servility' that is required in some of the hospitality occupations: Waiters needed to be "...pleasant, charming, polite and discreet. Others emphasised the need to show respect and play a submissive role" (1986:32).

Roles in the hospitality industry require friendly employees and the report sought to discover through extensive discussions what friendliness actually means in the service sector. Two behaviours were identified to describe a friendly employee - (a) smiling at, and (b) talking with customers- "Friendliness was behaviourally defined with emphasis on smiling and employees practised smiling in the mirror and with each other. It was then suggested that each employee smile at least four times when taking an order from a customer..." (1986:32).

Apart from the ability to be able to smile, the jobs require few other skills. In the 34 jobs in finance, tourism and government, more than half were said by employees to lack power of any kind and only two required high levels of expertise. Tourism was the most unskilled with a 3 to 1 ratio of low-skilled to medium-skilled jobs (1986: Table 6:47). There seems to be little demand made on workers in the personality market apart from the emotional labour involved in the 'keep smiling' requirement. School leavers with a Year 12 certificate would have every right to question a system which offers these kinds of jobs as an attractive destination after twelve years of schooling. It is for this reason that the E course initiative has been opposed by ACT college teachers. School-industry links are another example of attempts to make schools more relevant to the world of work.

The Culture of Service

Spring has questioned the 'new partnership' between business and schools in the USA and asks whose interests does the partnership serve? He cites several case studies of school-industry links most of which serve the interests of capital. In Boston, for example, "the school system seems primarily designed to prepare students for fast food chains and other service industries" (Spring,1972:249). Other program organisers freely admit using the school system to train students for local employers. Spring questions the morality of allowing companies to use school time and resources "to socialize students to their particular corporate values" (1972:252). This kind of ideological penetration is described in 'McDonald's in the classroom' (Appendix I). As explained in Appendix I, McDonald's management has convinced at least some Australian academics that its 'corporate culture' is a worthy model for Australian secondary schools. If students are alienated at school, the argument goes, then identify what keeps them hopping in Hamburger Heaven and apply it to the classroom.

Watkins argues how the recognition of worker alienation is likely to lead to "...the fostering of a work culture where the beliefs and goals engendered within an organisation can be internalised by the employees" (1988:72). McDonald's promotion of its corporate culture is an example of how the fast food giant seeks to 'McDonaldise' its crew members.

Coincidentally, the ACTSA's recent touting of a 'culture of service' came immediately after a major restructure of the profession caused a drop in teacher morale. The language of this particular ideology mirrors the world of small business: "... an increasing commitment to the notion of the customer-driven organisation.... As for service, when I use this term I do not mean 'servility'. Service is about the provision of intangible products in general, about delivery, responsiveness, empathy and relationships" (Sawatzki, 1989).

The 'culture of service' as defined by the Assistant CEO is about '*shared values and beliefs'*. Again, the language is reminiscent of McDonald's corporate culture in what is described as a customer-driven education system:

> "We need to...develop customer-friendly systems; recruit, hire, train and promote for service; market service to customers and employers; measure service, give feedback; reward good performance..." (Sawatzki,1989).

If a culture of service is to be the new watchword for ACT teachers, it is a logical extension of this ideology to promote E courses in the service sector, particularly hospitality and tourism, but also in supermarkets and fast-food outlets.

6. Conclusion

As we have seen in this chapter, teachers reject the narrow vocationalism of such courses. An unintended consequence of the E course proposal has been to create the climate for a more favourable attitude towards work experience (both paid and unpaid) within a work education curriculum. Parents, employers and students are in favour of a curriculum which teaches skills relating to post-school employment. The difficulty for teachers is to distinguish between really useful skills and activities which trivialise skills. The construction of 'productive affective personality traits' as 'skills' needed by industry highlights the nature of work in which these skills are necessary. Interpersonal and social skills are the 'people-handling' skills required of workers in the personality market of the service sector, which as we have seen in Chapter 4, is characterised by deskilling and underemployment. The recent promotion of a 'culture of service' in the ACT school system can be viewed as part of the impression management now required for success in the service industries.

It would be a parody of education if these practices were to be reinforced in secondary colleges. Teachers generally agree that E courses, particularly in the service sector represent a devaluing of educational currency. It is for this reason that these issues, as well as the first-hand experiences of student-workers need to become the subject of critical analysis within a work education curriculum. Gaskell has also argued that vocationalism has to be made visible so that the vocational logic of shooling can be integrated within a broad approach to learning. She sees this as a challenge to Canadian education (1987:271). It is no less of a challenge to Australian educators and policy-makers. Some suggestions as to how a work education curriculum might be developed are included in Appendix VII. The final chapter sums up the main findings of the thesis.

Chapter 10

Conclusion

Thesis Summary and Findings

The thesis began by identifying the collapse of the school to work transition as a major social problem for youth and society in the late 1980s. The social, political, educational and theoretical implications of the collapse were then described and the approaches taken in the thesis outlined. Educational responses to the collapse of the transition were critiqued in a review of the literature which dealt with three main topics - work preparation, work experience and work education. Various theoretical orientations relating to these three topics were explained. 'Liberal vocationalism' (or as teachers prefer, *work education*) was suggested as the most appropriate orientation for schools with Year 11-12 students to take, in dealing with the consequences of the transition's collapse.

The most important effect of the collapse has been the reduction of full-time employment opportunities for school leavers during the past two decades. For many young people, this means either unemployment or underemployment in deadend jobs. Underemployment was considered as a greater social problem in the 1930s than it is in the 1980s, although the nature of work in the new teenage workplace today, can be compared to the blind-alley jobs that were the destiny of youth during the Great Depression. Many of the official responses to the 'boy problem' of the 1930s have been recycled to bolster the collapse of the transition in the 1980s. The politics of retention, various forms of vocationalism and a return to the 'basics' are examples of supply-side solutions sought in both eras. These are politically more expedient than demand-side solutions which might conflict with powerful economic interest groups in industry and business. Inflated credentials are now demanded for even ordinary jobs in what is today, an employer's market.

Statistical and ethnographic data were used to describe the nature of work in the new teenage workplace of the 1980s. Teenagers are the natural proletariat for deskilled work in the 'personality market' of the service sector, where the 'skills' are about people-handling, impression management and emotional labour. School students are largely unaware of the decline in full-time employment opportunities for work in the primary sector; they continue to have 'career' aspirations which are shaped by families, peers, school and work experience in both paid and unpaid jobs. The latter are particularly important in exposing students to the difference between good and bad jobs. As shown in the student interviews, and in the two detailed case studies (see Appendix VI), students define success in life largely in employment terms.

The ethnographic data show how students' self concepts are not purely subjective constructs, but develop out of their experiences within objective structures. That is, employment opportunities available to young people, together with the subjective valuations of their competence by significant others, determine their ambitions. As Wright *et al.*, correctly note, "this internalised view of both the social reality and of self has enormous power to shape the individual, his (sic) aspirations and expectations (1978:105).

Having a good job is a high priority for both boys and girls; having a job while still at college is also important. While financial independence is the main reason students give for working part-time, the part-time job has a significance beyond the immediacy of the cash nexus. The growth in part-time work has been the fastest growing employment indicator in Australia since the 1970s and is one of the key indicators of the collapse of the school to work transition for school leavers. For school students, having a part-time job represents an early initiation into the realities of the workplace. Although part-time employment satisfies livelihood concerns more than unpaid, sponsored work experience, students see their jobs in supermarkets and fast-food outlets as strictly temporary. Part-time work in deadend jobs is tolerated while it is temporary, but is rejected as a permanent occupational destination. For about 30 per cent of ACT school leavers, access to further study at the tertiary level allows them to bypass underemployment in the secondary labour market. Work experience provides these students with strong vocational incentives to aspire to careers in the primary market.

For the 70 per cent who are not destined for tertiary study, work experience also provides these kinds of incentives. Many of these students, however, like the class of '82, will experience, as an alternative to unemployment, underemployment in deadend jobs when they first leave college. Rex's story at the end of Chapter 8 is a graphic illustration of this reality. Students like Rex are largely unaware of the collapse of the transition to entry-level jobs after Year 12. Unemployment was never mentioned by any of the students in the sample, although many were conscious of what underemployment means. Exposure to good jobs in work experience placements and bad jobs in part-time work highlighted for students the meaninglessness of most jobs in the service sector and the desirability of having a career which provides 'daily meaning' as well as 'daily bread'. Working in good jobs in their work experience placements performed a crucial vocational guidance function for most of the 21 students. But if restricted to guidance and motivation alone, the educational potential of work experience is wasted.

The thesis advocates the incorporation of work experience (both paid and unpaid) in the curriculum, so that the experiences of the students themselves can be the subject of critical analysis. It is clear that education cannot create jobs, nor can schools improve the quality of work available to school leavers. What schools can do, is to prepare students more effectively for the realities of work by teaching them **about** work within a work education framework. It has been argued in the thesis that liberal vocationalism provides the theoretical justification for a work education curriculum. The objective is to liberate students from the present and the particular and to define vocationalism in the broadest possible terms. To paraphrase Gaskell (1987), vocationalism as defined by employers has to be made visible so that the vocational logic of schooling can be analysed within the mainstsream curriculum. Many of the issues raised in the thesis about the collapse of the school to work transition could also be included in a work education curriculum. These include:

- underemployment as well as unemployment;
- the nature of work in the service sector (see Appendix I);
- the development of career preferences and how these are shaped by individual dispositions and social-structural factors external to the individual (see Appendix VI);
- the growth of part-time work and the decline in full-time employment opportunities for 15 to 19 year-olds;
- school work compared to 'real work' in work experience placements and in paid part-time jobs;
- school work as a determinant of academic and occupational success for a minority of students;
- the need to question the redefinition of 'skills' for school students, as vocational/ relevant or academic/irrelevant;
- the nature of work requiring cognitive or affective skills (eg. interpersonal skills) and how this cognitive/affective division is reflected in the curriculum.

For all of these topics, the perspectives of students, teachers, parents and employers will need to be considered. The thesis has investigated these perspectives and has reported them at various points in the text as well as in Appendices: I and IV (students), III (parents), and IV (teachers). Employer perspectives are compared to parent views in Appendix VII. How the world of work is experienced and constructed by the students must form the basis for any work education curriculum based on the liberal vocational approach advocated in the thesis. Such an approach will not affect the economic and structural changes that have brought about the collapse of the transition, but it will provide a better balance of the 'liberal' and the 'vocational' in the school/work couplet.

NOTES

1. Japanese Industrial Relations, series 7, 1981:31 quoted by Wellington p37. 'Skills for the future?' in Maurice Holt (ed.). *Skills and Vocationalism: The Easy Answer,* Open University Press, Milton Keynes, 1987.

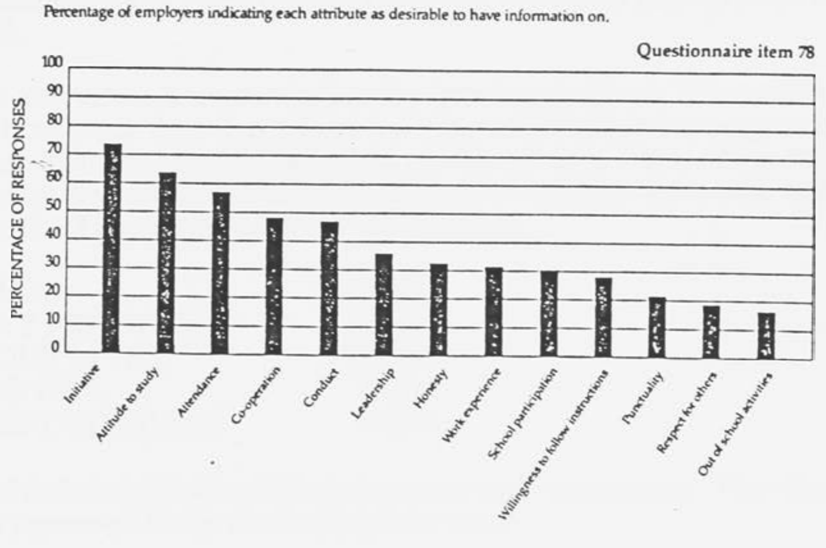
2. The Scope (1987) survey, for example, shows that Year 12 students discuss their future first with family and friends, and then with teachers and careers advisers. Their preferences are as follows-

Family	(95 per cent)
Friends	(90 per cent)
Teachers	(52 per cent)
Careers Advisers	(50 per cent)

3. Every government secondary college in the ACT has one full-time careers adviser in addition to a counsellor. Government high schools typically have a part-time careers adviser who devotes half of his or her teaching time to the role. The ACTSA also employs a full-time senior careers co-ordinator who is responsible for liaising with school staff. Whilst these staffing provisions are not especially generous, they have at least been relatively secure in a climate of general resource cutbacks in schools and colleges.

4. The thirteeen attributes are shown below. The graph comes from *Documents for School Leavers: What Employers Want* (1987), NSW Department of Education and NSW Employers' Consortium, Sydney.

Diagram 5.12:



5. For Greenberger and Steinberg, the social and psychological costs are highest for students who have an extensive time commitment (20 hours or more per week) to their jobs. While this is the norm for American teenagers, it is rare for their Australian counterparts. For example, in the ACT, less than five per cent of college students with jobs work more than 20 hours a week (Scope 1986). The norm, 8 to 10 hours a week, is unlikely to have the dire consequences which may come about with intensive involvement. As already noted, the literature on student work experience, both paid and unpaid, is sparse. The present thesis is an attempt to contribute to the empirical literature in this field (see chapters 7 and 8).

6. Cumming (1987a:107) has described the consensus between educators and employers as follows:

Shared Expectations of School Leavers Held by Employers and Eductors

Attitudes	**Attributes**	**Knowledge**	**Skills**
Motivation	Responsibility	Work - Occupational	Basic
Cooperation	Adaptability	Work - General	Problem solving
	Flexibility		Decision making
	Independence		Learning to learn

Clearly, it is easy to be sceptical of such lists. For example, what do the attributes really mean? 'Independence' of the kind encouraged in the socially - critical school might not be welcome by employers who probably define the word as 'the ability to work without supervision'. Nevertheless, most teachers and employers in the present study would agree, that students would be more employable, if they were able to demonstrate these particular attitudes, skills and understandings.

7. This incident actually happened to a friend of the researcher's with whom this section of the thesis was discussed.

8. Film Australia was commissioned by the ACTSA to produce a film about students on work experience. In the unedited version, about 20 hours of filming showed students from various ACT high schools and colleges in a variety of workplaces. As the film was meant for public relations purposes, some of the 'embarrassing' sequences were edited out in the 15 minute final product. Some of the expurgated sequences proved to be the most useful for the thesis.

