

ADOLESCENTS' REFERENCE GROUPS
IN THE SCHOOL SITUATION

I hereby declare that this thesis is
all my own work and that all known
sources are acknowledged.

Phillipa Butcher *Phillipa R. Butcher*

Being a thesis submitted as partial
requirement for the degree of Master
of Arts at the Australian National University
April 1974



TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
CHAPTER 1 - INTRODUCTION	1
<u>The Reference Group Perspective</u>	2
<u>Identification of the Adolescent's Reference Groups</u>	4
<u>The School Situation</u>	10
<u>Summary</u>	17
CHAPTER 2 - METHODOLOGY	22
<u>The Study</u>	22
<u>Response</u>	26
<u>Interviews</u>	27
<u>The Interview Schedule</u>	27
<u>Reliability</u>	30
<u>Validity</u>	32
<u>Interpretation and Analysis</u>	33
<u>Generalization of the</u> <i>Phillipa R Butcher</i>	35
<u>Summary</u>	37
CHAPTER 3 - PARENTS AND FRIENDS AS REFERENCE GROUPS	41
<u>Identification of the Adolescent's Reference Groups</u>	42
<u>The Areas of Influence of Parents and Peers in the School Situation</u>	49
<u>The Perception of Differences between Peer and Parental Norms</u>	53
<u>Conclusion and Summary</u>	57
CHAPTER 4 - PEER AND PARENTAL INFLUENCE IN THE SCHOOL SITUATION	59
<u>Parental Influence on the Boys' Aspirations</u>	60
<u>The Implications of Future Aspirations for Present Performance at School</u>	63
<u>The Values of Schoolfriends - Academic or Anti-Academic</u>	70
<u>The Effect of Involvement in Leisure Activities on Academic Performance and Study</u>	75
<u>Conclusion and Summary</u>	92
CHAPTER 5 - CONCLUSION	94
APPENDIX 1 - INTERVIEW SCHEDULE	102
BIBLIOGRAPHY	105

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
CHAPTER 1 - INTRODUCTION	1
<u>The Reference Group Perspective</u>	2
<u>Identification of the Adolescent's Reference Groups</u>	4
<u>The School Situation</u>	10
<u>Summary</u>	17
CHAPTER 2 - METHODOLOGY	22
<u>The Sample</u>	22
<u>Response</u>	26
<u>Interview Location</u>	27
<u>The Interview Schedule</u>	27
<u>Reliability</u>	30
<u>Validity</u>	32
<u>Interpretation and Analysis</u>	33
<u>Generalization of the Results</u>	35
<u>Summary</u>	37
CHAPTER 3 - PARENTS AND FRIENDS AS REFERENCE GROUPS	41
<u>Identification of the Adolescent's Reference Groups</u>	42
<u>The Areas of Influence of Parents and Peers in the School Situation</u>	49
<u>The Perception of Differences between Peer and Parental Norms</u>	53
<u>Conclusion and Summary</u>	57
CHAPTER 4 - PEER AND PARENTAL INFLUENCE IN THE SCHOOL SITUATION	59
<u>Parental Influence on the Boys' Aspirations</u>	60
<u>The Implications of Future Aspirations for Present Performance at School</u>	63
<u>The Values of Schoolfriends - Academic or Anti-Academic</u>	70
<u>The Effect of Involvement in Leisure Activities on Academic Performance and Study</u>	75
<u>Conclusion and Summary</u>	92
CHAPTER 5 - CONCLUSION	94
APPENDIX 1 - INTERVIEW SCHEDULE	102
BIBLIOGRAPHY	105

LIST OF TABLES

<u>Table</u>	<u>Page</u>
3.1 The Adolescents' Reference Groups	42
3.2 Perception of Ability to Understand	44
3.3 Perception of Ability to Advise	47
3.4 Reference Groups for Future Occupation	50
3.5 Reference Groups for the Choice of Subjects	52
3.6 Reference Groups for Leisure Activities	52
3.7 Similarity of Parents' and Friends' Ideas	55
4.1 The Association Between a Boy's Aspirations and his Parents' Expectations	61
4.2 The Association Between a Boy's Aspirations and his Socio-economic Background	62
4.3 The Association Between a Boy's Aspirations and his Academic Performance	65
4.4 The Association Between Parents' Expectations and Encouraging Behaviour	67
4.5 The Association Between Parental Encouragement and a Boy's Level of Study and Academic Performance	69
4.6 The Association Between a Boy's Participation in Leisure Activities and his Friends' Participation in Leisure Activities	75
4.7 The Association Between Study and Academic Performance, Controlling for IQ Score	77
4.8 The Association Between Study and Aspirations	78
4.9 The Association Between Study and Aspirations, Controlling for Academic Performance	79
4.10 The Association Between Playing Sport and Studying	81
4.11 The Association Between Playing Sport and Academic Performance	82
4.12 The Association Between Going to Dances/Parties and Study	83
4.13 The Association Between Going to Dances/Parties and Academic Performance	84
4.14 The Association Between Going to Friends' Places and Study	85
4.15 The Association Between Going to Friends' Places and Academic Performance	86
4.16 The Association Between Going Out at Night and Study	87
4.17 The Association Between Going Out at Night and Academic Performance	88
4.18 Level of Parental Encouragement for Boys High on Leisure Activities and Low on Academic Performance	91

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Most researchers who have studied the relationship between the adolescent, his parents and his peers have cast parents and peers as mutually exclusive forces - to follow one is automatically to reject the other. These researchers have turned up inconsistent findings, some finding the adolescent's conformity to his peers so great that they write of a separate youth culture, while others have found that the adolescent is still very much under the thumb of his parents.

It is a basic tenet of reference group theory that an individual may be simultaneously influenced by different reference groups, and that an individual's reference groups may have different, even conflicting, norms and values. It is only when the area of influence of different reference groups overlap, and they make conflicting demands on the individual in the one situation, that he may be forced to choose between the different groups.

The few researchers who have assumed that the adolescent may be influenced by both parents and peers have found that, in fact, this is so. Both parents and peers influence the adolescent, but in different area of his life. These findings to some extent explain inconsistencies in the findings of researchers who assume that only peers or parents can be influential. Emphasis on some areas of the adolescent's life will produce the finding that he is strongly influenced by his peers, and given the differences between peer and parental values, this has been taken to mean he is not influenced by his parents. Conversely, emphasis on other life areas is likely to suggest that the adolescent is mainly influenced by his parents.

The basic hypothesis of this study is that the adolescent will be influenced by both peers and parents, although they may have different, even conflicting, norms and values. The study will centre around an investigation of peer and parental influence on the adolescent in the school situation. The school situation was specifically selected because the literature suggests that here the adolescent will come under conflicting pressures from parents and peers. The school situation should therefore constitute a demanding test of the adolescent's ability to meet the possibly conflicting demands of both parents and friends.

The Reference Group Perspective.

The hypothesis underlying this study is that the adolescent will be influenced by both parents and peers, although they may have different, even conflicting norms and values. Since the reference group is a precise concept for measuring interpersonal influence, the hypothesis can be stated:

The adolescent will take both parents and peers as reference groups even though they may have different, even conflicting norms.

Reference group will be used here to denote 'any group to which a person relates his attitudes'.¹ The problem has been approached from the perspective of reference group theory because the concept reference group was developed specifically to cope with the fact that in a highly differentiated society, the individual has had to learn to live with different and not necessary compatible, influences from the groups he associates with. Cottrell & Foote have pointed out that Sullivan coined the term significant other because Mead's generalized other, developed at a time when society was still a 'fairly wholesome web' had limited application in a highly differentiated society.² Similarly, Sherif has argued that in a stable, integrated and less differentiated society there would be less need for reference group as a concept distinct from membership group.³ In a heterogeneous society, multiple group

membership often carries with it the possibility that the individual will come under pressure from his membership groups to conform to different and possibly conflicting norms. The extent to which he follows a group's norms will depend on the extent to which he accepts it as a reference group. It seems likely that for most adolescents, parents and peers will constitute membership groups with different, even conflicting norms, and the extent to which the adolescent follows peer and parent norms will depend on the extent to which he takes them as reference groups.

Basic to reference group theory is the assumption that different reference groups may influence different areas of an individual's cognitive structure or even different aspects of his attitudes. Thus, if an attitude is assumed to consist of a relationship between a person and an object, one reference group may influence the person's self concept, while another may influence his conception of the object. Further, reference group theorists argue that the reference groups of most individuals tend to be mutually sustaining.⁴ They do not deny the possibility of conflict between an individual's reference groups, but suggest that it does not usually occur over basic issues and need not necessitate rejection of one or other of the conflicting groups. They point out that most people live more or less compartmentalized lives, participating in a number of different social worlds and acting out different roles in each world.⁵ It is only when different social worlds overlap and reference groups define the same situation differently and make conflicting demands that a choice may have to be made between reference groups.⁶

The implications of reference group theory for the study of the interrelation of peer and parental influence on the adolescent are: first, both parents and peers may be taken as reference groups; second, they may exert their influence in different areas; third, there may be

differences between peer and parental norms without one or other group having to be rejected. Only if peers and parents made conflicting demands on the adolescent in the same situation would this be likely to occur.

Literature on the youth culture suggests that the school situation may be one situation in which parents and peers will make conflicting demands. Parents will emphasise the educational and occupational implications of the school and their implications for academic performance, and press the adolescent to study. Peers will develop short term status systems centering around non-academic aspects of the school, devaluing academic achievement and distracting the adolescent from his studies. Because this may be a situation where peers and parents make different, and conflicting, demands on the adolescent, a study of the interrelationship of peer and parental influence on the adolescent in the school situation should constitute a demanding test of the hypothesis.

There will be four steps in this investigation

(1) the determination of whether both parents and peers will be taken as reference groups

(2) the specification of the area of influence of peers and parents in the school situation

(3) the assessment of the nature of the conflict between peer and parental norms

(4) the identification of the content of peer and parental pressure in the areas of the school situation in which they are accepted as reference groups.

Identification of the Adolescent's Reference Groups

The literature on the relationship between adolescents, their parents and their friends reaches inconsistent conclusions. Theorists

are almost unanimous in their claim that adolescents reject all influence from their parents. Some research supports this, while other research has found that parental influence remains paramount. A few researchers, working within the reference group framework, have found both parents and peers to be influential, but in different areas.

Theorists of psychology and sociology alike argue that parents are not taken as reference groups by their adolescent children. Psychologists argue that, the developmental tasks of adolescence - the need to come to terms with reawakening sex drives and to establish an autonomous self independent of the family - disrupt the close family relationships of childhood, and drive the adolescent into the arms of his friends. Friends share his new fears, feelings and doubts, and support him in the drive for independence from his parents. Parental influence, already weakened by the adolescent's turmoil, is further diminished as the peer group, in return for its support, demands conformity to its norms. Thus Douvan & Gold write;

The adolescent is propelled into friendship by the psychic conflicts of his age and by the ego task he faces He needs friends desperately and the character of the adolescent's needs gives friendship at this period its peculiar cast. Theoretically at least, adolescents cleave to peer norms as though any deviation - in dress or attitude or behaviour - somehow threatened the inner integrity.

Sociologists focus on the social and cultural conditions which 'create' the adolescent condition and argue that these render parents useless as guides for the adolescent. In a rapidly changing society, parents can no longer act as models for their children. Their occupational skills are often either obsolscent, or too specialised for their children to understand. Further, in the face of rapid change, they come to doubt their own understanding of society, and withdraw from the role of adviser to their children,⁸ encouraging them to 'play it by ear' and to rely on their peers for goals and standards of behaviour.⁹ At the same time, adolescents reject their parents

and the world they have created where there is no longer any 'man's work',¹⁰ and where the goal is suburbia.¹¹ Finally, the segregation of children from the rest of society that is effected by the school combines with the inadequacy of parents to turn adolescents to each other as the source of new values. On a broad enough scale, the new value systems form a youth culture, separate from, and often in opposition to, adult society.

Industrial society has spawned a peculiar phenomenon most evident in America, but emerging in other western societies, adolescent subcultures with values and activities quite distinct from those of the adult society - subcultures whose members have most of their important associations with themselves and few with adult society.¹²

The argument of psychologists and sociologists alike then, is that there are strong pressures in the situation of the adolescent which lead him to reject his parents as reference groups and to turn to his peers as the source of values and standards.