9. After the interviews were conducted, I asked forty students in two sociology classes to write down how much time they spend watching television, what programs they watched and what they thought the main characters did for a living. Most of the students watched television every day; viewing ranged from 1 to 72 hours per week with an average of 16 hours per week. The most popular programs were:

NEIGHBOURS	24 fans
A COUNTRY PRACTICE	17 fans
DAYS OF OUR LIVES	10 fans
RICHMOND HILL	9 fans
THE COMEDY COMPANY	6 fans

Students had little trouble identifying characters and occupations. The most common occupations presented in the above programs were:

BABYSITTER/NANNY	11
STUDENT	11
MECHANIC/ENGINEER	10
GARDENER	9
FEMALE DOCTOR	9

Many of the remaining jobs were in the service sector - barmaid, coffee shop owner, waitress, handyman, hotel manager and stripper.

10. A Stirling College Certificate was introduced as an incentive to students who did not receive a 'tertiary entrance package'. The prerequisites were less stringent than for the latter. Staff voted in 1983 to discontinue awarding the certificate as they believed it was a meaningless piece of paper.

11. Estimated from Survey of 1984 Year 12 leavers in Canberra, conducted by the Research, Statistics and Social Projects Branch, Commonwealth Department of Education and reported in the Canberra Times, p. 7 on 17 May, 1986.

12. The epigraph comes from Gramsci's 'The school compared to the factory' in *Sotto la Mole* , 1960 : 239 and is quoted by Entwistle, 1979:153. It is perhaps not surprising that Gramsci was an opponent of work experience for school students as he himself was a victim of child labour. After leaving school in the fifth grade, he was forced to work ten hours a day lugging register books in the local lands office, an occupation which adversely affected his physical and emotional strength. Gramsci would also no doubt be critical of school students having part-time jobs, as he himself was a victim of a part-time babysitter's negligence. He was disabled as an infant when the young girl sent to babysit him , dropped him down a flight of stairs.

APPENDIX I

McDonald's in the Classroom

In an article entitled 'Is McDonald's a better place to work than school?' the authors suggest that McDonald's has more appeal to teenagers than school. The results of 140 questionnaires completed by students working in McDonald's restaurants in Sydney and Albury revealed that part-time workers held very favourable views about the company in terms of management, training, work-group relations and personal growth. The authors noted that managers sought to enhance young people's sense of responsibility, affiliation and status and that the workers' lives were changed by working for the company. The most important areas of change are set out in Table I.I:

Table I.I Response of Student Part-Time Staff Working at McDonald's (N=140) % indicating a change for the better as a result of working at McDonald's

Areas of Change	%
The amount of money available for spending	87
Understanding of the world of work	86
Ability to work in a team	81
Ability to communicate	81
Willingness to try new things	77
Self confidence	75
Social life	69

Source: Adapted from Hill *et. al.*, 1987:3 Table 1.

In 11 of the 17 areas mentioned in the survey, more than half of the sample believed their lives had been changed for the better. A minority of students reported detrimental effects of working in McDonald's in attitude to school (19%) and school achievement (17%). The alienation said to be rampant in many schools is clearly absent in McDonald's.

Burger Workers

A small sample of students working in McDonald's in Canberra (referred to here as Big Mac) was used as a basis for comparison with the larger sample from Sydney and Albury. Because McDonald's are virtually identical from store to store across the country, similar results could be expected from Canberra students. In general, the four students interviewed (informally on tape) were positive about their work experience. All four said that their co-workers were helpful, friendly and worked as a team. They believed that management is competent and that the customers get value for money. With the exception of the one male student, they saw Big Mac as a good place to work: the physical surroundings are pleasant and job security and promotion prospects are also seen to be good. The three girls also believed the job offers opportunity for independence and variety. Joseph was the only student who was critical of the firm. For him, the job is uninteresting and not worth doing: he saw his job in the kitchen as dangerous and a hazard to the workers' health. The girls, Beckie, Kate and Renate all said working for Big Mac was glamorous and interesting. The girls worked on the counter and enjoyed the customer contact and high profile of being 'up front'.

The indifferent worker

As the 'odd man out', Joseph is an interesting case of a highly talented individual in a job well below his capabilities. With a tertiary entrance score of 748, he was ranked in the top .44 per cent of all year 12 ACT students in 1987, averaging 95 in his courses - mathematics (double major), computing studies (major), chemistry (major), physics (major) and English (minor). Joseph also won the college's academic prize for the best results in the year; his score was the highest in the college's ten year history. Teachers speak admiringly of his academic ability. He is said to absorb information quickly (intelligent) but contributes little to the enhancement of the class (competitive rather than cooperative), qualities that are probably a disadvantage in the fast-food world. Big Mac is for Joseph a way of earning money during his 5 to 6 hours a week on the job. The work is irrelevant to his studies and career aspirations in computing. He is indifferent to the job, but not unhappy. He believes the kitchen work is what he does best as he lacks the confidence for counter work.

Dealing with customers up front is what the girls do best. Boys apparently make better cooks: ' There's not many girls that know grill!' was Renate's way of explaining the division of labour at Big Mac's.

The three female workers were united in their approval of Big Mac but have different levels of commitment to the firm. Commitment appears to be influenced, as in Joseph's case, by success at college rather than number of hours worked. The girls' degree of attachment to Big Mac is described below.

The Gregarious Worker

Beckie has been with Big Mac for more than two years working between 10 and 15 hours a week. It is a job she likes very much:

> 'There's a lot of people our age we can meet...and the crew outings are lots of fun'.

To Beckie, the job offers more than money. She likes meeting people and especially enjoys the youthful atmosphere in the store where some 170 students are rostered at various times. Asked what she disliked about Big Mac, she was unable to think of anything, commenting ,'it's a bit more rewarding than say working at Woolies'. She explained that there is a certain amount of glamour associated with working for a big, well-known company. There was no hint of self-doubt in her responses that making hamburgers was a trivial business in the broader scheme of things.

Beckie is an above average student. With a tertiary entrance score of 578, she is among the top third of ACT year 12 students. A good all-rounder, she received an average of 70 in major courses in English, mathematics, chemistry, art and minors in physics, textiles and computing studies. In addition to a full load of tertiary accredited subjects, she managed to complete eight hobby courses in her two years at college. Her teachers describe her as 'friendly, courteous and a pleasure to work with' , with one referring to her 'effervescence and generosity in class discussions'. Beckie has the right qualities for work in the personality market: friendly, happy and sociable. She is an attractive girl who needs no training in how to be nice.

Beckie, unlike Joseph is uncritical of Big Mac. Whilst his aspirations and career expectations are very secure, she has some doubts about her abilities. At the time of the interview before the year 12 results were known, she said that she would try and stay on at Big Mac if she was unsuccessful. Her ambition is to be a primary school teacher and to work at McDonald's part-time to help her financially during training. There is every reason to be confident that both Joseph and Beckie will achieve their goals. For them, Big Mac is a half-way house on the road to better things. The remaining Big Mac workers, Renate and Kate, have less secure futures.

The Dedicated Worker

Of the four Hamburger workers Kate is the most dedicated. After only two years employment at Big Mac she has graduated to the ranks of crew trainer, a job, she says that requires her 'to show more authority'. Initiative is needed in the job because, for example, 'you have to know how many fries to have ready'. Kate explained the hierarchy that operates at Big Mac's. At the top is the owner and the first assistant manager who is in charge of about thirty managers rostered for the various shifts. At the bottom are the crew trainers like herself and the crew members like Beckie, Joseph and Renate. Crew trainers are paid slightly more than the average worker who can make about $7 an hour and more for weekend shifts. Kate's presence during the group interview appeared to influence the crew members. They often looked her way when responding to questions and perhaps this partly explains the girls' positive remarks and Joseph's reluctance to say much at all.

Kate is described by teachers as 'serious, dedicated, hard-working, attentive and cooperative', qualities high on the list for success at McDonald's. She is the only student for whom working at Big Mac is more important than school. As a student, she is average, scoring 64 (top 45 per cent at the ACT year 12 cohort) in her tertiary courses. Working at Big Mac as a crew trainer has interested her in a career in business and alone among the four students, she would be prepared to work full-time at McDonald's.

The Happy Worker

Renate has worked for eighteen months at Big Mac and likes the job a lot. She was the only hamburger worker who found working for Big Mac more enjoyable than college. Although she believes college is more important, Renate is the least academic of the students and did not qualify for a tertiary package. Her scores in two tertiary courses - mathematics major (61) and textiles major (67) - are unspectacular. Her teachers describe her as 'pleasant and cooperative to work with' as well as 'serious and hard working'. Tagging along with Beckie had got her the job at Big Mac which had now become a better place to be than college. For a girl without any real interest in school, hopping in Hamburger Heaven is a good way to feel you are doing something useful. She clearly enjoys the work and feels important working up front on the counter. Working in the kitchen (a 'man's world' at McDonald's) was referred to with some reverence by Renate who conceded with some conviction: 'there's not many girls that know grill!" Although McDonald's senior management denies there is a deliberate policy of putting girls 'up front' and boys 'out the back', Game and Pringle cite an outlet manager who clearly sees teenagers in stereotyped roles:

> "During a busy period, the young guys like the challenge of running the grill. It's very hot and it needs a lot of coordination. The challenge doesn't appeal so much to the young girls. The young girls tend to be more pleasant and more articulate and are therefore suited to the selling area" (1983:70).

These four case studies generally support the results of the Sydney-Albury survey outlined above but with some important qualifications. In-depth interviews are more revealing than surveys in that they allow the 'silences' as well as what is said to be analysed. Although the sample of four is too small for any useful comparison to be made with the Sydney-Albury survey, the interviews do suggest a number of qualifications to that study. It is true that two of the students perceived work at Big Mac as more enjoyable than school work, although our Dedicated Worker (Kate) was the only one who saw it as more important. For the Happy Worker (Renate) and the Gregarious Worker (Beckie) hopping in Hamburger Heaven was more enjoyable, but not more important than school work. Big Mac offers glamour, atmosphere and fun, which the scholastic life of a school cannot match. It is significant that spending power was rated the most important change in their lives for students working at McDonalds (see Table I.I). Money provides access to glamour and fun which cannot, in the short term at least, be provided by grades for school work.

Most teenagers would agree with Beckie's comment that McDonald's is a better place to work than Woolworth's as attested by the long waiting lists for work at McDonald's. There is much more glamour associated with working for a company that has its own culture which crew members are expected to internalise. Teenagers are McDonalised by training or rap sessions, by wearing a distinctive uniform replete with badges of different statuses and by speaking a special language (eg. fries not chips, cookies not biscuits). Teenagers are easily seduced into becoming McDonald's people as Deirdre Macken (1988) discovered when she enrolled in a burger arts course for trainee managers:

> "...I remember how we all introduced ourselves to the class by stating our first name, our store and length of service with McDonald's.... It occurred to me that the first step to becoming a McDonald's person is to lose your old identity, forget your surname, your background and your old ideas - McDonald's has no room for competing identities".

The worker's first and final impression of the teacher was of an American preacher who believed in the company O & T manual (Operations and Training) as fundamentalists believe in the Bible even if it defied commonsense. Trainee managers become true believers in the serious business of burger-making as Macken discovered:

> "While I was talking to one of the students I made a joke about how McDonald's had made a science out of hamburgers. He replied, 'Everyone thinks McDonald's is easy but it's not. How many people would know about calibrating a shake?' And he told me - dead serious - how to calibrate a milk shake."

Australian teenagers are evidently easily converted to the McDonald's way of life. According to McDonald's Managing Director in Australia:

> "Australian kids are right behind the eight-ball compared with American kids. They aren't self-confident or articulate so we have to train them right from the start and there is criticism of that mainly from people who don't know. Parents always say to us that Bob or Jane has become so self-confident since starting at McDonald's" (as told to Macken, 1988:35).

Macken baulked at the idea of giving Australian teenagers an American identity, suggesting that McDonald's is like an island of American capitalism transplanted into Australian culture. The Managing Director defended the absence of any local culture and the successful avoidance of unions and anti-discrimination bodies:

> "Isn't that the way all companies should be? One of the attributes of a great company is a corporate culture. A strong corporate culture comes from being inward-looking. The other institutions shouldn't be there; we don't believe in bureaucracy"(as told to Macken, 1988:36).

Corporate Culture at McDonald's

It is McDonald's corporate culture which the authors of 'Is McDonald's a better place to work than school?' find so appealing and worthy of emulation by schools.

They suggest that the company's management policy is more successful than schools are in creating a good working environment. They provide a typical corporate statement which they suggest could be used to evaluate a school's success:

Figure I.I Corporate Statement (McDonald's)

The company aims to be a successful business which lives out its concern for the dignity and worth of its members as it pursues profits. To accomplish this, the company will attempt to operate in such a way as to:

(1) accept people as they are,
(2) expect responsible behaviour,
(3) support individuals and personal growth,
(4) assist individuals to develop their competencies,
(5) enlarge the opportunity for the impact of each individual in the company in every practical way,
(6) bend every effort to resolve conflicts through discussions and fair judgment, minimizing arbitrary rules and use of authority.

Source: Hill *et. al.*, 1987:13.

The institutions of school and work are different cultures in that they operate within contrasting ideologies; schools are motivated by a democratic ethos, businesses by an economic ethos (Carnoy and Levin, 1985:4-5). McDonald's makes this explicit in the statement above with reference to its pursuit of profits. It seeks to soften the relentless drive to make money by incorporating educational and democratic values in its corporate statement, some of which lack credibility when measured against what students experience in every day work at Big Mac. A critique of each of the stated goals reveals these contradictions:

(1) ***Accept people as they are*** - this is in line with McDonald's policy of recruiting teenagers, who as argued earlier, have ideal personalities for work in the personality market of the fast-food industry. Thus, accepting teenagers as cheap, enthusiastic, smiling and good-humoured workers is motivated by making money, not by enhancing the dignity and worth of the workers. Yiannis Gabriel's study of the fast food industry in Britain revealed an annual turnover in excess of £100 million out of which workers averaged £1-85 an hour and managers £6,800 to £8,200 a year for an average 65 hours per week. He concluded that "the formidable international success of fast food has been built on the systematic exploitation of teenage labor" (1988:8). A similar 'success' story is told in Australia. In 1987, the turnover for McDonald's alone was $450 million with the average outlet bringing in about $2 million and an annual profit of 15 per cent or $300,000 (*Weekend Australian,* October 8-9, 1988:30).

(2) ***Expect responsible behaviour*** - apart from punctuality, good grooming and the keep-smiling requirement, burger workers have little opportunity to demonstrate any real responsibility. A sophisticated production process that turns out xeroxed hamburgers by the minute, requires only robot-like responsibility. As one burger worker explained:

> "You couldn't do anything by yourself, it was all timed and stuff like that you know. Everything is timed to the second. You have got buzzers when you have got to take hamburgers off, you have to press them when you put them on, and you have a buzzer that tells you when to turn them, when to sear them. All that stuff" (Reeders, 1986:32).