But research findings do not give clear and unchallenged support to the existence of a separate youth culture. Since its existence was first noted thirty years ago,¹³ a number of researchers have identified a youth culture which cuts across and undermines parental influence.¹⁴ The most impressive evidence for the existence of such a youth culture is given by Coleman.¹⁵ On the basis of extensive research in ten schools of varying socio-economic status, he claimed to have identified an adolescent society with its own subcultural values and status system which cut across the academic goals of parents and the school by devaluing academic achievement and rewarding athletic and social skills. However, critics of Coleman's work have argued that he exaggerated the influence of peers. Epperson rephrased the question on which Coleman based his claim that adolescents are more influenced by peers than parents so that the consequences of differing from peers and parents were more even.¹⁶ The change produced a strong swing away from peers back to

parents. Berger has disputed the separateness of the youth culture by pointing out that the values of Coleman's adolescent society are derived from and shared directly with parents, as, for instance, when fathers take their sons to the football match.¹⁷

Other research disputes the claim that adolescents are most strongly influenced by their friends. On the basis of an intensive study of twenty adolescents and their parents in Montreal, Elkin and Westley present a picture of a peer group that is integrated into, and managed by, the adult community.¹⁸ They found that adolescents relied very much upon their parents, turning to them for support even in social activities, and that parents were able to guide peer group activities to the very goals they themselves held for their children. Turner studied the senior students of ten Los Angeles high schools.¹⁹ He found that relationships with parents continued to be important. Conformity to peer group norms was segmental in that they affected only a part of an adolescent's life, and ritualistic in that peer group values could be acted out perfectly without inner conviction. Finally, on the basis of a study almost as comprehensive as Coleman's, Douvan & Adelson concluded:

We think most writers have overplayed both the potency of peer norms and the amount of discrepancy between parental and peer standards - for most adolescents there is no great discrepancy.²⁰

They did not claim that there were no revolts on the part of the adolescent, but they pointed out that these occurred over small issues of taste and manners that were often of little concern to parents - rebellions that were psychically necessary, but produced no real examination of, or challenge to, parental values.

These researchers present a picture of the adolescent that is in almost complete opposition to that of the proponents of the youth culture. They see the adolescent as still very much under the influence of his parents. The basis of these inconsistent findings may be the fact that both the proponents of the youth culture, and the researchers who depict

the adolescent as very much under the thumb of his parents, have subscribed implicitly to what Kandel & Lesser call the 'exclusive theory' of influence;

the assumption that if the adolescent leans much upon one external agent, he will lean little upon another; if not parents then peers; if not peers then parents. 21

One example of this is the question Coleman used to determine whether adolescents were more oriented to their peers or to their parents.

Which one of these things would be hardest for you to take - your parents' disapproval, your teachers' disapproval, or breaking with your friend. 22

The respondent is simply not given the chance to say that both parents and peers are important to him, and, noting the differences between parental and peer norms, these researchers have argued:

the stronger the rejection of adult standards, the stronger the acceptance of peer standards; and conversely the stronger the acceptance of adult standards, the less the need for accepting peer influence. 23

Reference group theory suggests this approach is unrealistic in that it does not reflect the complexity of the process of influence. Research which has assumed that both parents and peers may influence the adolescent has produced findings midway between this picture of adolescents as mainly influenced by parents and that of a cohesive adolescent subculture. In an analysis of changing orientation to parents and peers between the fourth and tenth grade, Bowerman & Kinch measured three different aspects of orientation

- (1) the group with which the child identified
- (2) the group the child thought of as having norms and values most like his own
- (3) the group the child preferred to associate with. 24

They measured changes both in overall orientation and in each aspect of orientation. They found overall that orientation to peers increased, while orientation to parents decreased. However, the change in orientation was not spread evenly over all aspects of orientation.

Association showed the greatest change away from parents, with 55.7% of tenth graders preferring to spend leisure time with their friends.

Identification showed the least change. Only 26.6% of tenth graders identified more closely with their friends.

Remmers & Radler found that teenagers considered their parents' opinions more important, and by implication accepted them as reference groups, with regard to politics, handling money, and personal problems.²⁵ Friends' opinions were considered more important on issues such as what to wear to a party and how to act when out with the gang. Brittain found that adolescent girls took their parents as guides to the broader society, where statuses to which they could aspire as an adult were located.²⁶ Friends were taken as guides on issues of short term status, such as how to dress for a party. These findings suggest that adolescents take both parents and friends as reference groups but for different areas of their lives. There is substantial agreement over the areas of peer and parental influence. Peers will be accepted as reference groups for leisure activities - what clubs to join, how to act when out with the gang, what dress to wear to a party. Brittain has summed these up as issues of short term status based on leisure activities within the peer society. Parents will be taken as reference groups on political, financial, and broad moral issues - issues summed up by Brittain as having to do with the broader society where the statuses to which the adolescent can aspire as an adult are found. These are also the issues which adolescents themselves consider are most important.²⁷

These findings offer an explanation of why other researchers have reached inconsistent conclusions. Research which focusses on the short term leisure values of the peer culture is likely to find that adolescents are peer oriented and the implicit acceptance of the exclusive theory of influence - if peers are influential, then parents

cannot be - leads them to conclude that adolescents are influenced mainly by peers. Similarly, research which focuses on issues of long term consequence is likely to exaggerate the influence of parents. Because the findings that both parents and peers influence adolescents are based on a realistic measure of the influence process, and because they are able to reconcile conflicting research findings based on less realistic measures of influence, it seems reasonable to accept that both parents and peers will be taken as reference groups by the adolescent.

The School Situation

(i) Areas of parental and peer influence in the school situation.

The school situation has both long and short term implications, as the literature on the youth culture suggests. The basic meaning of school lies in the implications of academic performance for future educational and occupational status. Parents are likely to emphasise this meaning. However, systems of short term status based on popularity, social activities and athletics often grow up within the school and detract from the academic goals of the school. Friends emphasise these. Research findings reported in the previous section suggest that parents are taken as guides on issues of long term significance to do with future status in the adult world, while peers are taken as guides in areas of short term status, centering around leisure and social activities. It seems, therefore, that parents will be taken as reference groups for the long term implications, of the school situation, specifically the adolescent's educational and occupational aspirations, and that peers will be taken as reference groups in areas of short term status centering around leisure activities.

(ii) The Extent of Conflict between Peer and Parental Norms.

It is difficult to assess the extent and nature of the conflict between peer and parental norms. On the one hand, Elkin & Westley found there was very little conflict and that the peer group was integrated

into the adult community.²⁸ On the other hand, Parsons characterized the peer culture in terms of

compulsive independence of and antagonism to adult expectations and authority. 29

Reference group theory suggests that since research has found that both parents and peers are taken as reference groups, a position intermediate between Elkin & Westley's picture of no conflict at all and Parson's picture of complete conflict, is more probable. Most theorists are agreed that an individual's reference groups are likely to be mutually sustaining, and that where differences do exist, they are likely to be peripheral, and overcome by compartmentalization.³⁰ One basis for this lies in the fact that reference groups act as both independent and dependent variables. Turner distinguishes between 'identification groups', or reference groups which are the source of an individual's values, and 'valuation groups', or groups which serve not as a source of new values, but as standards against which the individual compares himself. He labels this form of reference group a valuation group because it is adopted by the individual on the basis of values he already holds.³¹ This suggests that values acquired from earlier reference groups are instrumental in determining which other groups will be selected as reference groups. Research on the selection of new reference groups supports this by its findings that new reference groups are chosen at least partly on the basis of their similarity with existing reference groups.³² This does not mean that new reference groups will not go to develop new values in the areas in which they operate, or that these values will be the same as those of earlier reference groups. But it is unlikely that there will be basic differences in the values of the reference groups with which an individual is closely associated.³³

Since the peer group only assumes importance after the child's

basic socialization is complete,³⁴ it would seem that which peers will be used as reference groups will be determined partly by values internalized during childhood. The peer group, however, opens up a whole new field of social and leisure activities, and these may produce conflict with parents. But they will not necessarily challenge basic parental values. Within the peer group the adolescent has the opportunity to play sex and leadership roles which are essential to his development as an adult, but which cannot be played within the sex and power structure of the family.³⁵ Thus Gold & Douvan describe peer group experience as a 'benign apprenticeship' to adulthood.³⁶ It is quite likely that the enactment of these roles will bring the adolescent into conflict with his parents, particularly if he wants to become too adult too fast. But this conflict is not a challenge of adult values, but rather an endorsement of them. Adolescents do not reject adults, but rather seek themselves to become adult too early. Douvan & Adelson found that conflict between parents and adolescents tended to occur in areas the parents were not basically concerned about - in one family 'father and son locked horns in a bitter dispute about popular music'.³⁷ But on issues about which parents were concerned, they found little difference between peer and parent opinion. Similarly, Turner found that peer values affected only a segment of adolescent life, and did not challenge the value on academic achievement internalized in childhood.³⁸ This suggests that while peer and parental norms may conflict, the conflict will probably be peripheral, and the basic values of the parents will not be challenged.

(iii) The Content of Peer and Parental Influence in the School Situation.

Research findings reported in the previous sections, suggest that parents and peers will be taken as reference groups in different areas of school life, and that they may make conflicting demands on the adolescent in school. To ascertain the extent to which the adolescent

is able to satisfy the demands of both groups, the content of these demands must be specified more precisely. In section (i) it was argued that parents will be taken as reference groups for those aspects of school life which relate to the adolescent's status in the broader society, specifically his educational and occupational aspirations. A substantial amount of research has been done on the way parents attempt to influence their children's aspirations, and this suggests three basic ways in which parental influence is exerted. First, parents influence their children's educational and occupational plans by the goals they encourage them to achieve. Kahl conducted an in-depth study of 24 working class boys who were matched on intelligence, but who differed in aspirations - half planned to go to college, while half did not.³⁹ Kahl found that parents' expectations had a crucial effect on the boys' aspirations. The parents of unambitious boys tended to feel that their way of life was to be preferred. They had no aspiration to rise any higher on the occupational scale and were content just to 'get by'. They exerted no pressure on their sons to aim any higher than they themselves had. Parents of ambitious boys, in striking contrast, felt that they had not risen as high as they should, and were concerned to get ahead. They saw occupational stratification in terms of education differences and were convinced that their lack of education had been a handicap. They encouraged their sons to take school very seriously and to aim for college. Kahl found that the boys learned to an extraordinary degree to view the occupational system from their parents' perspective, and set their goals accordingly. Further studies confirmed and elaborated Kahl's findings. Bordua studied adolescents from three different religious groups and found that in each case parental encouragement of educational and occupational goals contributed significantly to the adolescent's aspirations.⁴⁰ In perhaps the most thorough investigation of all, Sewell & Shah studied the effects on

college aspirations of intelligence, socio-economic status and parental encouragement.⁴¹ They found that, partialling out the effects of socio-economic status and intelligence, parental encouragement had the highest significant correlation with aspirations.

Secondly, parents influence their children's aspirations indirectly through the background correlates of socio-economic status. It is a truism that children from high socio-economic status backgrounds are more likely to go on to higher education.⁴² Many different studies, defining variables differently, have found that the intention to go to university is positively related to socio-economic status, and that the relationship continues to be significant when other variables associated with both socio-economic status and aspirations - sex, intelligence, academic achievement, neighbourhood characteristics - are controlled.⁴³

Although both of these pressures are applied to the adolescent's future goals, they will have a very real implications for his present behaviour because research has shown that adolescents recognize that their present academic performance must be congruent with their future goals.⁴⁴

Parents, too, are very well aware of the implications of present performance for future prospects. Parental concern for the adolescent's future is not expressed only in pressure on his aspirations. Some parents impress upon their children the importance of school and of doing well now. As Toby has pointed out:

it should not be taken for granted that any child, whatever his socio-economic origin, will find school a pleasant experience from the very first grade. On the contrary there is reason to believe that starting school is an unpleasant shock.⁴⁵

To the child, school is an invasion of freedom, an obligation imposed by adults. However, some parents make it quite clear to their children that school must be taken seriously. They constantly reinforce the

prestige and authority of the teacher and if the child has difficulty with his work, they are eager and competent to help. Kahl found that the parents of ambitious boys started applying pressure on their sons very early, encouraging good marks and stressing the value of school.⁴⁶

In section (i) it was argued that peers would be taken as reference groups on issues of short term status centering around leisure activities. Research findings suggest that the content of peer influence on the adolescent's leisure activities will have a negative effect on his academic achievement.

There are two ways peers will exert their influence. The first is through the effect of peer values on the adolescent's attitude to academic achievement. In his investigation, Coleman found that the peer culture held anti-academic values. Most students preferred the image of star athlete, or leader in extra-curricular activities to the image of brilliant student. Membership in student elites was based on personality, good looks and social skills rather than on academic achievement.⁴⁷ In a replication of Coleman's study, Kandel & Lesser also found that popularity and athletic success were preferred to the brilliant student image.⁴⁸ They concluded that 'the climate of American high schools does not appear to reward academic achievement'.⁴⁹ Similarly, Tannenbaum found that athletic ability was highly valued, while studiousness was not.⁵⁰ In a study of Queensland adolescents, Campbell found that academic excellence was valued far less than sporting prowess or popularity. He concluded, in the same vein as Kandel & Lesser, that

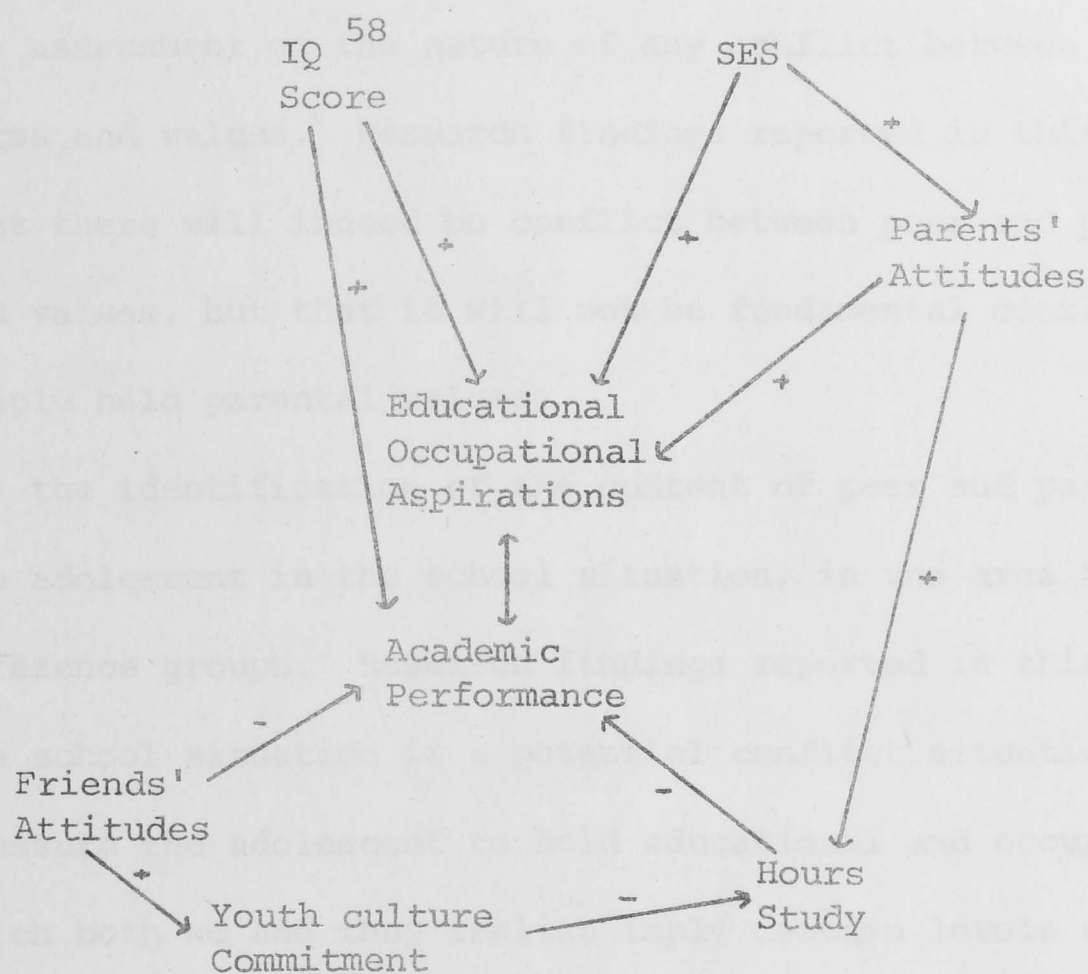
there seems little doubt that, in general, peer groups do not give strong support to school authorities and academic learning.⁵¹

One lone study stands out against this. Turner found that academic achievement was positively valued by the Los Angeles students he studied.⁵²

The second way the peer group influences the adolescent's response to the school situation is through the effect of involvement in youth

culture activities on the adolescent's limited resources of time. A number of studies have found that by the time the student reaches high school, academic success demands a good deal of study.⁵³ Involvement in youth culture activities, whether they support or undermine the academic values of the school, may eat into time that should be devoted to study. Research findings here are inconsistent. Turner found that high involvement in social activities did not necessarily produce a low rating on academic achievement.⁵⁴ In a re-analysis of Coleman's data, Snyder found a similar situation.⁵⁵ In seven of the ten schools studied by Coleman, Snyder found that athletic stars had higher than average grades. On the other hand, Kahl found that involvement in youth culture activities was coupled with low academic achievement.⁵⁶ Studies of British adolescents also found that commitment to youth culture activities was associated with low academic performance.⁵⁷

Research findings specifying the way parents and peers will influence the adolescent in the school situation suggest it may be a potential conflict situation. On the one hand, the adolescent is pressured by his parents to hold educational and occupational aspirations which both he and they know imply certain levels of academic achievement in the present. On the other hand the adolescent is pressured by his friends to join in the leisure activities which confer short term status, and may eat into time that should be devoted to study. The pressures exerted by parents and peers on the adolescent in the school situation can be depicted schematically:



Through an investigation of the adolescent's response to these pressures, the hypothesis that the adolescent will take both parents and peers as reference groups, even though they may have different, even conflicting norms and values, will be tested.

Summary

The object of this study is to discover whether the adolescent will take both parents and friends as reference groups, even when they have different, and possibly conflicting norms and values.

The study will centre around four issues:

- (1) determination of whether both parents and peers will be taken as reference groups by the adolescent. Research findings reported in this chapter suggest that they will be.
- (2) specification of the area of influence of peers and parents in the school situation. Research findings reported in this chapter suggest that parents will be taken as reference groups for the long term implications of the school situation, specifically educational and occupational aspirations. Peers will be taken as reference groups on issues of short term status centering around leisure and social activities.

(3) assessment of the nature of any conflict between peer and parental norms and values. Research findings reported in this chapter suggest that there will indeed be conflict between peer and parental norms and values, but that it will not be fundamental conflict, challenging deeply held parental values.

(4) the identification of the content of peer and parental pressure on the adolescent in the school situation, in the area he accepts them as reference groups. Research findings reported in this chapter suggest the school situation is a potential conflict situation. Parents will pressure the adolescent to hold educational and occupational aspirations which both he and they realize imply certain levels of academic achievement in the present. Peers will pressure the adolescent to join in the leisure activities that confer short term status, and may eat into time that should be devoted to study. The adolescent's response to these pressures will reveal the extent to which he is able to satisfy the demands of both groups.

Footnotes

- 1 Kelley, H.H. "Two Functions of Reference Groups" in Swanson, G.E., Newcomb, T.M. & Hartley, E.L. (eds) Readings in Social Psychology New York, Henry Holt, 1952. p.410
- 2 Cottrell, L.S. & Foote, N.N. "Sullivan's Contributions to Social Psychology", quoted in Haller, A.O. & Woelfel, J. "Significant Others and their Expectations: Concepts and Instruments to Measure Interpersonal Influence on Status Aspirations". Rural Sociology, 37 (4), 1972, p.593.
- 3 Sherif, M. "The Concept of Reference Groups in Human Relationships", in Sherif, M. & Wilson, M.O. (eds) Group Relations at the Crossroads New York, Harper Brothers, 1953.
4. Shibutani, T. "Reference Groups as Perspectives" in Manis, J.G. & Meltzer, B.N. (eds) Symbolic Interaction: A Reader in Social Psychology Boston, Allyn & Bacon, 1972 p. 168; Kuhn, M.H. "The Reference Group Reconsidered" in Manis, J.G. & Meltzer, B.N. op. cit. p. 178.
- 5 Shibutani, T. op. cit. p. 168
- 6 ibid pp. 168-69

- 7 Gold, M. & Douvan, E. Adolescent Development: Readings in Research and Theory. Boston, Allyn & Bacon, 1969, p.171.
- 8 Blos, P. "The Child Analyst Looks at the Young Adolescent" in "Twelve to Sixteen: Early Adolescence" Daedalus, 100(4), 1971, p.973.
- 9 Riesman, D. The Lonely Crowd. New Haven, Yale University Press, 1961.
- 10 Goodman, P. Growing Up Absurd. New York, Vintage Books, 1960.
- 11 Bettelheim, B. "The Problem of Generations" in "Youth: Change and Challenge" Daedalus, 91(1), 1962.
- 12 Coleman, J.S. "The Adolescent Subculture and Academic Achievement" American Journal of Sociology, 65(4), 1960, p.337.
- 13 Parsons, T. "Age and Sex in the Social Structure of the United States", American Sociological Review, 7(1), 1942.
- 14 Gordon W. The Social System of the High School. Glencoe, Free Press 1957. England, R.W. "A Theory of Middle Class Delinquency" in Vaz, E.W. (ed) Middle Class Juvenile Delinquency, New York, Harper & Rowe, 1967. Myerhoff, H.L. & Myerhoff, B.G. "Field Observations of Middle Class Gangs" in Vaz, E.W. op. cit.
- 15 Coleman, J.S. The Adolescent Society. Glencoe Free Press of Glencoe 1961.
- 16 Epperson, D.C. "A Re-assessment of Indices of Parental Influence in 'The Adolescent Society'" American Sociological Review, 29(1), 1964.
- 17 Berger, B.M. "Adolescence and Beyond" Social Problems, 10(4), 1963.
- 18 Elkin, F. & Westley, W.A. "The Myth of Adolescent Culture" American Sociological Review, 20(6), 1955. Westley, W.A. & Elkin, F. "The Protective Environment and Adolescent Socialization" Social Forces, 35(3), 1957.
- 19 Turner, R.H. The Social Context of Ambition, San Francisco, Chandler, 1964, pp.144-47.
- 20 Douvan, E. & Adelson, J. The Adolescent Experience. New York, John Wiley, 1966, p.81.
- 21 Kandel, D.B. & Lesser, G.S. Youth in Two Worlds. London, Jossey-Bass, 1972, p.8.
- 22 Coleman, J.S. The Adolescent Society, Appendix, Fall Students' Questionnaire, Boys' Version, p.6.
- 23 Kandel, D.B. & Lesser, G.S. op. cit. p.7.
- 24 Bowerman, C.E. & Kinch, J.W. "Changes in Family and Peer Orientation of Children between Fourth and Tenth Grades" Social Forces, 1959, 37(3).
- 25 Remmers, H.H. & Radler, D.H. The American Teenager. New York, Bobbs - Merrill, 1957, p.222.
- 26 Brittain, C.V. "Adolescent Choices and Parent-Peer Cross-Pressures" American Sociological Review, 1963, 28(3).