(3) ***Assist individuals to develop their competencies*** - again, these competencies are restricted to the 'skills' of the personality market and are defined by the service ideology as discussed earlier. Natural qualities which teenagers bring to McDonald's - the youthful image, the smile and big sisterish niceness - are commercialized for profit. As noted earlier, managers in the personality market spend a lot of time teaching people how to be nice. "They must master the company smile" (Gabriel, 1988:103). McDonald's appropriates the natural enthusiasm of youth, and youthfulness itself, as competencies (commodities) to be used for profit. The teenagers have skills, the job does not.

(4) ***Enlarge the opportunities for impact of each individual on the company in every practical way*** - it is difficult to imagine that the highly routinized operations of hamburger production could offer burger workers any initiative apart from variations on 'have a good day!' *Time* magazine reported that customers get almost as little discretion as the staff: their burgers come wrapped with premeasured dollops of onions and so on. There is no room for the rugged individualist who wants his 'without'. In the informal discussions with the four Big Mac student-workers, Kate's food science major was seen by her as irrelevant to the job. Reeders also reported on a student with a flair for cooking, a skill made obsolete by McDonald's scientific management (1986:32).

(5) ***Lend every effort to resolve conflicts through discussions and fair judgements, minimizing arbitrary rules and use of authority*** - there is probably less conflict for students at work than at school, particularly regarding authority and rules. The discipline of the wage is usually enough to keep teenagers hopping in Hamburger Heaven. At school, student resistance is far more difficult to control and teachers have less power than McDonald's managers. Students expend more energy trying to please the manager at McDonald's than they do on their school work (Greenberger and Steinberg, 1986:192). Working for a boss is perceived by students as different from working for the teacher:

"Since I've been working I've really had to listen for the first time in my life. If the boss tells me to do something, then I have to get it right the first-time'"(shop assistant in Munro, 1983:51).

In all of the above five goals, McDonald's credibility is open to question. It has been argued that the 'concern for the dignity and worth of members' at McDonald's is motivated by economic, rather than democratic principles. Furthermore, without evaluating schools according to these goals, which would require a separate chapter, it is not too difficult to assert with confidence that an educational institution is more able and likely to strive for such goals than a firm whose business is business. Education has more complex aims which include producing good citizens as well as competent workers. The former is only incidental to the latter in workplaces like McDonald's where the corporate objective is profit. This simple fact needs to be remembered by anyone who asserts that McDonald's is a better place to be than school. (An incident which occurred at the author's own school is instructive here. The school had been plagued by several bomb scares which severely disrupted daily operations when students were evacuated several times in the term. After consultation with staff and students, the Principal decided on the immediate evacuation of the buildings when bomb scares were phoned through. He noted that a large supermarket complex in the local district did not normally evacuate their clients and staff because it would be disastrous for business! The spirit of capitalism in their case took precedence over the democratic ethos).

Whether or not school work or paid work satisfies adult concerns about what is good for students, it is clear that the students themselves value many aspects of their part-time jobs. Working for money in most after-school jobs is likely to yield results similar to those outlined in Table I.I. Getting a job, any job, does give teenagers a feeling of adult status, of being grown up. After-school work provides financial independence, a sense of accomplishment and a degree of self-confidence (Munro, 1983:40). The great advantage of such jobs is that they are typically self-initiated rather than officially organised by adults. Reeders suggests that organising students' experience of work would undermine precisely what it is that teenagers themselves value about it (1986:34). Whether working for McDonald's or a supermarket chain, teenage jobs are unskilled and marginal. Because they are performed part-time and provide immediate benefits of money, independence and in the case of McDonald's, a certain amount of glamour, they are important in the lives of students. In a study of 24 part-time workers, for example, twenty-one said their jobs were important to very important; only one believed it was unimportant (Munro, 1983:39).

APPENDIX II

Profile of 21 Students

Work experience (W.E) students without a part-time job (PTJ)

Females		Males	
Gemma	Year 11, 16 yrs	Shaun	Year 12, 17yrs
Y.O.B.	1972.	Y.O.B.	1971
Mother	office worker	Mother	home duties
Father	community welfare officer	Father	maintenance engineer
W.E. site	solicitor's office	W.E. site	hospital
Future Career	lawyer	Future career	nurse
Samantha	Year 11, 16 yrs	Lee	Year 11, 15 yrs
Y.O.B.	1972	Y.O.B.	1972
Mother	real estate agent	mother	home duties
Father	computer consultant	Father	public servant
W. E. site	photography lab.	W.E. site	primary school
Future career	fashion photographer	Future career	primary school teacher
Mandy	Year 11, 16 yrs	Hugh	Year 11, 16 yrs
Y.O.B.	1971	Y.O.B.	1971
Mother	part-time shop assistant	Mother	secondary teacher
Father	senior technical officer	Father	taxi owner-driver
W.E. site	nursery	W.E. site	media production unit
Future career	horticulturalist	Future career	media work.
Christine	Year 11, 16 yrs		
Y.O.B.	1971		
Mother	school lab. assistant		
Father	customs officer		
W.E. site	travel agency		
Future career	airline stewardess		

Work experience students who previously held a part-time job (PTJ) for less than 10 hrs/week.

Nellie	Year 12, 17yrs	Ivan	Year 11, 16 yrs
Y.O.B.	1971	Y.O.B.	1971
Mother	public servant	Mother	home duties
Father	senior police officer	Father	pipe layer
W.E. site	public service	W.E. site	community club kitchen
PTJ	private babysitter	PTJ	cook, kitchen hand
Future career	accountant	Future career	chef
Ann	Year 12, 18 yrs	Murray	Year 12, 17 yrs
Y.O.B.	1969	Y.O.B.	1970
Mother	relief primary teacher	Mother	cleaner
Father	scientist	Father	plasterer
W.E. site	youth camp	W.E. site	tourist bureau
PTJ	speciality shop assistant	PTJ	shop assistant
Future career	nanny	Future career	tourism
Rita	Year 12, 18 yrs		
Y.O.B.	1969		
Mother	public servant		
Father	retired public servant		
W.E. site	science laboratory		
PTJ	'check-out chick'		
Future career	science degree or public servant.		
Milly	Year 12, 17 yrs		
Y.O.B	1970		
Mother	office secretary		
Father	senior computer analyst		
W.E. site	French embassy		
PTJ	video outlet		
Future career	diplomatic corps		
Jane	Year, 12, 17 yrs		
Y.O.B.	1971		
Mother	relief primary teacher		
Father	scientist		
W.E. site	theatre company		
PTJ	speciality shop assistant		
Future career	stage manager, acting		

Work experience students presently holding a part-time job (PTJ) for 10 or more hours a week

Females		Males	
Yolanda	Year 12, 17 yrs	Gary	Year 11, 16 yrs
Y.O.B.	1970	Y.O.B.	1972
Mother	secretary	Mother	cook/cleaner
Father	police officer	Father	incapacitated truck driver
W.E site	theatre company	W.E. site	auto workshop
PTJ	fast-food outlet	PTJ	milkrun
Future career	theatre costume design	Future career	mechanic
Sally	Year 12, 17 yrs	Max	Year 12, 17 yrs
Y.O.B	1970	Y.O.B.	1971
Mother	primary teacher	Mother	home duties
Father	primary teacher	Father	public servant
W.E. site	hospital	W.E. site	secondary school
PTJ	clerical assistant	PTJ	shop assistant/ supervisor
Future career	accountant	Future career	officer - armed services
Diane	Year 11, 16 yrs	Michael	Year 11, 17 yrs
Y.O.B.	1971	Y.O.B.	1970
Mother	primary teacher	Mother	receptionist
Father	primary teacher	Father	manager-landscape
supplies			
W.E. site	hospital	W.E. site	auto workshop
PTJ	'check-out-chick'	PTJ	fast-food outlet
Future career	occupational therapist	Future career	sound mixer
Sue	Year 12, 17yrs		
YOB	1970		
Mother	public servant		
Father	night-watchman		
W.E. site	hotel kitchen		
PTJ	*fast-food outlet		
Future career	chef		

*Sue did not have a part-time job at the time of the interview. She was included in the list because she was the only student in the sample with extensive part-time work of more than 20 hours per week.

APPENDIX III

Parent Survey (n = 353)

SURVEY WITH TOTAL RESPONSES SHOWN (in brackets)

Part 1 - Aims

How would you rank these goals for secondary education?
1 for most important through to 10 for least important:

Students at College ought to learn about:
Ranking

4	work and career choices (1358)
1	general academic subjects (1083)
3	thinking/problem-solving skills (1142)
2	basic skills (e.g. the 3Rs) (1129)
6	social skills (2213)
5	vocational skills - practical (1955)
7	coping with authority (2339)
9	health matters e.g. sex education (2543)
10	standards of deportment/manners (2801)
8	vocational skills - theoretical (2349)

Part 2 - Subjects

Please rank 1 - 7 in order of importance the following subjects which you believe ought to be included in the curriculum of the future:

% support	
4	Art (88)
8	Biological Sciences (e.g. Bology) (196)
6	Commerce (e.g. Business Studies) (134)
12	Computing Studies (290)
1	Drama (28)
15	English (347)
4	Foreign Languages (e.g. Italian, French) (101)
8	Industrial Arts (including Motor Technology) (182)
3	Leisure (e.g. hobby, recreational courses) (58)
15	Mathematics (342)
9	Physical Sciences (e.g. Chemistry) (219)
5	Recreational Studies (e.g. Physical Education) (114)
9	Social Sciences (e.g. Geography/History) (199)
1	Other (13)
(100%)	

Part 3 - Curriculum Emphases

Rank the following in order of importance 1 most important through to 7 for least important.

Question: In my opinion, students ought to concentrate on:
Ranking

2 Skills, knowledge and techniques for the practice of a future job (927)
3 Development of self-confidence and self-awareness (1023)
1 The ability to read, write and use numbers (732)
4 Learning about the world, career opportunities and job-seeking skills (1305)
5 How one can make a worthwhile contribution to one's community in the future (1741)
7 Learning about the values and practices of people from different social and cultural backgrounds (2013)
6 Fitting in to the present-day societies (1862)

CURRICULUM AND WORK SURVEY

Appendix IV(STAFF)

As part of the preparation for the next Staff Meeting, staff are asked to complete this Survey by marking the boxes and writing any comments in the spaces provided.

The questions relate to career education, work experience, part-time work and 'E' courses and are generally about Curriculum and the World of Work.

Total no =44

	Question	YES	NO	UNSURE
1.	Do you support the principle of work experience (1 week block release during the assessment period) at the College?	39	3	
2.	Do you think work experience in a related area improves a student's performance in your teaching subject?	22	4	18
3.	Is it feasible to integrate work experience (i.e., appropriate to the subject - architect's office/tech drawing class) in your teaching area?	29	11	
4.	Would you be prepared to spend class time briefing students before they go on work experience?	22	12	
5.	Would you be prepared to spend class time discussing/ evaluating their work experience after they return to College?	27	12	
6.	Do you support in principle the idea of briefing and debriefing students before and after work experience?	38	0	
7.	Do you support the present arrangements for career education at the College? (i.e., 1 full-time careers adviser)	36	3	

8. Would you feel more qualified advising students in your Advisory Group

ON	12	Careers
OR	9	Work Experience
	21	Neither

9. What role do you see the careers adviser performing? (List three of the most important tasks):

A. __________

B. __________

C. __________

10. Do you agree with the practice of students working in part-time jobs while still at College?

strongly disagree	disagree	agree	strongly agree
0	3	31	10

11. Do you believe that the typical part-time job on Friday night/Saturday morning affects student performance in your subjects?

good effect	bad effect	no effect	don't know
6	3	14	16

12. Do you support the half-hour lunch period and 3.30 p.m. finish on Fridays to allow students to get to work on time?

YES	NO
34	6

13. Do you think students learn more about the world of work in

29	their paid part-time jobs
OR	
19	on a work experience placement
OR	
3	at College

14. Do you believe that student involvement in part-time employment (on average 10 hours a week) has a positive or negative or neutral effect on the following:

	POSITIVE	NEGATIVE	NEUTRAL	DON'T KNOW
class attendance	5	11	13	8
study habits	8	9	11	10
homework	6	13	11	8
term grades	5	4	14	12
extra-curricular activities	7	12	6	13
the work ethic	25	1	5	8
getting a full-time job	30	0	3	5
adolescent social life	22	4	7	6
social skills	32	0	3	3
career knowledge	24	2	9	4
job skills	31	1	3	1
Total	194	57	85	78

		YES	NO
15.	Would you like to see more class discussion of what students experience in their part-time jobs?	24	16
16.	Is your subject employment-oriented i.e., relevant to a particular area of employment?	21	11
	Should it be more so	YES 6	NO 21
	Could it be more so	YES 19	NO 11
17.	Do you propose writing your courses to include 'work/employment' concepts (e.g., a careers or skills component) for the next accreditation period?	YES 7	NO 31
18.	Do you plan to develop an 'E' course in your faculty for the next accrediation period?	YES 5	NO 32
19.	Do you support in principle the present concept of 'E' courses as outlined in last year's ACTSA policy document?	YES 9	NO 22

20. Do you believe that the 'world of work' (e.g., work study, preparation, work experience) should be:

27	integrated in the curriculum
3	entirely separate from the curriculum
10	other ______________________

ANY ADDITIONAL COMMENTS:

APPENDIX V

Students

Interview Schedule

1. **Introduction**

   Explain the purpose of the interview and why I would like to tape it.

2. **Personal**

   . can you tell me something about yourself -
   . hobbies, interests, brothers, sisters and so on?

3. **Family**

   . Do you live at home with both parents?
   . Who works full-time in your family?
   . What do they do?
   . Where do they work?
   . Do you get any ideas on what you'd like to do after college from family members?
   . Do you do any domestic chores at home? (Voluntarily or for money?)

4. **College**

   . What do you like/dislike about college?
   . Generally, are you glad you went on to college?
   . Are you planning to complete Year 12?
   . Do you get enough homework to do?
   . How do you find the school work - interesting, boring?
   . Do you think school work is like real work?
   . How did it compare with work experience?
   . Were any of your subjects relevant to what you were doing on work experience?
   . What do you think it takes to be successful at college?
   . What does being successful in life mean to you? (means, goals, barriers?)

5. **Work experience placement**

   . Can you tell me about your recent work experience placement?
   . Where did you work?
   . What did you do?
   . How did you like it?
   . Was it challenging? (mentally, physically?)
   . How were your co-workers?
   . How was the boss/supervisor?
   . How did the staff get along with the boss?
   . Did you notice any conflicts?
   . Did you experience any conflicts?
   . Did you learn anything worthwhile - skills, knowledge, insights?
   . Did you work mainly alone or with others?
   . Were you able to use your initiative at all?
   . What was the most memorable thing about the week?
   . Did the week help you make up your mind about your future employment/study plans?
   . What does it take to be successful on work experience.

6. **Future work**

. What are your career plans for the future?
. Do you expect to achieve them?
. What do you want out of a full-time job?
. What would be the most important thing to you in a full-time job?
. Do you see any barriers to achieving your career goals? (General unemployment, shortage of good jobs?)
. Do you think you'll have to work or study hard to be successful?