- 27 Brittain, C.V. "An Exploration of the Basis of Peer Compliance and Parent Compliance" Adolescence 2 (8), 1968.
- 28 Elkin F., & Westley, W.A. op. cit.
- 29 Parsons, T. "Psychoanalysis and the Social Structure" quoted Elkin, F. & Westley, W.A. op. cit. p.681.
30. Shibutani, T. op. cit. p.168
- 31 Turner, R.H. "Role Taking, Role Standpoint, and Reference Group Behaviour" American Journal of Sociology, 61(4),1956,p.328
- 32 Hartley, R. "Norm Computability, Norm Preference and the Acceptance of New Reference Groups" Journal of Social Psychology, 52, 1960
"Relationship Between Perceived Values and Acceptance of a New Reference Group" Journal of Social Psychology, 51(1960) Newcomb, T.M.
"Student Peer - Group Influence" in Rosen, B.C., Crockett, H.J. & Nunn, C.Z. Achievement in American Society Cambridge (Mass), Schenckman, 1969, p. 308.
- 33 Kuhn, M.H. op. cit. p. 178.
- 34 Eisenstadt, S.N. From Generation to Generation: Age Groups and Social Structure New York, The Free Press, 1956. p.187
- 35 Dunphy, D. Cliques, Crowds and Gangs. Melbourne, Cheshire, 1969, pp. 17-20.
- 36 Gold, M. & Douvan, E. op. cit., p.175.
- 37 Douvan, E. & Adelson, J. op.cit., p.81.
- 38 Turner, R.H. The Social Context of Ambition, pp. 144-47.
- 39 Kahl, J.A. "Educational and Occupational Aspirations of Common Man Boys" Harvard Educational Review, 23, 1953.
- 40 Bordua, D.J. "Educational Aspirations and Parental Stress on College" Social Forces, 38(3), 1960.
- 41 Sewell, W.H. & Shah, V.P. "Social Class, Parental Encouragement and Educational Aspirations" American Journal of Sociology, 73(5),1968
- 42 ibid p.559
- 43 Baldock, C.V. Vocational Choice and Opportunity, New Zealand, University of Canberra, 1971, p.19.
- 44 Spady, W.G. "Lament for the Letterman: Effects of Peer Status and Extra-curricular Activities on Goals and Achievement" American Journal of Sociology, 75(5)1970, p.685.; Sewell, W.W., Haller, A.O. & Ohlerendorf, G.W. "The Educational and Early Occupational Attainment Process, Replication and Revision", American Sociological Review, 35(6),1970,1025.
- 45 Toby, J. "Orientation to Education as a Factor in the School Maladjustment of Lower Class Children" in Rosen, B.C., Crockett, H.J. & Nunn, C.Z. op. cit. p.217.

- 46 Kahl, J.A. op. cit.
- 47 Coleman, J.S. The Adolescent Society
- 48 Kandel, D.B. & Lesser, C.S. op. cit.
- 49 Kandel, D.B. & Lesser, C.S. "Parental and Peer Influences on Educational Plans of Adolescents" American Sociological Review, 34(2), 1969, p.222.
50. Tannenbaum, A.J. "Adolescent's Attitudes towards Academic Brilliance", cited in Campbell, W.J. & McSweeney, R.V. "The Peer-Group Context" in Campbell, W.J. (ed) Scholars in Context, Sydney, John Wiley & Sons, 1970, p.139.
- 51 Campbell, W.J. & McSweeney, R.V., ibid.
- 52 Turner, R.H. The Social Context of Ambition, p.148.
- 53 Kahl, J.A. op. cit.; Finger, J.A. & Silverman, A. "Changes in Academic Performance in the Junior High School", Personnel Guidance Journal, 45, 1966.
- 54 Turner, R.H. The Social Context of Ambition p.148
- 55 Snyder, E.E. "A Longitudinal Analysis of the Relationship Between High School Student Values, Social Participation, and Educational-occupational Achievement", Sociology of Education 42(3), 1969.
- 56 Kahl, J.A. op. cit.
- 57 Hargreaves, D. Social Relations in a Secondary School, London, Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1967. Sugarman, B. "Involvement in Youth Culture, Academic Achievement, and Conformity in School" British Journal of Sociology, 18(2), 1967.
- 58 IQ score was included as a control variable because of the close link between IQ score, academic achievement and aspirations. See for example Sewell, W.H. & Shah, V.P. "Socioeconomic Status, Intelligence and the Attainment of Higher Education" Sociology of Education, 40(1) 1967.

CHAPTER 2

METHODOLOGY

Data for the study were collected by semi-structured interviews with fourth form boys at a Canberra high school. The decision to use semi-structured interviews, together with the time limits of the project, limited the number who could be interviewed and made the selection of the sample very important. The decision to use semi-structured interviews, and the reasons for using as respondents fourth form boys at a particular high school are explained in this chapter. The interpretation of the data, particularly problems of validity and reliability, and the extent to which relationships based on a small sample can be generalized are also discussed.

The Sample.

(i) Selection of Boys.

Data were collected from fourth form boys at a Canberra high school. The decisions to focus on (1) boys (2) fourth formers and (3) a single high school all require explanation.

Boys only rather than both boys and girls were interviewed. Douvan and Adelson have pointed out that girls have closer relations with their parents than boys.¹ Murdock and Phelps found that boys and girls participate differently in youth culture activities.² To maximise the homogeneity of a small sample in order to highlight the effect of other variables considered more crucial, it was decided to concentrate on one sex. Boys rather than girls were finally selected as for boys, the academic and non-academic aspects of school are more separate and the vocational implications of school are more clear. A boy must prepare for a career which will support not only himself but probably also a

wife and children. His social skills are less important than how well he does in school. For girls, the situation is not as clear. The most usual female occupation is still housewife-mother. The achievement of this status demands the successful development of social skills, particularly with age-mates. A recent study of Sydney adolescents suggests that adolescent girls emphasise social skills more than do boys of the same age.³ While they acknowledge the need to work hard in school to secure their future occupation, they see the development of social skills as almost as important.⁴ Overseas research has found a similar situation. Douvan & Adelson found that a boy's occupational goals give meaning to his present activities, but that girls' occupational plans are full of discrepancies and have little meaning unless they are seen as a means of expressing feminine needs, and of attaining the feminine goals of marriage and motherhood.⁵ Gribbons & Lohnes found similar differences between the attitudes of boys and girls to occupations.⁶ The implication of this is that for girls, the academic and non-academic sides of school life may both have vocational relevance. Pressure from peers to participate in youth culture activities will not necessarily come into conflict with parents' concern for their daughter's vocational future.

(ii) Selection of Fourth Formers.

Adolescence is a developmental process and there will therefore be considerable differences between boys of different ages. Gottlieb & Ramsey also suggest that participation in the youth culture is affected by age.⁷ Therefore, to minimize variability based on age differences, it was decided to focus on one form alone. Fourth form rather than fifth or sixth was selected because it provided a more representative sample of the age group concerned. The school leaving age in New South Wales and the A.C.T. is 15, and most boys do not turn 15 until they are

in fourth form. Thus they cannot leave before starting fourth form. An incentive to complete fourth form is provided by the fact that passes in the School Certificate examination taken at the end of fourth form are required for acceptance into most apprenticeships. Thus the majority of adolescents remain in school until they have completed fourth form. A substantial proportion then leave. In 1971, 94.7% of 15 year old and 75.5% of 16 year olds were still in school, compared with only 47.3% of 17 year olds.⁸

Focussing on fourth formers, however, raised the problem of the vocational maturity of the respondents. Ginzberg has suggested that occupational choice is a process that occurs over an extended period of time.⁹ He noted three stages.

(i) the fantasy stage, which lasts until the child is about 11 years.
(ii) the tentative stage, from about 11 years to 16 years, in which the adolescent begins to consider first the structure of occupational opportunity, and then his own abilities.
(iii) the realistic stage, from about 17 years on, when environmental and personal factors are integrated into a fairly definite occupational choice.

If Australian adolescents pass through the stages at about the same ages as Ginzberg's subjects did, then fourth form boys may be too young to talk realistically about their aspirations and the people who have influenced them. However, other research has qualified the timing Ginzberg suggested for the stages of occupational choice. Ginzberg based his estimates on studies of upper class families. Work on lower class youth has found that the realistic stage is reached earlier.¹⁰ Further, work done outside the United States has also found that the realistic stage is reached earlier.¹¹ It seems that the timing of the stages of occupational choice is strongly affected by factors in the adolescents' immediate environment. Clarity and realism in aspirations is to a large extent forced on fourth form boys of both low and high status in Canberra. The former must decide what work to

take up at the end of the year while the latter must decide which of the broad range of matriculation subjects must be taken to ensure acceptance into the university course they hope ultimately to enter. Only five of the 44 boys interviewed did not have fairly definite educational goals, while only seven did not have fairly definite occupational goals.

(iii) Selection of a Single High School.

It was decided to focus on one particular school as the effect that the school boy attends has on his aspirations is not clear. Boyle argued that the high school 'climate' in the schools he studied had a considerable effect on the aspirations of their students.¹² Sewell & Armer found that high school climates had only a slight effect.¹³ Other research suggests that the slight overall effect is composed of a larger positive effect combined with a smaller negative effect.¹⁴ Schools in high status neighbourhoods are more likely to produce higher proportions of boys planning to go to university, but they are also more likely to foster doubts in their students about their ability to do well academically. These findings suggest that the high school a boy attends could very well affect some of the key variables in this project, so it was decided to focus on one particular high school rather than to attempt to draw a random sample which could produce a variety of high school affects. The use of a random sample was further discouraged by the fact that a comparison of the boy's plans and attitudes with his friends' plans and attitudes was to be an integral part of the analysis. The researcher's own personal experience suggested that most adolescents who are attending school have most of their important social contacts with their school fellows. Pretests supported this, and, although 12 boys mentioned friends who were not attending the school, in the event, only four of the 44 boys interviewed said their closest friends were not attending the school.

The high school in which the interviewing was carried out was

selected for three reasons. First, it had a better mixture of socio-economic backgrounds than most Canberra high schools, drawing its students from a very high status suburb and a very low status suburb.¹⁵ Second, there were 60 boys in fourth form at the school. It was hoped that, after non-response, there would be enough respondents to make the project worthwhile, but not too many for one interviewer working within certain constraints of time and money. Finally, and perhaps most importantly, the headmaster of the school was prepared to have the interviews conducted in his school.

Response

Data were collected by interviews with all the boys who would agree to be interviewed. The initial contact with respondents was made through the school. A letter explaining the object of the research project was sent from the school to all parents of fourth form boys with the request that they return an attached form giving their consent for their son to be interviewed. The initial response was 22 (37%) agreements, 17 (28%) refusals and 21 (35%) nonresponses. All of the boys who had either declined to be interviewed, or failed to respond were approached personally by the interviewer, the reasons for the interview explained in more detail, and their co-operation requested. The personal approach was far more successful, and the final response rate was 44 (73%).

On the basis of their class in school and their home address, it is possible to specify some of the characteristics of the non-respondents that are relevant to this study. In terms of academic performance, non-respondents were under represented in the top three-quarters of the class and drastically over represented in the bottom quarter. Only three of the 16 were not doing the majority of their subjects at ordinary or modified levels. Non-respondents were also more likely to be taking the subjects associated with early leaving. Finally most

non-respondents lived in the lower class suburb, suggesting that more of them were from the lower socio-economic strata.¹⁶

Interview Location.

Interviews were conducted in the teacher's reading room in the school library. There were only two possible sites for the interview, the boys' homes, or the school. Each seemed to have disadvantages. It was doubtful whether all the boys' homes could provide a place for the interview to be held with the necessary privacy.¹⁷ Further, one of the main tasks of the interview was to assess the influence the boy's parents had on him. It was unlikely that boys would be able to talk about their parents freely and frankly in their own homes, knowing that their parents were somewhere about in the background. The teachers' reading room, seemed an ideal compromise because the library, although at the school, was quite different in both atmosphere and appearance from the classrooms.

The interviews were held in August, September and October 1973. Most were held in the lunch hour, although seven were held after school, and 13 in the vacation. The interview took on the average one hour. The shortest took 40 minutes, and the longest almost two hours.

The Interview Schedule.

A copy of the interview schedule can be found in Appendix 1. The questions were designed to gather information on four broad areas:

- (i) the attitudes of the boys, their parents and their friends to school
- (ii) the attitudes of the boys, their parents and their friends to work
- (iii) the attitudes of the boys, their parents and their friends to leisure activities
- (iv) measures of social influence.