Note: Find out if the student has a paid, part-time job.

7. **Part-time jobs**

. Could you tell me about your involvement in part-time work this year?
. Where do you work now?
. What do you do?
. How many hours a week do you work?
. What do you earn?
. What do you spend your money on?
. Do you have enough money usually?
. Would you like more? Why?
. How do you like working there?
. Is the work challenging?
. What are your co-workers/boss like to get al,ong with?
. How does the staff get along with the boss? (Conflicts?)
. Have you had any conflicts there?
. Have you learnt anything worthwhile from working there? (Knowledge, skills, insights).
. Do you mainly work alone or with others?
. Are you able to use your initiative at work?
. Do you have any real responsibilities - or do you just do what you're told?
. Would you like more responsibility?
. How does part-time work compare with school work? (More enjoyable/important?)
. Are your school subjects relevant in any way to what you do there?
. Do you think working part-time affects your school work? (good or bad?)
. Do you find you ever miss classes or assignments because of your job?
. Do you think you get paid enough for what you do?
. Would you consider doing similar work full-time?
. Has the job helped you make up your mind about future work?
. How did work experience compare to your job?
. What do you think it takes to be successful in a part-time job?

APPENDIX VI

Meeting Two Students

Shaun* - Year (17 years)

Father:	maintenance technician
Mother:	home duties
Work Experience:	nurse
Part-time job:	none, but looking
Career aspirations:	nurse or ambulance worker
Courses:	Tertiary majors in English, Maths 2, Human Biology, Physics, Human Movement and a tertiary minor in Chemistry.
TE score:	543
ACT ranking:	Top 43 per cent
Sample ranking:	8th out of 9.

* I am indebted to Steve Shann who was commissioned by the college's Curriculum 2000 Committee in 1988 to write profiles of this kind on a selection of students. Several of the quotes in Shaun's story are derived from Shann's transcripts.

Shaun is described by staff as one of the 'anonymous' students, largely unnoticed in the crowd:

> "I see him as being one of an amorphous mass of students who pass through our hands and whom we don't take an awful lot of notice of, because they're not interesting for any particular reason - they don't stand out" (English teacher).

Other teachers see him as socially isolated, somewhat of a non-entity. In the unit *Women and Health*, Shaun is in a class mainly of girls who 'almost ignore his presence'. The teacher's charitable interpretation is that they perhaps feel at a ease with him.

Teachers appear to know little of Shaun's background or interests, noting only superficial things like his physique - 'he's a very poor specimen of a kid of his age'. Others note a certain rigidity in his thinking and hint at a conservative, narrow family life:

> "Perhaps in his family there is a healthy hotbed of prejudice and a belief about how the world should turn" (English teacher).

> "I often get comments back about Shaun's mother not liking some of the stuff, like some of the information he took home on the various contraceptives" (Biology teacher).

One teacher imagined Shaun's family life as uninspiring:

> "I'd be interested to know what his father does. He could be typical of the services, I'd say. The way he dresses and looks, a pretty basic type family life, nothing exciting happens, just boring food and TV and school work.

Not the sort of family I'd like to live in. Drab clothes, drab colours, old-fashioned haircut, manner I suppose" (PE teacher).

Ashendon and his colleagues also found ignorance and prejudice in teachers' perceptions of their pupils' backgrounds in the data collected for *Making the Difference:*

"Usually teachers know nothing about the circumstances and experiences of individual students...If they have ever met the parents it will have been at a parent-teacher night, which both sides regard as ritualistic. The judgements which teachers make about the kids' backgrounds are based, therefore, on very little knowledge, a good deal of inference and plain prejudice" (quoted in Blakers, 1985).

Shaun is thus perceived as an uninteresting non-descript from an equally uninspiring, conservative family. These perceptions, shared by a number of his teachers, refer to Shaun the student. Little is known of his life outside the school; the images of his family in the minds of his teachers are largely speculative but are influential in their assessment of his ability as a scholar:

"I think he probably sees things in terms of received truths... from home, possibly from church and certainly from teachers ... he doesn't have much of an idea about what real learning consists of" (English teacher).

The P.E. teacher acknowledges that Shaun puts in some work outside of class, does his assignments very well '- all word processor stuff but with no flair for the subject ... He'll chuck in facts, but not ideas.' The unimaginative plodder, 'meticulous about completing any assignment work', Shaun is not a student who can tackle maths problems in a flexible and creative way - 'Give him a rule to apply, a set procedure, and he's all right' - says the maths teacher. His own experience of maths conflicts with the teacher's analysis:

"I would like it if there wasn't as much emphasis on learning a formula and adding the numbers in. In maths at the moment, you've got to memorize the formula, and you're given the numbers and told - 'Here's the equation, add the numbers into the equation and give us the answer'."

Shaun on himself

Yet on talking to Shaun, he comes across as more interesting and more of an identity than the teachers' comments suggest, despite his one-dimensional interest in nursing. Asked to talk about himself, his first comment is about his life outside the College:

"I'm a first aider. I enjoy first aid and being outside. I'm a sergeant in the St John's Ambulance Brigade..."

Shaun explains how he had unsuccessfully tried to join the cubs, and then applied to join St John's. At the age of ten, he won the first aid competition and went to Alice Springs to compete as an ACT representative in the national competition. He has since been to other capital cities representing the ACT and once, last year, as an individual competitor. His ambition is to get into nursing and then ambulance work in the ACT or elsewhere in Australia if necessary:

> "I just can't wait to get out of college and get into that... to get into nursing or ambulance work."

Shaun's main priority at college is to get the 'magic number' 550 which will ensure entry into nursing. If necessary, he is prepared to repeat year 12 until he makes the grade, a feat which both he and his teachers see a real challenge:

> "I admit to not being very bright. And sometimes I know I'm really dumb about things..."

The things he is good at are unrelated to the college and are never assessed:

> "He's like a mother to all the kids in the street. If any of the kids want anything, or they get hurt, they'll ask for Shaun... Since he's become involved in St John's he's become a more caring sort of person" (mother).

His mother explains how she has been ill for the past three years and has relied on Shaun to take care of the family, a task he relates to a future career in nursing. His father comments on how his son cheerfully carries out most of the domestic chores:

> "And we can see a point in all this; in some respect he's been building up towards this career."

The Importance of a Nursing Career

Shaun did a week's work experience in year 10 at John Jame's hospital where they offered him a full-time job as a wardsman. His recent placement in year 12 was at Calvary hospital which confirmed his ambition to be a nurse:

> "I loved it - every minute of it, I really did."

Even the times when there was nothing to do were interesting to him. He spent most of the time observing patients, making beds, showering patients and generally learning about the hospital:

> "I picked up quite a few tricks of the trade, like with making beds. I'd make it one way, they'd make it another way..."

Just being in the hospital was compensation for doing menial work or having nothing to do at all. By contrast, faced with free time at school, he explains how he would go home. What he dislikes most about college is the attitude of fellow students towards school work. During a teachers' strike in the week before the interview, he was disappointed by the gleeful reaction of his peers in getting the day off. Shaun's views on youth unemployment are in line with his low opinion of the work ethic amongst his fellow students. He believes there are enough jobs available to teenagers; the problem is that they prefer not to work. Access to an occupation is for him a matter of hard work, a view shared by his father:

> "He realizes now that the new nursing system means that he's got this hard slog at college for a while.... He'll keep trying because like we were saying, where there's a will, there's a way".

Work experience at Calvary was another step in Shaun's preparation for a nursing career. His supervisor at the hospital praised him as diligent, enthusiastic and cooperative, 'good material for nursing'. Shaun has a clear understanding of the hospital world from his two work experience placements. He took the opportunity to talk with nurses about the job:

> "I see the nurse as being responsible for the giving of medication, assisting the doctors with tests and whatever and being on standby in case something major happens."

He is not deterred by student reaction to his career choice. At high school he was taunted for being a 'sissy' and he got a lot of 'strange looks' from college students after his most recent work at Calvary. For Shaun, entry into a female dominated occupation is not a problem as a male, only as a student anxious to gain the requisite course score. His mother is anxious about his prospects as well:

> "I mean if he got into nursing tomorrow, he'd probably top the class. But it's just getting in, getting the score."

Here is a boy with above average motivation and aptitude for nursing, but whose academic skills might let him down.

Academic Skills: Determinants of Success

Shaun chose biology and chemistry because they are related to nursing, while physics and human movement were selected out of interest. English and maths, he says are subjects everybody should do. As noted earlier, it is maths that gives him the most trouble. Referring to his maths homework, he comments:

> "You get home and you sit there for an hour and you read it over and over and over, and you get it into you. But it doesn't seem like maths."

It's not developing your thinking?

> "No, it's not. It's just, here's a number. Do as I told you to do with it. It's like following orders..."

Did you have to use any maths at the hospital?

> "Oh, yes, you need it a lot for working out relationships with time... something has to be set up to start now, like medication, and finish at a certain time."

The maths skills involved here are essentially the ability to tell the time, and although trivial, are nevertheless a practical application of number manipulation, infinitely more real than 'Here's the equation, add the numbers into the equation and give us the answer.'

During work experience, we see a practical application of maths concepts in the hospital, which unlike school work, is perceived by Shaun as real Maths. His teacher sees problem-solving as an intellectual, rather than practical exercise:

> "He's not one of those top students who can tackle a problem in a flexible and creative way. You give him a rule and he applies it and gets his results that way. Anything outside the straight and narrow, and he's in trouble... I don't think he's reached the level where he could devise new strategies to work out problems."

Teachers generally see Shaun, as he sees himself, as an earnest plodder. He is typical of the college student who treats college as a means to an end, concerned about grades, but not especially interested in what is learned:

> "I think that he doesn't have much of an idea of what real learning consists of" (English teacher).
>
> "So the best way to teach him is to feed him information. For him, rote learning. I don't think he's able to conceptualise very well" (P E teacher).

Shaun's interest in nursing is as a practical job, caring for patients, making beds and generally acting as a practical aid to doctors. He tends to see school work as theoretical and unrelated to what he does best, namely caring for people like patients or kids in his neighbourhood. His biology teacher sees his practical interest in negative terms when she recounts a class assignment:

> "The idea was that they each do a pamphlet for the other kids about a particular sexually transmitted disease, and he did it on gonorrhoea, but it was just overly technical, all about cleaning bedpans and this and the other... It was more or less a pamphlet for nurses or something higher."

His supervisor on work experience referred to his interest in the practical aspects of the job. Because of the confidentiality needed in the treatment of patients, Shaun had mainly observer status at the hospital, something which the supervisor says frustrates most students. Shaun, however, was 'adaptable and enthusiastic, eager to participate and work with adults'. The staff agree that he is well suited to the profession and able to meet the emotional demands of the job. At college, with its dominant academic culture, Shaun does not stand out as a success, either by his own assessment or in the accounts of several teachers. He is typical of students who struggle with their college courses seeing learning in purely instrumental terms. His English teacher believes that his obsession with the extrinsic rewards of school work, inhibits his ability to gain the intrinsic satisfaction that comes from real learning:

> "I think that Shaun would be able to learn a lot more if he could get his mind

off assessment, but the system doesn't allow him to get his mind off it."

What the teacher implies here, is that school work, unrelated to his career aspirations, has little meaning, except as a hurdle to be jumped.

'One of the Amorphous Mass'

Shaun's profile is interesting in that it describes how a relatively 'unnoticed' student is labeled by teachers as undistinguished, largely on the basis of their generally accurate assessment of his academic potential. Having little knowledge of his life outside the classroom, their assessments of his personal qualities are generally misguided. His life in fact revolves around his interest in first aid. His father points out that his social group consists of colleagues at St John's Ambulance where they talk shop most of the time:

> "That's all you get out of him - St John's Ambulance. Drives you mad sometimes!"

Shaun has in fact constructed an identity for himself as a first aider. It is his opening line in describing himself. Work experience in two hospitals has confirmed his intention to work in the paramedical field. School is but a means to that end. He is obsessed with the idea of working as a nurse to the point where college, except as a stepping-stone, is almost an irrelevance. His results are below average because to him the satisfaction from learning is extrinsic rather than intrinsic.

> "He's mainly concerned with his other interests which tend to eat away at his time, and he gets a bit disappointed with his results. We've often found at times that he's sitting there reading his first aid book instead of doing his home work" (father).

For a boy like Shaun, college is to be endured until the day he can get into nursing. Like many of the work experience students interviewed, he sees only a very tenuous connection between school work and real work in paid employment. As an 'unnoticed' student, his teachers are largely unaware of his motives, his plans for the future, and his non-academic qualities.

Their assessment of him is in terms of a scholar (mediocre) and as a physical a body ('a very poor specimen'). Teachers have a tendency to assess students as either 'obnoxious' or 'nice', terms which Davis and Schmidt use in stratifying people according to characteristics of "interactive competence, physical attractiveness, and intelligence" (1980:294). Whilst it would be inaccurate to suggest that Shaun is perceived as obnoxious by teachers, their assessment of him as a social isolate, a poor physical specimen comfortable with facts but not ideas, conforms to the obnoxious, rather than nice, stereotype. Whether this assessment is influenced by the teachers' negative speculations about his family background cannot be determined, but the middle class criteria of taste and outlook - an aversion to 'drab clothes', 'boring food', and 'received truths' - all convey the impression of a not very 'nice' family, or as the P.E. teacher puts it - 'Not the sort of family I'd like to live in.'

As an 'unnoticed' student, Shaun's status in the college is in sharp contrast to Milly's, another college student who conforms to the 'nice' category in the teachers' assessment vocabulary.

Milly - Year 12 (17 years)

Father:	Senior computer analyst
Mother:	Secretary to public service executive
Work Experience:	Public Relations
Part-time job:	Video outlet assistant
Career aspirations:	Diplomatic corps
Courses:	Tertiary majors in English, Maths 1, Human Biology, Continuing French, Social Psychology, Modern Economics and a tertiary minor in Chemistry.
T.E. score:	641
ACT ranking:	top 13 per cent
Sample ranking:	4th out of 9.

On meeting Milly, the first impression is of a personable, confident and ambitious young woman. Unlike Shaun, she is noticed by staff and students alike. Petite and stylish in appearance, she exudes energy and intelligence.

> "I'm so full of praise for the girl that it's boring. She's a teacher's idea of the ultimate student - involved, interested, responsive, committed and yet retaining a delightful capacity to be cheerful and relate well to her peers" (Social Science teacher).

Another male teacher is less extravagant:

Is she a good student?

> "She's quite competent but she's not brilliant. She's a good, hard working, conscientious student" (Maths teacher).

Later in the interview he sums her up in terms of the 'obnoxious/nice' categories employed by Davis and Schmidt (1980), 'interactive competence, physical attractiveness and intelligence':

"She's attractive, quite intelligent, quite charming, she's got a lot going for her".

The maths teacher acknowledges that he has no idea of her performance in other subjects, only that she is not 'brilliant' in maths. He sees her as more likely to succeed in the humanities, rather than maths or science, an assessment with which Milly agrees as does one of her English teachers:

> "Milly, your skills of critical analysis are well developed and you have a lucid writing style. Your creative response was outstanding and demonstrated a mature understanding of the issues raised in the novel."

The statement comes from a term assessment report in *Language and Literature 2* for which she was awarded an A plus. Superlatives abound in other reports where she is described as 'a delightful student to teach' by two teachers.

Milly explains how in English she has been challenged to work for the 'hidden meaning' in the story which she says is all right, but -

> "I wouldn't chose to read the books we're given for my own enjoyment, but I wouldn't mind reading them...I mean I read a lot of trash (laughing) like Jacky Collins, Sydney Sheldon".

The reaction of the social science teacher to Milly's reading preferences is to describe her as being 'extremely independent in outlook'.

Is she genuinely interested in learning, or just in the grades?

> "She has in my view a genuine interest in what is going on and I really don't think that she has a utilitarian view, that is, I'm here to extract the maximum benefit from every teacher I sit in front of."

The Importance of Money and Status

Milly is, however, very ambitious and mentions money frequently during the interview.
You've mentioned money a lot today. Is it very important to you?

> "Well, if I was poor and was having to worry about money I don't think I'd be at peace so I wouldn't be happy then. And also I've been brought up with never having to worry about it. I'm not saying we're rich or anything but we've got a pool and I've got a car. I've got more than a lot of other people ...maybe if I'd been brought up in a really lower...(gap) where money was a problem, then it might be a lot <u>more</u> important to me."

She goes on to explain what college means to her in achieving success in life:

> "It's all to do with attitude really. It's not so much like having a passion to come to school or anything, but if you have a hopeful outlook on things and think this is all going pay off one day and someone's going to pay me lots of money for this then it all sort of seems worthwhile. I know that's what happened with my dad. He studied part-time for years and is now earning a lot of money."

School is important as a stepping-stone to a career in the Diplomatic Corps, a world which she believes offers a glamorous life of money, entertainment and travel. She is unclear as to what further study is involved, but assumes she will have to complete an honours degree at a university.

Or perhaps at a CAE?

> "No. I know it's old-fashioned to say it, but it's not a proper university."

Unlike Shaun, Milly is very much noticed by teachers. While those interviewed professed knowing very little about her family background, outside interests and career aspirations, they all speculated positively on her family and future. The maths teacher remembers her father at a P & T night as 'very interested in her progress, a very pleasant chap!' Another teacher was surprised to learn of her ambition to join the Diplomatic Corps:

> "I would have thought of her as a doctor, or at least working in the helping professions."

In short, Milly is perceived positively by teachers, despite their lack of knowledge about her life outside the college. She is the 'ultimate student' in the teachers' vocabulary and unlike Shaun is positioned on the far right of the 'obnoxious-nice' continuum. Whereas Shaun is thought to have a very narrow world view, seeing things in terms of 'received truths', Milly is 'extremely independent in outlook'. Her views on life, success and work were explored in the interview and are discussed below.

Milly's Idea of Success

On the subject of youth unemployment, Milly is less inclined than Shaun to blame the victim. While she believes there are enough jobs for those who want them, unlike Shaun, she does not think that unemployed youth prefer not to work. For her, success in an occupation is a combination of hard work and luck:

> "I reckon success is all to do with attitudes and <u>luck</u> (emphasis) - if you're in the right place at the right time. Like getting a part-time job for example, it's just a matter of trying and one day you'll get one."

Milly's endowments of physical attraction and social graces are the lucky characteristics not shared by Shaun who has tried unsuccessfully to get a part-time job. In contrast to Shaun, Milly's success at college has reinforced her belief that hard work pays off. She is optimistic about fulfilling her own high aspirations to work in advertising, probably in Foreign Affairs or in the Diplomatic Corps.

Does it worry you that there are more men than women in the best jobs in these departments?

> "I don't think there should be a problem...but it is a male-dominated place although at the French embassy the cultural attache was a woman."

She is clearly aware that women in these 'glamour' jobs usually act as secretaries to their male bosses and is determined not to be one of them. Her main priority is to get to the top in the diplomatic service and she has no desire to start at the bottom by working for somebody else - male or female. It is not status that concerns her, but responsibility:

> "I'd want someone to hire me and put their faith in me to make the best decision. I don't want to have to ask the boss for a decision every time a client wants an answer."

The satisfaction of having autonomy and responsibility is something she experienced at the embassy. She explains how she was responsible for contacting sponsors for an embassy magazine, a task which was essential for its production. Most of her time was spent on the telephone selling advertising space for our booklet for French teachers. Not having to check every decision with the supervisor gave her job satisfaction:

> "I could get the satisfaction out of seeing it all come together, instead of doing little bits of different jobs. I felt as if I was part of the embassy and not like they had to find jobs for me to do like photocopying or making cups of coffee. They sort of had jobs that needed doing and they thought I could do them."

Milly's ample endowment of self-confidence and intelligence lead her to expect and to accept trust in what she does, whether at college or in her part-time job at a video outlet. She explains how it would be easy for her to help herself to the till at the video shop where she is often alone, just as it is easy for students to "slack off" at college when they are not strictly controlled by teachers.

So you think you are trusted at College?

> "I think they trust year 12s more than year 11s."

And at the embassy, were you trusted there?

> "I don't think they would have let me contact sponsors if I had a real ocker tone... because a lot of diplomatic work is presentation."

She explains how apart from improving her French, the work experience helped her develop 'phone manners', a skill she already knew about from working in the video shop.

Experience of work

Like most of the students who work part-time in the sales and service sector, Milly has no intention of staying on at the job after college. Work in the video shop is a means of making money, work experience is about making contacts and sampling a prospective future career. There is a hint of class in Milly's description of the two workplaces - the 'ocker tone' which is acceptable with the 'dinkum Aussies' at the video shop but not in dealing with clients of the French embassy. These are her kind of people and she explains how ideally she would like to host cocktail parties as a career, 'as that's the best way to do business' She admits to being an avid reader of 'trashy' novels and was formerly a fan of television serials like 'Dynasty' and 'Dallas':

"I love the world of the upper-class..."

It is partly her desire to identify with glamorous people that explains her interest in the diplomatic service. Her ambition is to become a cultural attache, probably in France, where she can use her French. I asked her female supervisor at the embassy if Milly's ambitions were realistic:

> "It's really hard to know because it's really hard to get in... but she certainly has initiative and intelligence... and as far as her work in the embassy goes, yes, I think she'd have a good chance. For example, her knowledge of French is quite good."

What qualifications do you need to get into the Diplomatic Corps?

> "They tend to like you to have economics these days, and I'm sure languages and economics would be a good combination. And it seemed to me that she coped well with the economics by doing a lot of advertising for our Teachers' Booklet... so she probably has the right balance and she seems to cope well. So I think she can cope with the competitive aspect. She's got the presence; I found her very impressive, mature and capable, so I think it's fine for her to set her sights high... she seems to have the right personality for the job."

Positive praise from teachers and adults in the workplace have boosted Milly's confidence to succeed in a competitive, high status career. She has already applied for an exchange scholarship in France and is firmly set on the path to success. Her college courses and work experience, even in the video outlet, where she can save for a year in France, are all a part of her preparations for a diplomatic career.

Was there much of a difference between working at the embassy and in the video shop?

> "It's similar because you're dealing with people. At the video outlet I've been exposed to all sorts of people, like the real Aussie, dinkum Aussie...the most important thing is not to offend them and keep them happy and that."

For the past two years, Milly has been working 10-12 hours a week at the video outlet, usually on the weekends when overtime is paid. She explains how she has learnt a lot about advertising and the tricks of the trade, like setting up the shelves to catch the customer's eye. At a promotion night, the staff were taught how to sell videos using two different descriptions for the same film. In this way, customers are induced to hire a film they had already seen!

Milly describes this as a 'trick of the trade' and gives no hint that she finds the practice unethical! Although she likes working in the video outlet, it is not as stimulating as either college or the embassy work experience. She very much enjoyed being treated as one of the embassy staff, and being asked for her advice:

> "They got me to watch French videos and give an opinion on how well they'd go down with school kids."

In situations like this, unlike in the video shop, she felt she was valued for her knowledge, in this case of French. Although she likes school, particularly French and economics, the subjects came alive at the embassy when she was required to use them.

> "It was much more stimulating at the embassy. We didn't even have breaks for morning tea and by the time lunch came I hadn't even thought of lunch I was so busy!"

Milly explains how college is different from work where one is dealing with adults who talk about different things. At college, she notes without any reference to teachers as adults, the kids all talk about their social life, part-time jobs and each other. Being exposed to all kinds (classes) of people in the two workplaces has shaped her view of what success is all about. As we have seen, success for her is a combination of hard work and luck. The latter is something of which she is aware, having been brought up in a family of relative affluence. Her parents, teachers and employers have reinforced her self-confidence with positive messages about her intelligence, physical attractiveness and interactive competence. For these reasons, she readily identifies with 'upper class people' and aspires to emulate them in a prestigious career which offers glamour, money and status.

In several respects, Shaun is like Milly. He too has made the most of his more limited talents and has achieved some distinction as a first-aider. For him, however, college is a struggle and the messages he gets from teachers reinforce his perception of himself: 'I admit to not being very bright.' He blames himself for being unable to get a paid, part-time job, just as he attributes youth unemployment to the lethargy of individuals. Whereas Milly's drive and motivation will almost certainly lead her to fulfil her career ambitions, Shaun's path to a more modest career will undoubtedly be more difficult, despite an equal determination to succeed. An explanation as to why this is so lies not only in the personalities of the students, but in the structure of opportunities provided by the economy as well as their families and school. These complex psychological, economic and sociological interactions are examined for their significance in the lives of the rest of the sample.

Appendix VII

Work Education

"The school if it is to be taken seriously, does not have time for the workshop, and vice versa" (Gramsci).[12]

1. Stirling College - Perspectives on Curriculum

In a recent study of contemporary youth culture in America, the author notes the importance of the structure of opportunity for the socialization of young people. "The local community is the place where most of them go to school, form friendships, find things to do in their spare time, and, more generally, explore ways of defining themselves in relation to the world outside of their families" (Schwartz, 1987:15). For most students in their last two years of secondary schooling, the college is the community in which many of these experiences occur.

The college was established in 1977 to cater for year 11 and Year 12 students resident in eight neighbouring suburbs. Three feeder high schools provide secondary education to year 10, after which approximately 80 per cent continue on in a secondary college, with about 750 enrolling every year in years 11 and 12.

At the end of each year, parents of prospective new students are invited to discuss their children's course enrolments with subject teachers. Informal discussions with students and their parents indicate the importance of the latter's influence on what students choose to study. Invariably, parents seek advice about the relevance of courses to specific future career preferences for their children. It is therefore of interest to know what expectations parents have of the formal curriculum and of a college education generally.

The college's curriculum consists of 48 courses, with academic tertiary courses outnumbering non-tertiary accredited courses by a factor of 3 to 1. As we have already seen, the choice of subjects is weighted to the advantage of students intending to continue their post-secondary education in tertiary institutions. As part of the present study, parents were asked to rank existing college courses in order of importance(se AppendixIII). The results represent the views of about 300 families (353 individuals) who are likely to have one to two children attending the college in the next decade. They were asked to indicate their support for the existing curriculum. Figure VII.I shows the relative weighting given to individual subjects and categories of subjects:

Figure VII:1 Parental Support for College Curriculum Courses

% Support	
	(42%) Basic 3 R's
15	English
15	Mathematics
12	Computing Studies
	(40%) Natural, Social and Industrial Sciences
9	Physical Sciences
9	Social Sciences
8	Biological Sciences
8	Industrial Arts
6	Commerce
	(18%) General Subjects
5	Recreational Studies
4	Foreign Languages
4	Art
3	Leisure/Hobby Courses
1	Drama
1	Other
100%	n = 353

Note: Only a small number of subjects were listed by parents under 'other', including home science, an existing course, which was inadvertently omitted from the given list.

Not surprisingly, student choices largely reflect their parents' preferences. Parents and students tend to favour academic/vocational subjects, while staff place more importance on general education. In a separate staff survey, there was a clear majority of teachers in favour of a broadly-based curriculum which emphasised the third category (general subjects). For example, drama and foreign languages, which attracted only five per cent of the parent vote, were considered by teachers as essential to the curriculum. Only in the case of leisure/hobby courses, do teachers and parents agree that these are not essential to the curriculum. Students appear to value them more highly however, as more than half of the student population enrols in such courses each term.

The survey also sought parental views on the aims of a college education. Their views were largely in line with what employers surveyed by the Business Council of Australia believed were the most important aims of secondary education:

Figure VII.II Order of importance for aims in education for employers and parents

	Employers (a)	Parents (b)
General academic subjects	7	1
Basic skills (eg. 3Rs)	1	2
Thinking/problem-solving skills	2	3
Work and career choices	3	4
Practical vocational skills	4	5
Social skills	5	6
Coping with authority	8	7
Theoretical vocational skills	6	8
Health matters (eg. sex education)	n.a.	9
Standards of deportment/manners	9	10

Source: (a) B.C.A. survey, March 1986, p.17. (b) Parent survey, July 1987.

Only on the first aim is there a significant difference of opinion between employers and parents. Employers are not against the teaching of academic subjects per se. The relatively insignificant weighting given to this item, which parents rank as their first priority, is explained by the B.C.A. in these terms: "...from a business point of view, (basic thinking, vocational and social) skills are likely to be more useful in the work situation than the learning of content from academic subjects such as English, history, geography and so on" (B.C.A. 1986: 18). On all the remaining items there is general consensus between employers and parents, particularly concerning basic skills and work-related skills.

The Schools Commission's *In the National Interest* adds its weight to these curricular emphases when it identifies three ways in which schools can prepare students for work:

(1) by teaching basic skills - in addition to the 3 Rs; these include technological literacy, analytical thinking and social skills;

(2) by helping students understand the nature of employment and preparing them for the choices they will have to make to get jobs;

(3) by fostering qualities such as 'initiative, adaptability, self-discipline, cooperativeness and self-confidence'

(Commonwealth Schools Commission, 1987:9).

Similar objectives were considered the most important by college parents in the survey. In a separate question, parents were asked to rank seven given items which students ought to concentrate on (see Appendix III). The most important for the parents were:-

(1) the ability to read, write and use numbers;
(2) skills, knowledge and techniques for the practice of a future job;
(3) development of self-confidence and self-awareness.

Item (2) is perhaps more specific than the Commission's general interpretation of the same work-related practices. Here the Commission refers to careers education and "learning about work as part of a general education where the emphasis is on the role of work in society. This is often accompanied by work experience"(1987: 9).