Demographic data was also obtained. Most of the questions were constructed by the researcher, using questions used in previous research as a guide. A few questions were drawn directly from other research.¹⁸ The order of

questions was decided on the basis of pretests with 10 fourth form boys from other Canberra high schools. Generally, there was one question for each subsection of the subject area, and each question consisted of a series of smaller questions arranged in order of increasing specificity. First the topic was approached broadly to gauge the immediacy of the issue to the respondent and his general feelings about it. Then more specific questions were asked to elicit information on areas of particular importance to the project, and to discover the basis for the respondent's answers. Question 10 exemplifies this process.

How do your parents feel about school?
 Do they think it is important? Why?
 Are they interested in how you're going?
 How do they show their interest?
 Do they think you work hard enough at your schoolwork?
 What makes you think this?

Responses to even simple questions depend on the respondent's frame of reference. This may be different from that which the interviewer hypothesised the respondent would use, and from the frame of reference of other respondents. All responses were open to permit the respondent's frame of reference to direct his answers, and probing was used to ensure that the interviewer understood the respondent's frame of reference. This was particularly important for the question used to identify the boys' reference groups. Questions that had been used for this purpose in other research were tried out during pretests, but they were not very successful. For example, in his response to one question supposed to identify an individual's reference groups

"who are the people whose good opinion of you is most important to you?" 19

one boy did not mention his parents. When questioned about this he replied 'Well, your parents don't have an opinion of you do they?' Ultimately it was decided to use the simple question 'Who are the people who have most influence on the way you feel and behave?' followed by 'How do they influence you?' The word 'influence' could have had broader connotations

for the respondents than social influence, for example influence based on authority or power. On the other hand, some of the processes of social influence, for example internalization, are more subtle than the question suggests. To find out how the boys were interpreting the question, and to allow them to think through what is a rather complex process they were encouraged to elaborate on how the people they mentioned as sources of influence influenced them, until the interviewer understood what they understood by influence. The following excerpt illustrates how one boy interpreted influence, and how he thought through the process by which his parents influence him.

I think my parents used to have more influence. They still have a certain degree of influence, but they don't influence me so much now - it's more what they told me to do and that while I was young. They've always told me don't steal things like that. I suppose my parents and friends have an equal influence. Like I wouldn't steal anything, neither would my friends. We don't indulge in crime or anything because my parents - I've always taken notice of them, especially when I was young, so I suppose it's mainly my parents influence me even now. Though my friends do have a certain amount of influence.

By talking through the way he saw his parents as influencing him, this respondent gradually realized how the values he had learned from his parents in childhood still governed much of his behaviour. His awareness of the way his parents still influenced him increased as he talked about it, so that his answer was perhaps different from what it would have been if he had only had to answer yes or no.

Open responses were also used for the more factual information on how often the boys engaged in different leisure activities as the researcher had no basis for developing categories that would be meaningful in advance.

IQ scores for all but three of the boys were obtained from the New South Wales Department of Education.¹⁹ The boys' academic performance was assessed on the basis of school records of examination and assignment results.²⁰

The interviews were tape recorded and later transcribed. Most of the

boys were unperturbed by the use of a tape recorder and the few who were at first, soon settled down. Tape recording was used as it has decided advantages in this sort of interviewing because it allows both the interviewer and the respondent to concentrate on the discussion without the interruptions of note taking.²¹ Overall, the boys responded to the interview rather well. Each respondent was scored for his openness and receptivity during the interview. The majority 25, 58%, were scored as good, 11, 25%, as medium and 7, 16%, as poor. Only one interview had to be discarded, and this was for language problems. There was little variation in the score received according to whether the boy had agreed to be interviewed at the first approach or at a later date.

Interpretation of the Data.

Before the methods used to interpret and analyze the data can be discussed, the adequacy of the data, its reliability and validity, must be assessed.

Reliability.

Reliability is used here in its simplest sense to mean the stability of the responses.²² There are two aspects to this (1) the effect of the interviewer on the responses obtained. (2) the stability of the responses themselves over time. Interviews were conducted on school premises and approaches to the boys were made through school authorities. The interviewer herself obviously came from the class of young university educated women from which many female high school teachers come. There was therefore a large chance that the interviewer might be categorised by the boys as teacher-like. The fact that students on several occasions mistook the interviewer for a teacher did nothing to increase her confidence that the disinterestedness on the interviewer role would be understood by the respondents. The effect this could have on questions such as 'How do you feel about school?' is obvious. To counter this,

every attempt was made by the interviewer to dissociate herself from the teaching staff, to explain the background to the interview and to emphasise the confidentiality of the responses.

From the open, and often critical, responses that were made, it seems that the neutrality of the interviewer role was accepted. Two things seem to have helped here. The first was the existence of generally good relations between the boys and the teachers and school authorities, who seemed to encourage constructive criticism rather than blind acceptance. The second was the fact that a large number of the boys had fathers who had gone, or elder brothers and sisters who were going to university. This gave them a basis for understanding the interviewer's position. Many of the remaining boys, whose family backgrounds gave them little basis for understanding this, placed the interviewer very broadly in a social class that was different from theirs and was peopled by teachers, school authorities and better-off pupils. One of them commented:

"Dad's in the building trade and they lead completely different lives than like you, or the teachers here, or half the pupils."

But this did not seem to affect his willingness to respond frankly and fully, and overall, the boys in this group were not markedly different in their attitude toward the interviewer from the other boys. One reason for this probably lay in the fact that these boys were intending to leave school at the end of the year and were often actively engaged outside school in preparation for their occupation. The impression they made to their teachers was not as important as the impression they made on the Apprenticeship Board, or potential employers. Another reason for their openness could have been the fact that most of the non-respondents came from this group. Those who were not prepared to talk freely probably simply refused to be interviewed.

(2) the stability of the responses over time.

Adolescence is a developmental stage, a period of constant change as

the adolescent frees himself from his family and builds an autonomous life for himself. Theories of occupational choice suggest that this, too, is a process that occurs over time. Results obtained at any one stage of either process simply cannot be expected to be reproduced by a repetition of the data gathering procedure at a later date. This made the timing of the interviews crucial. The time that best suited both the school authorities and the interviewer - the end of the second term and the beginning of the third - was fortunately very appropriate. In first term examinations are a long way away. In third term, they are very close. In contrast to first and third terms, second term is more balanced. The academic and non-academic sides of school life both feature prominently. Interschool sport is played weekly, and though examinations are not pressing, they cannot be forgotten.

Validity.

The particular form of validity involved in data of this sort is content validity.²³ Two basic sorts of data were obtained - quantitative data on the extent of the boys' participation in leisure activities and qualitative data focussing around the effect of the attitudes of friends and family and the process of social influence. Limited resources of time and money meant that no independent measure of the attitudes of parents was made and it would seem that to assess the influence of others on an individual, an independent measure of the other's attitudes is necessary. However, the impact of an other's attitudes is not based on the content of the attitude alone, but also on the individual's perception of that attitude. There is no reason to believe that the individuals' perception of an other's attitude is always correct, and it seems that it is the perception of the attitude, rather than the objective attitude, that is crucial in the influence process. Thus Turner suggests that the process of roletaking is the same whether the individual's perception of

the other's role is accurate or inaccurate.²⁴ Similarly, Newcomb defines the process of reference group influence not in terms of the objective content of the attitudes, but in terms of the individual's perception of the attitude.

If a person's attitudes are influenced by a set of norms which he assumes that he shares with other individuals, those individuals constitute for him a reference group.²⁵

Omitting direct measures of the attitudes of people who influence the boys may therefore not affect the validity of the data as a basis for assessing influence. However, the issue of perception raises serious problems regarding the ability of any questions to reveal the 'real' influence of any person on another. The problem is particularly serious where influence occurs through the process of internalizing the other's values or norms. The deeper and more effective the influence, the more the values seem to be a part of the person who is influenced, and the less aware he is able to be of the process of influence. As the excerpt on page 29 suggests, encouraging the respondent to talk about the way, for example, his parents influence him, helps to overcome this problem, and the interviewer was impressed by the boys' awareness of more subtle forms of influence. However, the proviso that one of the boys attached to his answer to the question 'who influences you?' must be attached to all responses:

"You mean conscious influence. I can only talk about influence I'm conscious of, but there's probably others."

Interpretation and Analysis.

Responses relating to different parts of the project were analysed differently. In the first section, the intention was to determine whether both peers and parents were accepted as reference groups, in which areas they were accepted as reference groups, and how much difference the boys thought existed between peer and parental ideas. Analysis here involved noting the frequency of certain responses, and attempting to understand the meaning of the distribution in terms of the boys' discussion of the

underlying issues.

The second section was concerned with the way the boys came to terms with possibly conflicting pressures from parents and friends through an analysis of the impact of the influence of each on the boy, and the implications of this for his academic performance and the amount of study he did. Where a statistical measure of association was required, Yule's Q was used. Q is, briefly, an expression of the number of cases which are alike on two variables as a proportion of all cases which are alike on two variables.

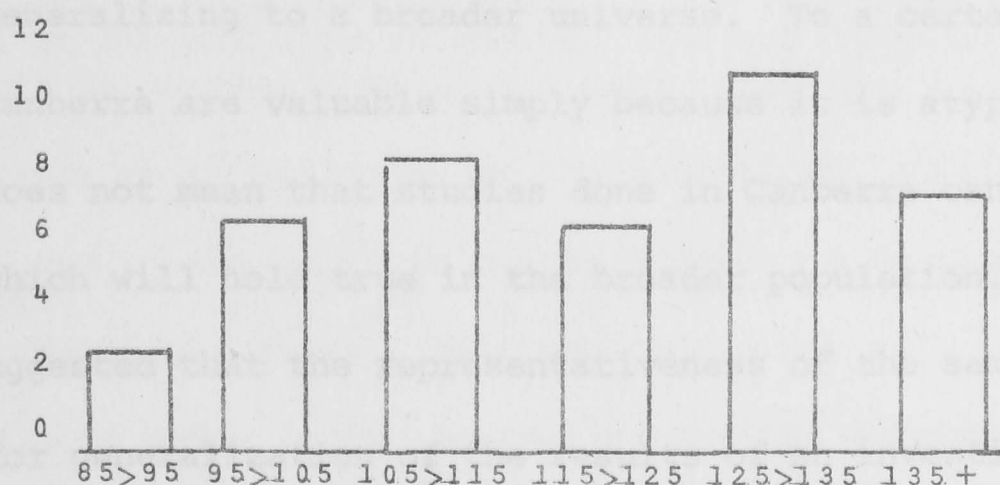
$$Q = \frac{\text{number of pairs that are alike on } x \text{ and } y - \text{number of pairs that are different on } x \text{ and } y}{\text{number of pairs different on both variables} + \text{surplus or deficit of like pairs}}$$

26

all pairs differing on both variables.

For the purpose of analysis the variables were dichotomised. None was naturally dichotomous, and the point of dichotomisation was based on a consideration of the distribution of the variable together with the substantive meaning of the variable. The process of dichotomising IQ scores provides a good example. The distribution of the boys' IQ scores is given in Figure 2.1. As this shows, to dichotomize at the substantive midpoint, 100, would have meant that only 20% of cases were low, while 80% were high.

Figure 2.1. Distribution of IQ Scores.



This would have been outside the limits within which Q can be used with any confidence.²⁷ Further it would have meant that some cell numbers were so small as to be meaningless. To dichotomise at the median would have meant that boys who were above the substantive midpoint would have been considered to have low IQ scores. A compromise between the distribution and the meaning of the variable was necessary. A cutoff point of 110 was finally selected, giving 24 cases high on IQ score, and 16 low on IQ score. Research suggests that although this was still above the theoretical midpoint of an IQ distribution, it was a useful midpoint. Meyer argues that the high school climate has a negative and a positive effect on the individual student.²⁸ The negative effect arises from the fact that the individual's assessment of his own ability is based on a comparison of himself with his fellow students, and where most of them have very high ability, the student is likely to underestimate his ability, seeing it as lower than it really is compared with the broader population on which IQ distributions are calculated. This means that given a distribution skewed towards higher IQ scores, it is a better reflection of the real effect of a boy's ability to dichotomise IQ scores above the theoretical midpoint to compensate for the negative effects of the boy's comparing himself with an above average population.

Generalization of the Results.

Canberra is generally regarded as an atypical Australian city. One implication of this is that a study of its population is not a very fruitful basis for generalizing to a broader universe. To a certain extent, studies of Canberra are valuable simply because it is atypical. However, this fact does not mean that studies done in Canberra cannot discover relations which will hold true in the broader population.