Surveys amongst students, parents and employers have consistently demonstrated that getting and holding a job is their main criterion for valuing the outcome of secondary education. It is a recurrent theme in the interviews described in the previous chapters of this thesis. The Schools Commission recommends including the study of work in the school curriculum in order to encourage more students to stay on to year 12. The retention rate in ACT colleges (81% to Year 12 in 1986) is already well ahead of the 65 per cent goal set by the government for 1990. The Schools Commission agrees with Wilson and Wyn on the incentives needed if students are to stay on to Year 12: "...the desire amongst young people themselves to achieve a livelihood means that schooling will continue to have marginal credibility, as long as it is seen to have only marginal relevance to the world of work. It is appropriate, perhaps even necessary, to explore a new form of curriculum which takes work in all its forms as the basis for the development of knowledge...and skills..." (Wilson and Wyn,1987:118).

2. Integrating Work Experience in the Curriculum

As already noted, only minor timetable adjustments have been made at Stirling College to accommodate both sponsored and student-initiated work experience. As these occur during non-teaching time, both forms of work experience are excluded from the subject-based curriculum. Whilst teachers are strongly in favour of integration, it is not clear how this can be achieved when work experience remains an extra-curricular activity. During the student interviews, the issue of integration received only lukewarm support from the informants. However, several students believed that informal debriefing by way of class discussion would be beneficial. It was clear in the interviews themselves, that discussions of what students experienced in various workplaces helped them clarify many issues related to school and work - manual/mental divisions, good/bad jobs, teachers/bosses, masculine/feminine stereotypes, theory/practice, aspirations/expectations, intrinsic/extrinsic rewards, real work/school work, grades/wages, and the significance of paid versus unpaid work.

During informal discussions with teachers, the problem of how such issues could be discussed was raised. Again, an informal model was preferred where the students, rather than the teacher determined what would be discussed. One teacher argued that work experience ought to be related to the subject and the discussion would take the form of a more formal report by the student(s) involved. For example, a science student who worked for a day or two at CSIRO would be asked to report on what he/she had learned. Students would be released from classes to take up short-term (one to three days) internships in business, industry or community organisations on the understanding that a report would be written, discussed and assessed, perhaps as a formal assignment in the subject. The subject-oriented work experience placement could be used in some curricular areas but not in all. For the majority of college students (70 per cent) ,who are not destined for tertiary institutions, this kind of approach could be unattractive. Many of these students are interested in jobs not specifically linked to any particular subject area such as police, hotel management, military service, child care and so on. It is the non-academic majority that will not go on to tertiary study and will seek immediate employment, TAFE training or an apprenticeship for whom the school to work transition is most important. This is particularly so for those who do not have any well-thought out employment or career plans. For such students, participation in discussions of school/work issues such as those listed above, could be of crucial vocational importance. Thus for those without any particular post-college occupation in mind, the more general the frame of reference the better. An example of how a general class discussion could be of use to all students is outlined below. In this case, the topic was an analysis of student views on paid and unpaid work experience by a sociology class.

Listening to Students

First, the reactions of students in three sociology classes were sought on some of the statements made by student-workers in the sample quoted in Chapters7 and 8. Fifty students (35 girls, 15 boys) completed a 'reaction to views on work experience' survey which consisted of two parts. Part A included two quotations to which students were asked to respond in any way they chose. Part B sought a simple agree/disagree response. The results are described below together with the follow-up discussion by one of the sociology classes. Part A, which follows, was not completed by all students.

> *"In the very near future I'll become night-filler boss and will welcome the extra responsibility - possibly because it gives me a feeling of identity as well as meaning more money" (college student in a part-time job at Coles).*

About 60 per cent expressed sentiments supporting the night-filler's ambition and could identify with his desire for more responsibility and money. Several added that being a night-filler boss was 'no big deal' but if that's what he wanted, he should be encouraged to 'go for it'. Forty per cent believed the student was endangering his long-term prospects for short-term rewards in what is essentially a deadend job:

> "If the job involves staying up late, the school work would suffer, as he may not be able to advance much further without a proper education."

and

> "It's good for the money but a bit of deadend to do it for a career."

What is interesting about the responses is the generally uncritical reaction to the student's ambition to become 'night-filler boss'. While several said it would not suit them, many agreed that being the boss does bestow a sense of identity. The point was made during the follow-up discussion as well. One boy revealed that he was 'the boss' on two nights a week at a fast-food outlet and that this gave him a certain status amongst his peers who often approached him for work at the outlet. Others argued that becoming a boss was good for one's confidence and a useful experience to add to one's employment resume. Of interest here is the unquestioned acceptance by students of the need for bosses and their authority in the workplace. In many deadend jobs, students learn that the advantages of being the boss include not having to do the 'shit work'; having the 'power' to make others do the dirty work is seen by some students as a legitimate and attractive responsibility of the boss. The second quotation also yielded a division of opinion. (Interestingly, this excerpt was omitted in the edited version of the ACTSA's video).

> *"The porters gave me a lot of responsibility. They would often let me do whole linen runs by myself. I thought that was pretty good. They'd let me go out, go into all the rooms and take all the linen out, put them in the trolleys; come back to housekeeping and they'd be sitting there waiting for me... so they trusted me"* (John on work experience in a hotel).

The results here suggest how follow-up discussion can challenge and change initial reactions. More than half of the respondents interpreted John's experience as one of exploitation by the porters. A typical comment:

> "The porters have actually given John the dirty work while they sit down doing nothing. John is obviously very gullible or unintelligent".

Nevertheless, 18 out of the 40 respondents saw the experience in John's terms. They argued that the job provided opportunities for gaining more responsibility and trust with one's co-workers and like John, thought that this was 'pretty good'. During the follow-up discussion, exploitation and menial work featured prominently with several students providing examples of how these were inevitable, but undesirable practices in unskilled workplaces. While some students believe that they would disqualify themselves for employment if they refused the menial jobs, many acknowledged that employers had a responsibility to provide a range of tasks for their workers. After a lively discussion, it was clear that workers did not have the right to exploit students on work experience. Here is an example of how group evaluation of work experience can clarify an important issue for students who otherwise might accept unfair work practices as inevitable. It was pointed out by one student, and supported by others, that it would be wrong for the teacher or the group to challenge John's optimism as naive. They believed that informal discussion of similar experiences would be enough to expose John to a different perspective. Most students and teachers believe that sharing information in an informal setting is the most appropriate way to brief or debrief students on work experience.

Part B examined three quotations related to the school-work nexus:

Table VII.3. VIEWS ON WORK EXPERIENCE

Part A % (n=50)

	AGREED	DISAGREED	UNSURE
(1) If you don't do well at school, you end up in some boring job that drives you crazy - that's if you get a job. (Check-out Chick)	32	48	20
(2) It's a bit too early for worrying about the future. (Year 11, student Stirling College.)	0	98	2
(3) A lot of work we do in school is unrelated to what we do at work but you've got to know it. (Work experience as an apprentice chef.)	66	18	16

The results for quotation (1) suggest that close to half of the respondents are optimistic about gaining meaningful employment after college, irrespective of their college results. A significant number (20%) is unsure; some of these were students without part-time jobs, a fact which emerged during the follow-up discussion. However, no attempt was made to distinguish between workers and non-workers in the initial survey. What was clear in the follow-up discussions, was the number of students without part-time jobs who were not really concerned about their employment prospects provided they did reasonably well in their Year 12 certificates. Only a few students had never worked part-time or had never been on a work placement during their high school years. These students appeared quite blase about their lack of work experience although as a result of the discussion, a few said they would consider applying for a placement before they left college.

Quotation (2) provided the most clear-cut response in the survey with none of the fifty respondents agreeing with the proposition. Clearly, college students are concerned about the future, although it is not clear whether the concern is entirely about their employment prospects. In the follow-up discussions, it was however obvious that this is how most students interpreted the quotation. As noted in chapter 8, achieving a satisfactory livelihood is one of the highest priorities for senior secondary school students contemplating the future. Finding out what they should do for a living, is a constant, though not oppressive preoccupation for most college students. In the 'vocationally obsessed 80s', it is not surprising that this is the case. Yet many students, especially year 11s do not have any clear idea of what to do after college, despite the fact that 98 per cent say they should. As shown in Chapter 8, virtually all of the work experience students had clearly defined aspirations. For this reason alone, work experience is a useful and economical way of introducing students to the world of work, no matter how restricted this inevitably is. Another potentially positive outcome of work experience concerns the 'relevance' of school to the world of work.

Quotation (3) dealt with this question. The majority of respondents believe that school work is unrelated to work, an opinion shared by most students as revealed in the follow-up discussion and in the work experience interviews. As described in Chapter 8, students frequently saw no relationship between what they learned at college and what was expected of them in work placements. This discrepancy was often expressed by the students as a difference between school work and 'real' work, or between theory and practice. Even where teachers insisted there was a connection, for example, between motor technology and work in an auto workshop, the students could not see it. It is this perception of the irrelevance of schooling that poses the most difficulties for teachers. For teachers at least, work experience evaluations of the kind we have discussed thus far, have the most enduring results in terms of student co-operation and motivation. To achieve these outcomes, a careful classroom analysis of the school-work link needs to be undertaken. Needless to say, a more comprehensive integration of work in the curriculum would need to be achieved than the ad hoc and informal approach discussed so far. The present approach represents a practical and relatively achieveable measure that a school could implement immediately. For example, in quotation (3), two questions can be posed for discussion: what school work is related/unrelated to work in the 'real' world and why is it necessary to learn such things as calculus, essay writing or sociology?

In any discussion of such questions, the perspectives of the students themselves would need to be considered, rather than the conventional responses of educators; thus in analysing the 'irrelevance of school' argument, the views of Yolanda (theatre), Hugh (media), Sue (home science) and Nelly (business studies) could provide a starting point. Why these subjects are 'necessary' and what students learn by doing them would logically lead to discussions about theory versus practice, credentialism, school work versus 'real' work and so on, all of which were raised by students in the interviews reported in Chapter 8.

While it is acknowledged that talking about school-work transition problems will not resolve them, "...short term though principled suggestions can be made...to contribute to longer term structural change..." (Willis, 1977: 188). Willis's 'lads' and their counter-school practices bear little resemblance to Canberra's Year 11 and 12 students. Nevertheless, they both face restricted employment opportunities which will affect the quality of work they do and their life chances. For these reasons, some of Willis's 'principled suggestions' are relevant to Canberra's college students: (a) recognise the strict meaninglessness and confusion of the present proliferation of worthless qualifications (E courses are an example); (b) recognise the likely intrinsic boredom and meaninglessness of most unskilled and semi-skilled work (most part-time jobs fall into this category); (c) recognise the possibility of joblessness both as an enforced and as a chosen option in relation to the real opportunities available (recognise 'non-career' as well as career education); (d) use more collective practices, group discussions and projects to examine the ideology of work (as has been advocated above) and (e) recognise that it is a condition of working class development that working class kids do develop certain disciplined skills in expression and symbolic manipulation (that is, teach the basic 3Rs to ordinary kids, a prerequisite for education accepted by parents, employers and teachers). The final point is what college students often mean when they say school work is 'unrelated to work, but you've got to know it'.

During the interviews with the work experience students, the point of being able to read, write and calculate was often not understood. (See for example, Shaun's profile in Appendix VI). As we saw in Chapter 8, subject teachers insist that their subjects are relevant to the world of work and that the connection is 'fundamentally obvious'. The problem is that students often do not see the link and resist learning anything that they perceive as 'theory'. How then, can teachers ensure that students understand that there is a fundamental link between school and the world of work?

3. Improving the School-Work Link

At the most basic level, students need to see their role as workers. Gramsci's argument is relevant here:

"Many people have to be persuaded that studying too is a job, and a very tiring one, with its own particular apprenticeship..." (Gramsci in Entwistle, 1979:54).

Gramsci's idea was that before students could improve their own lives or transform their society, they had to have the intellectual tools to do so. These included first and foremost the three Rs. He strongly advocated the mastery of the standard form of language and literacy as the object of schooling. To do otherwise, he believed, would be to permanently incapacitate the working classes.

Gramsci was not opposed to students learning practical skills but rejected the idea that only practical, vocational activities are worth learning. Far from condemning the competitive academic curriculum, Gramsci endorsed it. Gramsci's theory and praxis offers no support for those who advocate the incorporation of work experience in the curriculum. His prescription for relevance was much wider ,since a specific work focus, was for him, a denial of opportunity. Instead, he advocated a general orientation emphasising the cultural imperative of work (Entwistle, 1979:136). "A striking feature of Gramsci's writing is its positive valuation of traditional, mainstream, humanistic culture" (Entwistle, 1979:18). It is a view which educators find easy to embrace. Stirling College teachers, for example, believe the existing, broadly based curriculum serves students well, educationally and vocationally. For this reason, they are opposed to the 'new vocationalism' inherent in the E course initiative. They are nevertheless strongly in favour of integrating work experience in the curriculum since they acknowledge that the college's predominantly tertiary-academic curriculum serves only a minority of tertiary - bound students. The teachers favour an approach which could be called 'liberal vocationalism' (Silver and Brennan, 1988), but prefer the term 'work education'.

Liberal Vocationalism

Liberal vocationalism can be defined as a combination of two of the main traditions in educational theory - progressive liberalism and neo-classical vocationalism without the vocationally - specific orientation inherent in the latter. It is also flexible enough to include concepts from the socially - critical approach to schooling outlined earlier. Liberal vocationalism was described seventy years ago by a critic of strict neo-classical vocationalism:

> "The kind of vocational education in which I am interested is not one which will 'adapt' workers to the existing regime... (but one) which will alter the existing industrial system and ultimately transform it" (Dewey, 1977: 38).

Liberal vocationalism at Stirling College would have no pretensions about transforming society. It does have the modest objective to transform individuals from passive learners into active participants through the medium of work thereby enhancing their employability. It incorporates employer expectations (teaching for work) and educator preferences (teaching about work) by recognising the common ground between the two (see Cumming, 1987a).

Only the most conservative commentators still blame schools for the collapse of youth employment opportunities. Enlightened critics of schooling now accept that schools cannot create jobs for school leavers; joblessness is generally perceived as a problem of demand, not supply (Curtain, 1983; Sweet, 1987). Although educational initiatives will not solve economic problems, schools still have a role to play in enhancing the employability of their students (Willis, 1977; Connell *et al.* 1982). Willis, for example, argues that teachers should resist the claim that nothing can be done until the basic structures of society are changed: "To refuse the challenge of the day to day - because of the retrospective dead hand of structural constraint - is to deny the continuance of life and society themselves" (1977: 186). How can teachers enhance the employability of college students, thereby making successful school to work transition a possibility for the seventy per cent?

4. A Work Education Curriculum

Marion High School in South Australia has used work experience for this purpose. The school has become renowned for its work experience programs and for the fact that in an area with a declining population it has more than doubled its enrolments. The staff have succeeded in attracting students to the school by making them more employable.

Their idea is that:

> "The whole of a general education enhances employability if the content of the syllabus can, in any way, be shown to be useful to the student" (Hannaford, 1982:109).

They go on to describe their concept of employability:

> "It is our belief that a young person who has known what it is to experience success, is socially at ease, has a sufficient degree of self-esteem, is equipped with necessary skills and has learned to care about other human beings, will be eminently employable" (Hannaford, 1982:117).

Students need useful skills and useful (powerful) knowledge if they are to make a successful transition from College, to employment or further study or combinations of the two. If defined more broadly than is presently the case, work experience has the potential to provide the necessary skills and knowledge to enhance the employability of school leavers. It has been argued that the present model of work experience can be improved by an informal incorporation in the classroom. A broader definition of work experience would include programs and concepts which are more effective in linking the college with the world of work.

Stirling College teachers have been asked to consider a number of proposals designed to do this. These are outlined below.

(a) The Classroom as a Workplace

Garth Boomer (Chairperson of the Schools Commission) has recently promoted this idea in his concept of the productive classroom:

"The challenge for educators is to devise better ways of setting challenging assignments tailored to stretch learners and designed to give them feelings of mastery after effort" (Boomer, 1987).

He illustrates this with an example from business studies. *The Office Skills Model* which is largely teacher-directed is inferior to a *Business World Model* which is geared to the local business environment. The first model trains students (mainly girls) to type and to perform office duties, while the second teaches a mixed class about decision-making and problem-solving. Boomer clearly favours the latter as a means of skilling students and making them more employable. Obviously many different subjects in the sciences and humanities, as well as in more practical subjects, could be made more relevant to students if taught in the context of the world of work. Crucial to the success of such an approach, is Gramsci's idea of the student as worker described above. Related to the notion of the productive worker is the concept of the productive college.

(b) The Productive College

This does not mean a new, reconstructed Stirling College Inc. It means promoting more of what teachers already do for a larger number of students and encouraging their participation in similar projects which actually produce something and involve effort, mastery, and enhance employability. Some examples:

- College social (SRC)
- Media production (Swansong Magazine)
- Catering (Canteen)
- Landscaping (College grounds)
- Food and plant production (Agriculture plot)
- Furniture and clothing (Textiles, I.A.)
- Paintings and pottery (Art)

Many of these activities could be run as mini-enterprises managed by the students themselves. There are dangers in 'entrepreneurial' education if the opportunities for critical reflection about the economic and social consequences of capitalism are taken for granted (Watkins, 1985). Cohen has also criticised the entrepreneurial spirit which is part of the new vocationalism in Britain:

"(The) combination of romantic individualism and penny-capitalism has a potentially wide appeal to young people whose routes into wage labour have been blocked (Cohen, 1984: 108).

Educators believe that schools are not responsible for producing teenage tycoons, nor is their mission to foster the spirit of capitalism. In discussing mini-enterprises run by school students, Cole points out that the profit motive has resulted in "such dubious practices as students engaging in high pressure selling, operating with disregard for health and safety precautions, undercutting community businesses and sabotaging other students' enterprises" (1987: 11-12).

Clearly, schools have a responsibility to teach alternative approaches to enterprise and productivity; for example, making socially useful products (Cooley, 1980), knowing about worker co-operatives, democratic and participative decision-making and so on.

An example of a successful enterprise by college students in Canberra, was the production of the magazine, *Momentum*. A Stirling College English teacher co-ordinated the magazine which involved students from different ACT colleges. The teacher was not the boss or even the editor; decisions about content, format, marketing and so on were taken by the students who came to see themselves as workers engaged in productive and socially useful work. The students learnt skills that enhanced their employability and their education. "Already links have been forged with the Rape Crisis Centre, the Tuggeranong Youth Centre and the AIDS Action Council. The growth of the network will...encourage the youngsters to be more outward-looking, more involved in serious youth issues and will bring matters of youth policy and services to the attention of their readers " (*Canberra Times*, 24.8.87). According to the co-ordinator, the success of the project was the active participation of 30 to 35 college students for the whole of 1987. The fact that they produced five quality magazines which actually 'said something worth while and stirred things up' gave the students a sense of achievement. Several went on to join university newspapers and one took up a cadetship as a journalist with the Sydney Morning Herald. The group received a $2,000 grant but ran at a loss. It was more successful as an educational project than as a business venture.

In discussing school based enterprise activities elsewhere in the ACT, Holmes and Hanley (1988) argue that the acceptance of failure as a possible positive outcome has to be part of such projects. Related to the 'productive school' approach to work experience, is the school-industry link which is now well established in the UK, the USA and locally in Victoria.

(c) School-Industry Links

As already noted, it is often difficult for some students to see the usefulness of what they do in the classroom for their future working lives. Typically, they see the college as school work, while 'real work' goes on outside. School-industry links help overcome this apparent gap between theory and practice. Again, what is already done so successfully could be extended to other areas of the curriculum. Existing programs include science students at CSIRO and secretarial studies students in the Public Service. Here the students see how what they learn at school is applied in the world of work. Such programs have advantages over conventional work experience placements in that student participation is greater and the work is integrated. For example, a science project could involve the students working with CSIRO scientists on a particular research area which could then be written up as a college assignment and assessed in the usual way. Other areas of the curriculum could benefit by having students do inquiry-based projects within industries or businesses. These include: legal studies in a law firm, graphic design in an architect's office, psychology in a counselling unit, foreign languages in diplomatic embassies and so on.

Again, using liberal vocationalism as the underlying rationale for projects of this kind, students would need to reflect on wider social issues in a critical way. An excerpt from a recent British film promoting school-industry links illustrates why this is necessary. In a visit to a British Wedgewood factory, school children are taught about business in a role-playing exercise:

> Interviewer: *As deputy managing director, what is your job?*
>
> Pupil: Well, if Charlotte was away, I'd have to do her job which is managing director and as the Secretary I might have to write letters to ask people to sell the dishes where they work.... If people in the job were (inaudible) we might have to give them one chance and if they didn't do it right then they'd get the sack.
>
> Interviewer: *You'd sack them, would you?*
>
> Pupil: Yes.

What is remarkable about this exchange is that the pupil is a six year old girl. The narrator explains that five and six year olds are 'already deeply into industry' and are learning 'the standards that colleagues will expect'. Children in their infancy are being introduced to the requirements of modern industry - discipline, subordination, authority, hard work and productivity. While this might be important for developing teenage and todler tycoons, it is a very questionable activity for schools to be encouraging. Here, the needs of industry are given priority over the educational and personal development of pupils. While this is an extreme example, school-industry links which are designed to prepare students for the values and realities of the business world and which take these for granted, are not authentic examples of liberal vocationalism. To achieve the latter, educational-vocational goals need to be balanced.

The School Industry Project in Victoria recognises this in its stated goals to engage the "...school community and industrial community in a two-way exchange of information and experience...in an educational framework" (VISE, 1984:7). The project defines work broadly and assumes a critical approach; students are not required to accept work as it is, but are encouraged to consider future transformations of work. A major objective is to develop citizens and workers who know their rights and can act collectively to influence decision-making (Byron, 1985:12). An example of how students learn about industry and its links with the school curriculum (specifically food studies, humanities, business studies and careers) is the Fairfield Hospital Catering Project (see Appendix VIII). Such projects can have positive outcomes for the full-time workers as well. As the personnel officer of one company observed:

> "The individuals within our company who have met with students have benefited through the process of explanation and discussion. The self analyses and questioning of ideas that this prompts can have refreshing results" (Vise, 1984).

(d) School-Community Involvement

School-community links are related to the above, and have a longer tradition in Australian schools. Despite this, the most widely practised type of community involvement, work experience (sponsored and student-initiated) remains, as we have seen, separate from the curriculum. *In the National Interest* draws attention to the importance of part-time jobs as a possible bridge between school and work:

> "While much part-time work is exploitative and unlikely to provide skills of direct relevance to the future activities of school students, such work does provide some useful general experiences as well as experience of the realities of working in a certain sector of the labour market and of holding down a job. If these experiences are drawn on for curriculum offerings, especially those concerned with developing an understanding of work and/or society, they should help provide both working and non-working students with insights into the world of work and the structure of the labour market" (1987: 53-54).

How this can be achieved, albeit in a very limited way, has been described in Chapter 9. Varlaam (1983) has suggested the possible educational use of part-time job experience in the school curriculum. She argues that the learning experiences are more real than in school sponsored work placements and while they are more limited in range, they provide more consistent experience over a longer period. Students involved in part-time work may be reluctant for various reasons to have their out-of-school activities made the subject of classroom discussion. Unlike sponsored work experience placement, part-time work is in out-of-school hours and therefore inaccessible to teacher visits. Varlaam suggests the use of a diary and debriefing exercises for students willing to participate. In the ACT, the Schools Authority's Work Experience Log Book could be easily adapted to part-time work performed by students. The log book includes sections on the nature of the business, working conditions, training and promotion, payment and leave, the role of trade unions, new technology, and equal employment opportunity questions, all of which provide useful data for classroom or individual debriefing.

In addition, the experience of students in their part-time jobs in supermarkets and fast-food outlets as described in Chapter 7 provide the kind of ethnographic data which can be used as a basis for classroom analyses. Essentially, these jobs are 'people handling' jobs, as distinct from the people-oriented occupations to which many students aspire.

The community provides voluntary work in the latter in such places as homes for the aged, pre-schools, welfare organisations like the Smith Family, Life Line and so on. Like the school - industry programs discussed above, voluntary community work can be linked to college curricula in ways that enhance student learning and employability. Sociology or psychology students at Stirling College, for example, have visited rape crisis centres and women's refuges for the purpose of interviewing clients and social workers. Usually working in small groups of two or three, students are required to investigate how the centres are run, why they are needed, who uses them and whether or not they serve any useful social purpose. They may also report on the everyday working life of social workers and investigate the training and qualifications for such work.

Students enjoy these real-life field projects and learn a number of valuable insights and skills during the planning, research and reporting phases. In one such study of an ACT women's refuge, two sociology students visited the refuge over a period of three weeks (Friday nights and weekends) as participant observers. One of the girls succeeded in winning the confidence of the women by teaching them jazz ballet. As a result, the students produced a highly authentic ethnography of the refuge in a written report which demonstrated most of the skills identified by the Schools Commission as essential skills for secondary students: skills of rational enquiry, communication and expressive skills, social skills, physical skills and technological skills (1987:100). Most well executed field reports require competency in the first three skills and in this case included, in an oblique way, the latter two (performing jazz ballet and keyboard skills used for typing the report). More importantly, the successful completion of the project gave the students a sense of achievement and mastery and in the case of one of the students, inspiration to pursue a career in nursing. When linked to real-life concerns, school assignments take on a relevance and significance usually missing when school remains segregated from the community.

Every school subject can be related to everyday problems in society. Provided students are taken seriously as problem-solvers, school-community projects provide opportunities for skill development which enhance student learning and employability. A few examples will serve to indicate the potential value of such projects to the community as well:

. a geography class examining the transport routing network of a local company engaged in the distribution business;

. a sixth-form physics group using a firm's laboratories to see how mental fatigue is determined;

. a maths group seeing how mathematics and computing are used in a company's stock control procedure;

. a religious education class discussing, with an industrial chaplain and a firm's welfare officer the human and spiritual problems raised by industry;

. physical education students, with the assistance of a firm's safety officer and trade union health and safety representative, making a study of the physical aspects of industrial safety;

. a commerce class getting experience of a commercial office, its machinery, its layout and its methods;

. a design and technology group seeing computer-assisted design in operation and then working with the firm's craftspeople in learning about how the design would be translated into a product in industry.

Source: from Industry Year 1986: 3.1

Projects of this type are enquiry-based and are relatively easy to integrate within the relevant subject. As discussed earlier, conventional work experience can also be used as the basis for enquiry-based or research type programs although as we have seen, these will generally be attractive to the academically-oriented student. For most students, work experience gets its appeal by virtue of its lack of any close ties with the school. A former work experience coordinator for the ACTSA, for example, believes that student evaluation, of work experience indicate that "...the lack of 'contamination' of the workplace by school is what makes work experience so attractive and valuable for students" (Norrington, 1987:8). Yet elsewhere, the coordinators of work experience in the ACT note that six out of the eight ACT secondary colleges make no effort to link work experience with the rest of the curriculum and in most programs "...the nature of the experience is largely determined by employers and the work environments, and the influence of the school is relatively minor" (Goodwin and Norrington, 1982:7). The failure to integrate work experience within the curriculum is one of the most persistent criticisms wherever work experience programs are in operation. Jamieson and Lightfoot (1984) argue that without an adequate curriculum context, potential learning gains cannot be maximised. Similarly, Kemmis suggests that "the assumed motivational effects...are generally diminished by the school's failure to connect the experience with the student's educational experience" (1983:131). This is true for whatever form the work experiences takes - youth participation, mini enterprises, work simulation, work shadowing, school-industry/community links and the sponsored or student-initiated work experiences described in Chapters 7 and 8 of this study. How the most common types of work experience can be included in the curriculum as the subject of critical inquiry is discussed below.

(e) The Study of Work

According to the socially - critical orientation, the incorporation of the world of work in the curriculum means that it should become the subject not the object of study as in the neo-classical/vocational orientation. The liberal progressive orientation in education emphasises the preparation of students for life, of which the world of work is a part. The approach advocated in this thesis is liberal vocationalism, which as has been already described, seeks to liberate individuals from the instrumentalism of narrow vocationalism, while at the same time recognises the cultural imperative of work in our society. Bernard Davies has argued that young working class people in Britain are motivated by education with a clear vocational orientation but resist narrow vocationalism associated with "induction into already specified job skills" (1986:138). Davies believes that a progressive, vocationally-oriented curriculum need not be a contradiction in terms. He suggests an approach which utilizes the insights and experiences of young people themselves but warns that personal biographies are in certain respects limiting and need to be analysed.

Thus, the four case studies of the 'burger workers' (Appendix I) and the detailed profiles of Milly and Shaun (Appendix VI) could be treated in this way. All of these case studies raise issues of importance to college students. Because they offer perspectives on life and work in the words of the students themselves, they are authentic data to which their peers can relate. At least this has been the researcher's experience in using the case studies in *The World of Work* sociology unit at Stirling College.

Watkins has suggested a number of topics which could be included in a sociology of work course including unemployment and underemployment (1982:281). He argues that a reflective approach might eliminate any possibility of a one-dimensional perspective whereby students go on work placements without any subsequent classroom analysis of what they experienced. There is no shortage of topics which could be included in a work study curriculum (see for example *The World of Work Monographs*, CDC, 1987 and the Work Education Syllabus of the South Australian Department of Education, 1987).

The South Australian syllabus has the advantage of combining both substantive world of work topics (eg. trade union history, industrial relations, employment patterns in Australia and so on) and an experiential component incorporating the work experience of students. It permits the integration of work experience in the curriculum and treats the experiences of students as authentic data for reflective analysis. It is nevertheless limited in that it is confined to teaching about work within a single subject, in this case, work education.