Cartwright suggested that the representativeness of the sample is not the only basis for generalization of the results of an investigation.²⁹ The existence of the relationships discovered does not depend on the

representativeness of the sample, but on the conditions that produce them. What this means for relationships found in an atypical population is only that no inferences can be made that the quantitative incidence of the relations found in that particular population will be found in the broader universe. By pinpointing the distinct characteristics of the Canberra population which influence the relationships under observation, it is possible to specify the conditions under which the relationships discovered hold, and are likely to occur elsewhere.

The bias of the group interviewed towards high socio-economic status and high IQ scores has already been noted. Since Sewell and Shah found that adolescents drawn from these groups are more likely to be influenced by their parents on educational goals than are other groups,³⁰ this could produce a picture of adolescence which overemphasises the influence of adults.

Finally, the distinct occupational structure of Canberra may lead adolescents living here to put more store in school performance than would adolescents elsewhere in Australia. In their survey of Canberra high school students, Anderson & Beswick pointed out:

The occupational structure of the Canberra community is more discernibly hierarchical than elsewhere. The main avenue of employment is the Public Service which is, of course, visibly hierarchical in terms of status and rewards. Outside the Public Service the main areas of employment are the professions and manual occupations, both skilled and unskilled. Here again there is a clear division of prestige and reward which is also correlated with educational level. These distinctions exist elsewhere but the significant thing about them for young people in Canberra is that here they are more visible and that alternative occupations which do not fit so clearly into the hierarchy .. are less numerous. This situation we suggest places Canberra students under even greater pressure to succeed than is the case elsewhere.³²

The occupational structure is reflected in the educational qualifications of the population. 20% of the subjects of the Anderson & Beswick survey had fathers with university degrees. This was consistent with Census data which showed that 18% of males in the Australian Capital Territory in the 40-44 age group had university degrees compared with 2.3% of all

Australian males.³³ It can be assumed that the educational characteristics of the population will support the effect of the occupational structure to produce a stronger than usual awareness of the importance of education.

One other characteristic of the Canberra population that could heighten the influence of parents is its high mobility.³³ Bowerman & Kinch have pointed out that when the adolescent moves away from his established friends this has the effect of increasing his dependence on his parents.³⁵ Only 27% of the boys interviewed had lived in Canberra all their lives, and 30% had arrived at or after the high school stage.

The effect of the distinctive characteristics of Canberra would therefore be to heighten the boys' awareness of the importance of education, and probably also to heighten their sensitivity to their parents' expectations. These factors together have the effect of exaggerating the influence of parents on the adolescent so that the findings of the project are likely to present a picture of the adolescent as more influenced by his parents than would be the case if a more representative sample had been used.

Summary

In this chapter, methodological issues which arose in the collection and interpretation of data were discussed. These included the choice of fourth form boys from one high school as the sample, the use of semi-structured interviewers, problems of reliability and validity of the data, methods of interpretation and the extent to which the findings of the study can be generalized.

Footnotes

- 1 Douvan, E. & Adelson, J. op. cit.
- 2 Murdock, G. & Phelps, G. "Youth Culture and the School Revisited", British Journal of Sociology, 23(4), 1972, p.479.
- 3 Connell, R.W. "You Can't Tell Them Apart Nowadays - Can You?" Paper given to the Sociology Section, 44th Congress, A.N.Z.A.A.S., Sydney, 1972.
4. Connell, W.F., Francis, E.P. & Skilbeck, E.R. Growing Up in an Australian City. Melbourne, Australian Council of Education Research, 1957.
- 5 Douvan, E. & Adelson, J. op. cit.
- 6 Gribbons, W.D. & Lohnes, P.R. "Shifts in Adolescents' Vocational Values", Personnel Guidance Journal, 44, 1965.
- 7 Gottlieb, D. & Ramsey, C.E. The American Adolescent Homewood, Ill., The Dorsey Press, 1964.
- 8 Calculated from Schools 1972. Australia Bureau of Census & Statistics, 1972.
- 9 Ginzberg, E. et al. Occupational Choice New York, Columbia University Press, 1951.
- 10 Gottlieb, D. & Ramsey, C.E. op. cit.
- 11 Baldock, C.V. Vocational Choice and Opportunity, New Zealand, University of Canterbury, 1971, p.18.
- 12 Boyle, R.P. "The Effect of the High School on Students' Aspirations" American Journal of Sociology, 71 (6), 1966.
- 13 Sewell, W.H. & Armer, J.M. "Neighbourhood Context and College Plans", American Sociological Review, 31 (2), 1966.
- 14 Meyer, J.W. "High School Effects on College Intentions" American Sociological Review, 76 (1), 1970.; Nelson, J. "High School Context and College Plans: The Impact of Social Structure on Aspirations" American Sociological Review, 27 (2), 1972.
- 18 Lowman, C.E. & Kinch, J.W. op. cit.; Haller, A.O. & Wolfel, J., op. cit.; Martley, A. op. cit.
- 19 Rosen, B.C. "Conflicting Group Memberships: A Study of Parent-Peer-Group Cross-Pressures." American Sociological Review, 20 (2), 1955, p. 155.
- 20 The tests on which the IQ scores were calculated were Australian Council of Education Research tests of verbal reasoning ability (VI) and quantitative reasoning (IQ), administered in third form.

15

Structure of the Workforce

Occupation	Australia %	A.C.T. %	Suburb (a) %	Suburb (b) %
Professional, technical and related	10.1	17.4	8.6	24.2
Administrative, executive and managerial	6.5	6.4	5.6	13.3
Clerical	15.6	30.0	28.0	31.7
Sales	7.9	6.2	5.6	6.3
Craftsmen, production process workers, miners and labourers	37.6	21.6	31.0	11.2
Service, sport and recreation	7.2	7.3	8.7	4.5
Members of armed forces	1.2	4.6	2.1	3.0
Farmers, fishermen etc.	7.5	1.7	2.4	1.1

Source: Census of Population and Housing, 30 June 1971, Bulletin 1. Summary of Population. Part 9. Australia and Bulletin 7. Characteristics of the Population and Dwelling of Local Government Areas. Part 8. Australian Capital Territory. Australia, Bureau of Census and Statistics, 1972.

16 ibid.

17 Pretests carried out in the boys' homes were very unsatisfactory. Often the only room available for the interview was the living room, so that there were constant interruptions from phone calls and other members of the family needing things from the room during the interview.

18 Bowerman, C.E. & Kinch, J.W. op. cit.; Haller, A.O. & Woelfel, J. op. cit. Hartley, R. op. cit.

19 Rosen, B.C. "Conflicting Group Membership: a Study of Parent-Peer-Group Cross-Pressures." American Sociological Review, 20 (2), 1955, p. 158.

20 The tests on which the IQ scores were calculated were Australian Council of Education Research tests of verbal reasoning ability (WL) and quantitative reasoning (WQ), administered in third form.

- 21 The measure used constituted 75% of the mark the boys would receive in the School Certificate.
- 22 Bucher, R., Fritz, C.E. & Quarantelli, E.L. "Tape Recorded Interviews in Social Research" American Sociological Review, 21 (3), 1956.
- 23 Kerlinger, F.N. Foundations of Behavioural Research. United States, Holt, Rinehart & Winston, 1965, p. 450.
- 24 ibid. pp. 445-47; Nunally, J.C. Psychometric Theory. United States, McGraw Hill, 1967, pp. 79-83.
- 25 Turner, R.H. "Role-taking, Role Standpoint and Reference Group Behaviour." p.318.
- 26 Newcomb, T.M. Social Psychology. New York, The Dryden Press, 1950, p. 225.
- 27 Davis, J.A. Elementary Survey Analysis. New Jersey, Prentice Hall, 1971, p. 47.
- 28 For the value of Q to be meaningful the maximum imbalance acceptable in dichotomisation is 70:30. Davis, J.A. ibid. pp. 25-30.
- 29 Meyer, J. op. cit.
- 30 Cartwright, D. "Analysis of Qualitative Material" in Festinger, L. & Katz, D. (eds) Research Methods in the Behavioural Sciences. New York Holt, Rinehart & Winston, 1953, p.4.
- 31 Sewell, W.H. & Shah, V.P. "Social Class, Parental Encouragement and Educational Aspirations"
- 32 Anderson, D.S. & Beswick, D.G. quoted in Secondary Education for Canberra. Report of the Working Committee on College Proposals for the Australian Capital Territory, 1972, p.12.
- 33 ibid. p.13.
- 34 Henessy, B.L. "Planning a Psychiatric Service for the Australian Capital Territory" Australian and New Zealand Journal of Sociology, 4, 1970.
- 35 Bowerman, C.E. & Kinch, J.W. op. cit.

CHAPTER 3

PARENTS AND FRIENDS AS REFERENCE GROUPS.

This study seeks to show that the adolescent will take both parents and friends as reference groups, even though they may have different, even conflicting, norms and values. As outlined in the first chapter, there are four issues to be examined:

- (1) Are both parents and friends taken as reference groups?
- (2) In what areas of the adolescents school life are they taken as as reference groups?
- (3) What is the nature of any conflict between friends' and parents' norms, specifically as they apply to the school situation?
- (4) What is the content of friends' and parents' pressure on the adolescent in the school situation?

In this chapter, the first three of these questions are examined.

First, the boys' reference groups will be identified. Then, the claims of psychological and sociological theorists that the adolescent turns away from his parents because of the psychic conflicts of his age, and because rapid social change renders parents unable to understand or advise their children are evaluated. The life areas in which the boys take parents and friends as reference groups are specified, and the boys' perception of any difference or conflict between friends' and parents' ideas is assessed. This is done first in a broad overall sense, then specifically with regard to two issues of great importance to the study - the importance of education, and the way free time should be spent - to determine if the conflict between friends' and parents' ideas in these areas is fundamental or only superficial.

Identification of the Adolescent's Reference Groups.

In much of the literature on adolescence, peers and parents are cast as opposing and mutually exclusive forces - to follow one is automatically to reject the other. Research based on this assumption has produced inconsistent and contradictory findings. Some researchers, however, have assumed that the adolescent may be influenced by both peers and parents. They have found that, in fact, this is so, and their findings begin to reconcile some of the conflicting findings in research which has subscribed to the 'exclusive theory' of influence. It is hypothesised in this study, therefore, that both peers and parents will be taken as reference groups.

The boys reference groups were identified by asking them:

"Who are the people who have most influence on the way you feel and behave?"

The results are presented in Table 3.1. The majority of boys took both parents and friends as reference groups. Nine boys took parents only as reference groups. No boys felt they were influenced only by their friends, but three felt that neither parents nor friends had any influence over them.

Table 3.1

The Adolescents' Reference Groups.

Parents Only	Friends Only	Both Parents and Friends	Neither Parents nor Friends	Total
9	-	31	3	43
(.20)	-	(.71)	(.09)	(1.0)

Haller & Woelfel have defined two very broad ways in which a reference group communicates its influence: first, it may provide information on the

individual's conception of himself; second, it may provide information on the roles and objects of the broader society.¹ Writers who claim that the adolescent rejects his parents and turns to his friends argue that the adolescent sees his parents as unable to provide valid information either about himself or about the broader society. On the personal level, the adolescent rejects his parents in the struggle to develop his own identity.

² On the broader level, parents cannot act as guides for the boy's immediate position in school because things have changed since they were young. Nor, because of the rapid change, can they act as guides for his future position in the broader society. Further, in the face of rapid change, parents themselves come to doubt their own understanding and withdraw from the role of adviser to their children.³ Friends, on the other hand, are able to provide valid information for the adolescent on both counts. First, they share his developmental problems and thus know what he is going through. Secondly, they share the immediate school situation and are also better able to advise him on issues to do with the broader society because they know what the situation is like now.

To discover the extent to which the boy saw his parents and his friends as able to communicate valid information regarding both himself and the society at large, two pairs of statements were drawn up, one dealing with his perception of parents' and friends' ability to understand him, the other with their ability to advise him. Each pair consisted of one statement which emphasised the strongpoints of the parents' position, and one which emphasised the strongpoints of the friends' position. The boys were asked to read each pair of statements and then to say which, if either, was more true for them. The strongpoints of each group were put before the boy in an attempt to elicit a response which considered the strengths of both groups.