While a subject-based approach is relatively easy to implement, that is to timetable, it has to compete with a multitude of other subjects. Unless it were made compulsory, as in Victoria, work education would inevitably be restricted to one or two classes and its educational value would be lost to the majority. As there is little likelihood of any course being made compulsory in ACT secondary colleges, the best future for a work education course would be in a work-across-the-curriculum approach.

Work education in the liberal vocational tradition is literally, education about work. The principles underlying work education are summed up by Hannaford (1982:109):

> "The whole of a general education enhances employability if the content of the syllabus can, in any way, be shown to be useful to the student"

As we have seen in chapter 8, many students are unable to see any link between what they learn, for example, in chemistry or history or geography or commerce, with the world outside the classroom. While teachers in the present study reject any form of vocationalism which is occupation-specific, they do see it in their interests to be able to demonstrate how their subjects are useful to students. A number of concrete proposals have been made in this chapter which are designed to help all teachers achieve this objective. They are concerned with improving the school-work link and the employability of school leavers and are outlined in (a) to (e) above.

At the time of writing, faculty heads at Stirling College have supported this approach to work education. One senior teacher, in answer to a colleague's question on how the ideas could be implemented, suggested that they 'should infuse everything we do'. The task remains however, for individual subject teachers to find their own strategies for implementing Willis's 'principled suggestions' as well as some of the more concrete ideas presented above.

APPENDIX VIII

Year 11-12 Investigation of Fairfield Hospital Catering

Aims and Objectives

In this project specifically we would be investigating a catering operation and the processes involved. We would also look at the nature of the work, the unions involved and the workers involved in the catering operation. It is our intention to produce a small booklet describing the catering operation at Fairfield Hospital.

Food and Catering Studies Component

1. **Purchasing**
   Storeroom operation, delivery, issuing. Dockets used, stocktaking, cold storage, fresh foods etc.

2. **The Menu**
   E.g. types used, cycle, choice, special menu planning considerations, nutritional diet. Costing, budgeting, staff menu, (doctors and others).

3. **The Kitchen**
   Departments and responsibilities. Staffing organisation and responsibilities e.g. Head Chef, 2nd Chef. Food preparation areas, wash up areas, safety, hygiene, shifts. Catering supervisor responsibilities. Training.

4. **Service**
   Types of service: patient, staff, doctors, other. Staffing organisation, shifts, hours, beverages.

5. **Equipment & Energy**
   Fuels used. Large equipment, small equipment, service equipment. Cleaning, storage, new technology. Steam, gas, electricity.

6. **Statistics**
   Number of patients, kitchen staff, service, meals, nurses, doctors, cleaners, gardeners etc.

7. **Dietician Area**
   Types of diets. How they work in the kitchen.

8. **Comparison with other Systems**
   E.g. hotels, restaurants, airport, industrial canteens, reception and function rooms, other hospitals.

Humanities Component

1. **Technology**
   How have the equipment and methods changed over the years? Has this changed the nature of work?

2. **Unionism**
   What unions are involved in this place of employment?
   How are they represented? How have salaries/conditions changed over time?

3. **Worker Health and Safety**
   What regulations are in operation and why? How are these enforced? Do they require further regulations to ensure their health/safety?

4. **Women in the Workplace**
   Investigations e.g. ratio men/women in each work area, ratio married/single, the percentage and location of migrant women employed. Does equal opportunity exist?

5. **Hospital Organisation**
   The structure/function of the different departments, in particular the Food Services department. Operation of hospital e.g. hiring/firing, staff welfare, maintenance, decision making, employer/employee relationships.

6. **Other Areas**
   The history of the hospital. Migrant employment e.g. migrant/anglo for which jobs? Employment of disabled people.

Business Studies Component

1. **Cash Flow**- Ordering/invoicing, credit.
2. **Accounts**
3. **Office Procedure**
4. **Production of booklet** - typing, format, collation, binding.

Careers/Work Experience Component

1. **Career Opportunities** - including qualifications, training.
2. **Work Experience.**

Source: VISE, 1984.

APPENDIX IX

SCOPE 87

SCOPE 87 YEAR 11 SURVEY
(Government and Non-Government Colleges)
STUDENT CHOICE OF OCCUPATIONS
AND PATHS IN EDUCATION

DIRECTIONS:

Use an HB pencil or darker pencil

Note: Since Scope 1986 and 1987 for both Year 11 and Year 12 are essentially the same, only one version is included here.

NAME OF COLLEGE: ____________________

1. Student I.D. Number (Optional)

Write your I.D. number in the boxes, then blacken the corresponding circles. Your I.D. number is necessary if we are to use your survey form to assist you with career counselling.

0	0	0	0	0	0
1	1	1	1	1	1
2	2	2	2	2	2
3	3	3	3	3	3
4	4	4	4	4	4
5	5	5	5	5	5
6	6	6	6	6	6
7	7	7	7	7	7
8	8	8	8	8	8
9	9	9	9	9	9

2. Your First Name: ____________________

3. Sex: Male ○ Female ○

4.

DATE OF BIRTH				
DAY		MONTH	YR	
		JAN ○	19-	
		FEB ○		
0	0	MAR ○		0
1	1	APR ○		1
2	2	MAY ○		2
3	3	JUN ○		3
	4	JUL ○		4
	5	AUG ○	5	5
	6	SEP ○	6	6
	7	OCT ○	7	7
	8	NOV ○		8
	9	DEC ○		9

5. What is the highest level of education attained by your parents?(Mark ONE only for each parent)

	Father	Mother
(i) Didn't attend school	○	○
(ii) Primary School	○	○
(iii) Some Secondary School	○	○
(iv) Completed Secondary School (Year 12)	○	○
(v) Technical College qualification (e.g. Trade Certificate)	○	○
(vi) Diploma (e.g. Diploma of Teaching)	○	○
(vii) Degree (e.g. B.A., B.Ed., B.Sc.)	○	○
(viii) Advanced Degree (e.g. M.A., Ph.D.)	○	○
(ix) Other / Don't know	○	○

6. What language do you speak at home?

English only ○
Mostly English ○
Mostly another language ○
Another language only ○

7. The average hours per week I spend doing 'homework' (school work outside of class) are:

None ○
less than 4 ○
4 to less than 8 ○
8 to less than 12 ○
12 to less than 16 ○
16 or more ○

8. The average hours per week I am presently working in paid employment are:

Not working ○
Working less than 4 ○
4 to less than 8 ○
8 to less than 12 ○
12 to less than 16 ○
16 or more ○

9. Are you presently looking for work? (excluding work during school holidays)

YES
- Full-time only ○
- Part-time only ○
- No preference ○

NO
- Not interested at the moment ○
- Found a job already ○

10. Have you discussed your future with:

	Yes	No
(i) Your family	○	○
(ii) Your friends	○	○
(iii) Your teachers	○	○
(iv) Your careers advisor	○	○
(v) Your student counsellor	○	○
(vi) Commonwealth Employment Service (CES)	○	○
(vii) Career Reference Centre	○	○
(viii) People at work (if you have/had a job)	○	○
(ix) Others, (please specify) ____________________	○	○

11. Have you ever taken part in a work experience programme sponsored by a school or college?

YES	○
NO	○

Was this useful in helping you think about your future?

Yes, useful	○
No, not useful	○

12. Have you decided on a job area for when you finish your studies?

Definitely	○
Partly	○
No	○

Do you need more information to help you decide on a job area?

Yes	○
No	○

13. In which of the following job areas would you prefer to work when you finish studying? Mark ONE circle for your first choice and ONE circle for your second choice. Refer to HELP SHEET for more information.

	First Choice	Second Choice
Agricultural/Horticultural	○	○
Armed Forces	○	○
Basic Manual/Processing/Plant/Transport.	○	○
Clerical/Sales	○	○
Services	○	○
Trades	○	○
Managerial/Supervisory	○	○
Nursing	○	○
Technicians/Technical Officers	○	○
Science/Maths Professionals	○	○
Health Diagnosis/Treatment Practitioners	○	○
Teaching	○	○
Social Professionals	○	○
Building/Engineering Professionals	○	○
Artistic/Literary Professionals	○	○
Business Professionals	○	○
Other Professionals	○	○
Other Jobs Not Listed Above	○	○
Undecided	○	○

(HELP SHEET lists jobs in the above categories)

14. For all of the T and A courses you have completed and intend to complete in Years 11 and 12 mark the appropriate circles. If a similar course name to one offered at your college is not printed, then write the course name in the appropriate space and mark the corresponding circle. Be sure that all T and A courses in your college studies are marked.

(Note: Be sure to include your intended Year 12 courses. You may always change your mind later.)

	T COURSES				A COURSES			
	Double Major	Major/ Minor	Major	Minor	Double Major	Major/ Minor	Major	Minor
ENGLISH								
English	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
E.S.L.	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Writing	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Media Studies	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Drama	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
....	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
MATHS								
Maths 1 (level 1,2,3;A,B,C)	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Maths 2	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Maths 3	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
....	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
COMPUTING								
Computer Studies	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Computers in Society	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
....	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
SCIENCE								
Physics	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Chemistry	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Electronics	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Physical Science	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Biology/Life Science	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Environmental Studies	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Agriculture	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Earth Science/Geology	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
General Science	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Multidisciplinary Science	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Science Health	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Oceanography	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Accredited Science	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
....	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
....	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
SOCIAL EDUCATION								
History/Modern History	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Ancient History/Civilizations	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Philosophy/P.B.S.	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Politics	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○

	T COURSES				A COURSES			
	Double Major	Major/ Minor	Major	Minor	Double Major	Major/ Minor	Major	Minor
Social Studies.......	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Geography............	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Archaeology/ Anthropology.........	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Behavioural Science	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Sociology..............	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Psychology............	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Religious Education/ Studies..................	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
....	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
....	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
LANGUAGES								
French..................	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
German................	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Spanish.................	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Russian................	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Italian....................	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Greek....................	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Chinese................	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Japanese...............	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Indonesian.............	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
....	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
THE ARTS								
Art/Craft..............	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Music..................	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Dance..................	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Photography.........	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Ceramics/Pottery...	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
....	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
COMMERCIAL								
Shorthand...........	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Typing.................	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Commerce............	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Economics...........	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Business Studies...	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Legal Studies........	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Accounting...........	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Small Business Management.........	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
....	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
PRACTICAL/DESIGN/ TECHNOLOGY								
Textiles..............	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Fashion...............	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Food Studies/Science	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Home Economics..	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Design................	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○

	T COURSES				A COURSES			
	Double Major	Major/ Minor	Major	Minor	Double Major	Major/ Minor	Major	Minor
Technology (e.g. motor, wood).....	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Tech Drawing/Drafting	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Industrial Arts.........	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Engineering Science	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
....	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT								
Physical Education...	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Recreation Studies...	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Human Movement..	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
....	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○

15. In June last year (1986) I was:

(i) not working in paid employment........... ○
(ii) working in paid employment part-time... ○
(iii) working in paid employment full-time.... ○
(35 or more hrs per week)

16. In June last year (1986) I was:

(i) not studying.................................... ○
(ii) studying part-time............................ ○
(iii) studying full-time............................ ○

17. In June next year (1988) I expect to be:

(i) not working in paid employment........... ○
(ii) working in paid employment part-time... ○
(iii) working in paid employment full-time..... ○
(35 or more hrs per week)

18. In June next year (1988) I expect to be:

(i) not studying.................................... ○
(ii) studying part-time............................ ○
(iii) studying full-time............................ ○

STOP HERE if not continuing your studies after this year.

19. Where do you expect to be studying when you finish your college studies? (Mark one circle only)

Canberra TAFE................................ ○
Bruce TAFE.... .... ○
Woden TAFE.................................. ○
Some other TAFE............................ ○
Institute of the Arts (Associate Diploma) ○
Business College,
Police or other training centre.............. ○

(Q. 19 Cont. over page)

COMPLETE Q.20 THEN STOP

Q. 19 (cont.)

Australian National University................. ○
Some other University........................... ○
Canberra College of Advanced Education.. ○
Some other C.A.E................................. ○
Signadou College of Education................ ○
Institute of the Arts (Diploma or Degree).... ○
Defence Force Academy........................ ○

OMIT Q.20 COMPLETE Q.21

Undecided .... ○

STOP HERE. NO MORE QUESTIONS

20. FOR TAFE or other training centres.

(i) When you finish your college studies, do you intend to take: (MARK ONE CIRCLE ONLY).

Refer to HELP SHEET for more information.

An Associate Diploma Course................. ○
An Advanced Certificate Course.............. ○
A Certificate Course.............................. ○
A Trade Certificate Course...................... ○
A Statement of Attainment Course........... ○
A Non-Award Course............................... ○
Some Other Course (eg Business, Police Cadet, Industry Training Course).... ○

(ii) In which area of study do you intend to enrol? (MARK ONE CIRCLE ONLY)

Art / Design.. ○
Building Studies.................................... ○
Business Studies................................... ○
Catering Studies.................................... ○
Community Studies................................. ○
Electrical Studies.................................. ○
Engineering Studies (technician).............. ○
Engineering Studies (trade)..................... ○
Fashion and Hair Design......................... ○
Horticultural/Agricultural Studies.............. ○
Information Studies................................ ○
Music.. ○
Science Studies..................................... ○
Secretarial Studies................................ ○
Other (please specify)............................. ○

Undecided/Don't Know........................... ○

(Refer to HELP SHEET for specific courses)

21. University or College of Advanced Education Studies in 1989 (or following deferment)

Which of the course areas listed in the next column is the ONE which you are considering most favourably for further study?

(MARK ONE CIRCLE ONLY)

Engineering (other than Chemical)........................ ○
Chemical Engineering....................................... ○

Agriculture (College),Horticulture, Environmental Studies.. ○
Agricultural Science (University),Forestry, Veterinary Science... ○

Medicine, Dentistry, Optometry, Pharmacy............ ○

Applied Physical Sciences,Geology, Metallurgy.... ○
Applied Biological and Food Sciences/Technologies............................ ○
University Science Courses.............................. ○
Mathematics, Mathematics and Science Education. ○

Computer Sciences/Studies.............................. ○

Therapy and Rehabilitation studies...................... ○
Nursing, Hospital Administration......................... ○
Nuclear Medicine.. ○

Building Science/Technology............................. ○
Architecture... ○
Surveying, Cartography..................................... ○

Fine Art, Graphic Design................................... ○
Industrial, Interior, Fashion and Textile Design...... ○

Drama, Media Studies, Journalism....................... ○
Photography... ○

Primary Teacher Education................................ ○
Early Childhood Care and Education.................... ○

Physical Education, Recreation........................... ○

Humanities, Social Sciences, Librarianship........... ○
Welfare Studies.. ○
Music... ○

Law and Law Combinations................................ ○

Economics, Accountancy................................... ○
Banking, Marketing, Insurance........................... ○
Secretarial Studies... ○
Food Service, Hospitality, Tourism...................... ○
Personnel and Business Administration................ ○
Town Planning, Transport, Public Administration.... ○

Other (Please Specify)...................................... ○

Undecided/Don't Know....................................... ○

END OF SURVEY
THANK YOU

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