(i) Understanding

"My parents understand me best because they've known me all my life."

"My friends understand me best because they're going through the same things as I am."

19 boys felt that their friends understood them best, 14 thought that their parents understood them best, while seven felt that both their parents and their friends understood them very well.

Table 3.2

Perception of Ability to Understand.

Group which understands best	Parents	Friends	Both	Neither	Total
	14	19	7	3	43
	(.33)	(.44)	(.16)	(.07)	(1.0)

The boys who felt their parents understood them best emphasised the length of the relationship - the fact that their parents had known them all their lives, and therefore knew them far better than did their friends.

"Mum and Dad are fairly intelligent and they know the way I think. My friends haven't known me quite long enough to know all the ins and outs so I can hide things from them that I can't hide from Mum and Dad."

Some boys also pointed out that they were with their parents more of the time, particularly at times when they were more likely to reveal their true selves. The boys had no illusions that things were the same as in their parents' youth. They emphasised, rather, the attributes of their parents which enabled them to bridge any gap that had developed - their deeper knowledge of, and feeling for their children. Thus, for about one third of the boys, growing up and developing deeper relationships with friends did not necessarily entail growing apart from their parents. In response to the question, one boy said:

"My parents know me best because they've known me all my life. My friends aren't going through the same things because different people have different situations. My parents know what I'd do in different situations. I don't confide in them now as much as I used to - like I'd tell my friends things I wouldn't tell my parents - like some experience like parties I've been to - but I'd tell parents things I wouldn't tell my friends, personal things, and on the whole my parents understand me best."

As this statement suggests, the other side of the picture was the feeling that friends did not really share the same situation, and expected their friends to be the same as they were all the time, and could not understand the differences that did exist.

Most of the boys who felt that their friends understood them best thought, on the other hand, that they and their friends did in fact share the same situation. For a few of this group, the 'same situation' meant the same developmental stage, the simple fact of growing up itself producing a rift between them and their parents:

"because your parents have known you all your life doesn't mean they understand what you're doing now. Like you might be really close to your parents till you're about 15 or so, then you kind of create a generation gap till you're about 20."

The rift cut the communication which could perhaps have sorted things out:

" You seem to talk more with your friends than your parents - about what you did during the weekend, what you saw at the pictures, dirty pictures - you couldn't do that with your parents 'cause they wouldn't really share it."

But for most of the boys in this group, the 'same situation' meant the shared physical situation, being at school together, going out together after school, and the fact that because of it, they communicated more with their friends and less with their parents.

"I'm with my friends most of the time. There's all school, after school, weekends. You're mostly with your friends. You get to know them, understand them and they get to know you. Your parents, well you don't see your parents through the whole day. The only time you get to talk to your parents is at night when you're normally watching TV or doing homework. You just don't get talking all that often with your parents, whereas with your friends you do."

Because these boys were with their friends more they did more things with them and learned things from them that were not necessarily passed on to

their parents, thus building up areas of their lives that were separate from their parents' knowledge. Sometimes the separation was deliberate, as when the boys knew their parents would not approve of their activities, but more often the separation was unintentional, simply the result of the fact that they were with their friends most of the time. It did not mean that they thought that their parents did not understand them at all, but only that they did not understand all aspects of them. When asked,

"Do your parents understand you at all?" one boy replied:

Oh, yeah, your parents do - just your friends understand you better. Parents don't really know all the things you do, or why you do them, so they don't understand you as much as your friends do."

Finally, a number of boys felt that both parents and friends understood them equally well, parents understanding some aspects of their lives, and friends others.

"Well, in different spheres both statements are correct. The way I feel about society sort of thing my friends understand me best because they're going through the same things - my parents'd understand the way I feel about people a lot more because they're with me all the time."

(ii) Advice.

"My parents are best able to advise me on things because they've had a lot of experience with life."

"My friends are best able to advise me on things because they know what the situation is like today."

A majority of the boys saw their parents as best able to advise them. The next largest group saw parents and friends as equally able to advise them. Only a very small minority saw their friends as being better able to advise them. Clearly parents' understanding of society at large is not considered worthless. Seven boys did feel that their parents' experience might be out of date, but only one of these valued his friends' advice more than his parents', and even he still turned to his parents for advice on those things 'that would not have changed over the last few years'. Three of the seven turned equally to friends and parents, feeling that their parents' broader experience balanced out their friends' better knowledge of the present situation. The remaining two valued their

parents' advice more because, although it might be a little behind the times, they thought it was still far wiser advice than their friends were capable of giving.

Table 3.3

Perception of Ability to Advise.

Group which is best able to advise	Parents	Friends	Both	Neither	Total
	25	2	13	3	43
	(.58)	(.05)	(.30)	(.07)	(1.0)

But the vast majority of boys felt either that their parents had kept up with the times, or that the times had not changed so fast that their parents' experience was worthless. As one boy said:

"Parents've been through it before and they know what's best. Friend's can be going through the same thing but they don't know what the outcome will be - your parents have more of an idea what it would be like than your friends."

Not only were parents more considered to be experienced, they were also considered to be wiser, and to offer their opinions more seriously.

Friends on the other hand were more likely to be a bit immature and not serious in the advice they gave:

"My parents've lived a lot longer than my friends - my friends some of them might be a bit foolish."

"Parents give better advice because sometimes when your friends advise you they're just sort of not serious."

About a quarter of the boys valued the advice of parents and friends equally because parents' experience made them best qualified to advise in some areas, while friends' knowledge of the 'teenage scene' made them best qualified to advise in other areas.

One boy said:

"I'd turn to my parents say for getting a job - who to see, where to ring up and find out everything. Friends, you can imagine your friends telling you something if they've gone through it - like smoking pot, they could advise you on that, say it's a load of garbage, or great stuff."

The only conclusion that can be drawn from these findings is that both parents and friends are important to these boys. Parental influence was not paramount as it was in childhood, but there was little evidence for the existence of the psychic rebellion against parents which is theoretically characteristic of adolescence, a lack of evidence that has been noted elsewhere, for example, by Douvan & Adelson, & Friedenberg.⁴

There was much more evidence to support the claim that because adolescents are concentrated together in school and have most of their interactions with each other, they feel they understand each other better. But this did not carry the implication that their parents did not understand them at all, and that the good relationships of childhood had been shattered. Rather, it reflected the fact that new areas of life were being opened up to them by the peer group, areas that were not, and could not, be shared with parents, with the result that while their parents still did understand them, they could not understand them as fully as they once had.

While the majority of the boys felt that their friends understood them better than their parents, their parents' understanding of the broader society was recognised and valued. They were not seen as old-fashioned and out of date. In fact, rather than friends being taken as the source of advice on the way things really are now, there was distrust of the sort of advice friends would give because friends had only limited experience, and were not always serious in what they said. In some areas, specifically areas of the 'teenage scene' which were not shared with parents, friends' advice was valued. But many boys who said they followed their friends' lead on what clothes to wear and what records to buy still felt that overall, their parents'

advice was more valuable, suggesting that the boys felt that the areas on which they turned to their parents for advice were more important.

Thus neither the claim that parents are rejected by their adolescent children, nor the claim that the adolescent is still very much under the thumb of his parents was supported. The boys' feeling that their parents understood them was diminishing, but their reliance on parental judgment about the broader society had not been weakened.

The Areas of Influence of Parents and Peers in the School Situation.

Both parents and friends were found to be taken as reference groups by the boys. Research findings discussed in Chapter 1 suggest that they will be taken as reference groups in different areas of the boy's life. There is substantial agreement among researchers who have studied the different areas in which peers and parents influence the adolescent that parents will be accepted as reference groups on issues related to the adolescent's future status in the broader society, and that peers will be taken as reference groups in issues of more short term status centering around leisure activities. The school situation includes both of these areas. On the one hand, the basic meaning of school lies in the preparation of its students for their future vocations. On the other hand, in the school situation, systems of short term status may develop around leisure and extra-curricular activities. It was hypothesized that parents would be taken as reference groups for the long term implications of school, while peers would be taken as reference groups for the leisure activities around which short term systems of status may develop.

To determine who acted as reference group for the long term implications of school, the boys were asked:

"Have you ever talked to anybody about what work to do for the rest of your life?"

"Did you find talking to them helpful?"

"When you were deciding to take the subjects you're doing now, did you discuss this decision with anyone? Who?"

"Have you discussed what subjects to take next year with anyone? Who? How did the discussion go?"

As shown in Table 3.4, slightly more than half of the boys had talked only to their parents about what work to do for the rest of their lives. 15 had talked to both parents and friends, while one boy had talked only to his friends.

Table 3.4

Reference Groups for Future Occupation.

	Parents Only	Only Friends	Both Parents and Friends	Neither Parents nor Friends	Total
Group Talked to	23 (.53)	1 (.02)	15 (.36)	4 (.09)	43 (1.0)
Group that was most helpful	26 (.61)	2 (.05)	11 (.25)	4 (.09)	43 (1.0)

Most boys had found their parents to be most helpful, and stressed the fact that because their parents had first hand experience with the world of work, they not only knew a lot themselves, but also had contacts who knew about the areas they did not.

"I turn to my parents mainly. The actual factual knowledge my parents give me - about work and things like that - it's very important because they've had so much experience. I take everything from my parents."

Only five boys felt their friends knew as much, or more, about work, and three of these boys had immigrant parents. Friends generally were considered to know far less than parents, and the little they did know was not as valuable because it was secondhand, based on the experience of their parents. Only one boy thought the accumulated secondhand knowledge

of his friends outweighed his parents' own experience. But this was not the main reason for not talking the future job over with friends. There was a very strong feeling that this was an area that simply did not involve friends. Friends had their occupational interests, the boy had his, the two were not usually related, so that any discussion had little effect.

"Well, by talking to my friends I don't really change my mind about what job I'm going to do. I just discuss what I'm going to do and what they're going to do. We don't really discuss it - we don't change each others' minds about the job we're going to do - we just say what we're going to do."

The choice of an occupation fits very clearly into the long term implications of school. The choice of which subjects to take is not so clear. A boy may choose to do a subject because it leads up to his future job, because he's interested in it, or even because his friends are doing it. Parents, it was expected, would see the choice of subjects mainly in terms of preparation for a future occupation. How the boys would see the choice of subjects was not so clear. However, most of the boys revealed a very strong awareness of the occupational implications of school - 63.3% thought it was important to do well in school to get a good position later on in life. Consequently, much the same situation was found for the choice of subjects as had been found for the discussion of future occupations, as Table 3.5 shows. The following description of one boy's discussion of what subjects to take with his parents and his friend underlines the findings for occupational advice, showing quite clearly that parents are accepted as reference groups for the occupational implications of school, while this is felt to be an area quite separate from friends.

"I talked it over quite a lot with my parents, especially about University entrance - this was what I was really worried about. When we did decide, it was over the breakfast table, very briefly, only it was very concentrated. It wasn't just idle chatter. It was really concentrated."

With his friends,

"Well, we've talked it over. We both sit down and just sort of both

talk away at the same time really. We never sort of talk out why we want to do subjects - it's really a sort of yelling match to see who can get in quickest what they're going to do."

Table 3.5

Reference Groups for the choice of Subjects.

	Talked to Parents	Talked to Friends	Talked to Parents and Friends	Talked Neither to Parents nor Friends	Not Applicable	Total
Second form	21 (.49)	5 (.12)	11 (.25)	-	6 (.14)	43 (1.0)
Fourth form	17 (.40)	4 (.09)	8 (.19)	3 (.07)	11 (.25)	43 (1.0)

To determine who would be taken as a reference group for leisure activities, the boys were asked:

"Would you rather spend your free time with your family, with your friends, or by yourself?"

The results are presented in Table 3.6. Slightly more than half of the boys preferred to spend their free time with their friends. Nine preferred to spend it equally with family and friends, and five preferred to spend it with their family.

Table 3.6

Reference Groups for Leisure Activities.

Parents	Friends	Both Parents and Friends	Neither Parents nor Friends	Total
5 (.12)	26 (.61)	9 (.20)	3 (.07)	43 (1.0)

The reasons the boys gave for preferring their friends' company to their parents' company were very similar, and summed up very well by one boy who said:

"My interests are with my friends. Like if I was with my parents more than likely I'd be at home, and there's bugger-all to do at home. If I'm with my friends I can be out some place - parties, concerts, doing everything I shouldn't do, and having a really good time."

This contrasts strongly with the boys' feelings on their parents and friends' ability to act as reference groups for the occupational implications of school. There, friends were thought to have different interests, and little concern for the way the boy himself felt, while parents were thought to be both concerned and able to help. With regard to leisure activities, the boys saw their friends as sharing their ideas and interests, while parents neither shared nor understood these interests, and might even obstruct them.

The Perception of Differences between Peer and Parental Norms.

Reference group theorists seem basically agreed that an individual's reference groups are mutually sustaining, rather than mutually contradictory.⁵ One of the reasons for this is the fact that new reference groups are selected in part on the basis of similarity with established reference groups. The little research that has been done in the area of the selection of new reference groups suggests that the greater the compatibility between the ideas of the individual and the perceived ideas of the new group, the more likely the new group is accepted as a reference group.⁽⁶⁾ It was argued in the first chapter that this was likely to be very much so for the adolescent peer group which only assumes real importance after the child's basic socialization within the family has taken place, so that friends are presumably selected against a background of values internalized by parents. The peer group will go on to open up new areas of activity, and to develop new values and norms in those areas, some of which may be different from parental

values, as the following statement suggests.

"If my hair's too long or something like that, my parents don't like it but my friends do, and I think that because practically all my friends like it that way I feel - you know - that it'd be better to fit in with them than be like my parents want me to be.

But conformity to peer group norms is not likely to involve rejection of deeply held parental values. Rather, deeply held values will underlie, or at least co-exist, with the new values. A statement made by one of the boys - a boy who was considered one of the wilder boys in the group - suggests this is so:

"When you're a child, parents teach you what's right and wrong. They have a greater influence at an earlier age, but now your friends do. Your parents give you your ideas of what's right and wrong, but you kind of follow what your friends do - but if I was hanging round with friends and they started smashing windows or something, I wouldn't get involved because I know it's wrong."

It was argued that while parental and peer values and norms may be different, even conflicting, the difference would not be fundamental in that it challenged values that were deeply held by parents.

To discover the extent and nature of the difference the boys perceived to exist between peer and parental ideas, they were asked the following question.

"Very often, different people have different ideas about the same things. Are your parents' ideas and your friends' ideas generally alike or generally different?

Could you give me some examples?

How about (i) the importance of school?

(ii) doing as the teacher says?

(iii) things that are fun to do in your free time?"

As Table 3.7 reveals, just over half the boys thought their parents' ideas and their friends' ideas were different. Seven felt they could not say one way or the other, because some of their ideas were different, and some were alike. Although a slight majority of the boys felt that their parents' and their friends' ideas were different, the examples they gave of where they were different do not support the idea of basic conflict but had mainly to do with matters of teenage taste - hair length, music, the current craze for trail riding on motor bikes - or symbols of adulthood which the boys

sought to appropriate to themselves before their parents thought they should - going to R movies, smoking, and to a lesser extent drinking. Only three of the 22 boys mentioned areas of basic difference - politics, pacifism, and the conduct of personal relationships.

Table 3.7

Similarity of Parents' and Friends' Ideas.

Area	Ideas Alike	Ideas Different	Some Ideas Alike Some Different	Don't Know	Total
Overall	14 (.33)	22 (.51)	7 (.16)	-	43 (1.0)
Importance of School	39 (.91)	4 (.09)	-	-	43 (1.0)
Things that are fun to do	10 (.23)	27 (.63)	-	6 (.14)	43 (1.0)

To find out if the conflict was basic rather than symbolic - what Douvan & Adelson call 'psychically necessary' rebellions, centering around areas of little real concern to parents⁷ - the boys were asked if their parents and friends agreed or disagreed over one 'basic' issue, the importance of school, and one 'superficial' issue, things that are fun to do in their free time. The importance of school was considered basic in this context because educating its young is generally accepted to be one of society's most vital tasks, and the educational functions of the school are certainly likely to be recognized by most parents. Things that are fun to do in leisure time were designated superficial because, although any conflict which may arise over them may seem vital to the boy and even to his parents, it does not necessarily challenge the parents' basic values. The conflict here centres around the boys' desire to be

accepted as full members of society before their parents and other adults consider them ready, rather than around their rejection of basic parental values.

The boys perceived a very high level of agreement between the ideas of parents and friends on the issue considered basic - the importance of school. Only four boys thought there was a difference here. Two of these were going on to the Higher School Certificate with full parental encouragement, while their friends were leaving at the end of fourth form. A third boy belonged to a group whose members were eloquent in their criticism of the school system as it existed, thus appearing to reject it, but who, when pressed, admitted that they could not figure out a more acceptable alternative. One boy summed the overall position up very well when he said:

"Parents'd agree that school is important. Friends would probably if you really pushed them. Probably if you asked straight out they'd say no. But really they probably do. This is where you appear to have a conflict of opinion but you don't really when you go deeper into it."

Differences in parents' and friends' ideas centered around the more superficial issue of things that are fun to do in free time. In contrast to the importance of school, things that were fun to do in free time was perceived to be an area of great cleavage between parents and friends. Their ideas were thought to be different for a number of reasons, ranging from the idea that parents got the same 'kicks', just in different ways, to the feeling that parents were overprotective and out of date. They attempt to restrain the boys from doing things which they thought were dangerous, or that the boys were too young to do. Further, they had different ideas on the meaning of leisure, wanting their boys to do something that was constructive, rather than just enjoyable. The feeling came through very strongly that leisure was something quite separate from, and not understood by parents.

Conclusion and Summary.

In this chapter, issues dealing with parents and friends as reference groups for the boys were discussed. It was found that both parents and friends were taken as reference groups. While the boys felt their parents' ability to understand them had diminished as they grew older, they did not feel that their parents did not understand them at all. Further, parents' understanding of society was still highly valued.

The areas in which parents and friends were taken as reference groups were found to be quite different - parents acting as guides for the vocational aspects of school, specifically occupational choice and the selection of school subjects, friends acting as guides for the use of leisure time. There was a strong feeling that these areas were the province of parents and friends respectively, and that each group was not interested in, or not very good at, understanding the area in which the other was taken as a guide.

Finally, the boys' perception of the extent of similarity between their parents' and their friends' ideas was examined. Here, although a slight majority of the boys felt that their friends' and their parents' ideas were different, the differences centered around issues classified superficial from the point of view of this study. Thus, while there was seen to be almost total agreement as to the importance of education, the area of leisure activities was seen to be an area of great disagreement. The relationship between parental influence, exerted on the basis of the value they attach to education, and peer influence exerted through pressure to join in the leisure activities they value, will be examined in the next chapter.

Footnotes.

- 1 Haller, A.O. & Woefel, J. "Significant Others and their Expectations.", p.595.

- 2 Gold, M. & Douvan, E. (eds) Adolescent Development: Readings in Research and Theory. p. 171.; Alissi, "Concepts of Adolescence.", Adolescence, 7 (28), 1972.
- 3 Blos, P. "The Child Analyst Looks at the Young Adolescent." p. 973; Riesman, D. The Lonely Crowd.
- 4 Douvan & Adelson described the adolescents they studied as 'bland docile youngsters' Douvan, E. & Adelson, J. The Adolescent Experience. p. 81; Friedenberg wrote of the 'vanishing adolescent' because for him, the fact that there was no longer any conflict between adolescents and their parents meant that adolescence itself had vanished. Friedenberg, E.Z. The Vanishing Adolescent. Boston, Beacon Press, 1964.
- 5 Kuhn, M.H. "The Reference Group Reconsidered."; Shibutani, H. "Reference Groups as Perspectives."
- 6 Hartley, R. "Relationship between Perceived Values and Acceptance of a New Reference Group." and "Norm Preference, Norm Compatability and the Acceptance of New Reference Groups."; Newcomb, T. "Student Peer Group Influence."
- 7 Douvan, E. & Adelson, J. op. cit. p. 81.

CHAPTER 4

PEER AND PARENTAL INFLUENCE IN THE SCHOOL SITUATION.

On the basis of research reported in Chapter 1, it was argued that parents will be mainly concerned for the vocational implications of school. Research suggests that parental influence on the vocational planning of their children will be exerted directly by their encouraging the child to hold certain goals, and indirectly by the effects of the family's socio-economic background. While aspirations have to do with the future rather than the present, research also suggests that parents recognize the future implications of present behaviour and encourage the sort of behaviour which leads to the attainment of the goals they hope their son will reach. Thus in the immediate school situation, parents are likely to emphasize the importance of doing well academically. In Chapter 3, it was found that the boys took their parents as reference groups in the area of vocational planning. It is therefore likely that the boys will respond to parental pressure to do well in school to guarantee their future occupational status.

However, it is generally agreed that the peer culture does not reward academic achievement. Rather, it rewards skill in the athletic and social activities around which it centres, sometimes to the extent that these skills become the basis of status systems separate from the academic status system supported by the school and parents. These status systems are said to undermine the official academic status system by devaluing, either comparatively or absolutely, academic achievement, and by diverting the student from his studies. In Chapter 3 it was shown that the adolescent's friends are taken as reference groups for leisure activities, so that he is likely to be responsive to their pressure to join in the leisure activities which confer status in their eyes, but

which may detract from his ability to achieve academically.

Thus the school becomes a potential conflict situation as the boy is pressured to conform to the values of his friends in the area in which he regards their opinion as important and to the values of parents in the areas in which he regards their opinion as important. Conformity to parental pressure demands academic achievement. Conformity to peer pressure demands achievement in other areas which may detract from his ability to do well academically. This chapter seeks to investigate the pressures put on the boy by his parents and his friends to discover if, and how, he is able to conform satisfactorily to their potentially conflicting demands. Four main issues will be investigated:

- (i) parental influence on the boys' aspirations.
- (ii) the implications of future aspirations for present performance at school.
- (iii) the values of schoolfriends.
- (iv) the effect of involvement in leisure activities on academic performance and study.

Parental Influence on the Boys' Aspirations.

Research reported in Chapter 1 has shown rather clearly that parents have a great deal of influence on their childrens' educational aspirations. This influence is exerted directly through the aspirations they encourage their children to hold, and indirectly through the family background they create.

The boys' aspirations and the expectations their parents encouraged them to hold were measured by the questions:

- "When do you think you'll finish your education?
When do your parents think you should finish your education?"

38 of the 43 boys were reasonably sure how far they wanted to take their education. 53.3% intended to go to university or to a college of advanced education; 16.3% intended to leave after sixth form, either with no further training, or with training at a technical college; 18.3%

intended to leave after fourth form and take up apprenticeships. The educational aspirations of the group were unusually high. This was in part the result of the unusually high aspirations of most Canberra high school students,¹ and in part the result of the fact that the boys who agreed to be interviewed were drawn from the top three-quarters of the form academically. Only two or three of the 13 boys who declined to be interviewed were going on to sixth form or further. Because of the very high aspirations of the majority of the boys, where it was necessary to dichotomize aspirations, university and college of advanced education were considered high, while fourth and sixth form were considered low. Those leaving at the end of fourth form were going into manual occupations, while those going on to sixth form and university were generally going into non-manual occupations. Grouping those leaving at fourth form and sixth form together ignores this basic difference, and where possible, the three main leaving levels - fourth form, sixth form and tertiary are used.

39 boys were able to state confidently how far their parents thought they should take their education. The remaining four said that their parents had left the decision up to them. As Table 4.1 shows, there was a very strong positive association between perceived parental

Table 4.1

The Association Between a Boy's Aspirations and his Parents' Expectations.

	Parents' Expectations Non-tertiary	Parents' Expectations Tertiary	Total
Boy's Aspirations Tertiary	4 (.33)	19 (.86)	23
Boy's Aspirations Non-tertiary	8 (.66)	3 (.14)	11
	12 (1.0)	22 (1.0)	34

$$Q = .90$$

expectations and the boys' own aspirations. ($Q = .90$). Nearly two-thirds of the boys were taking their education to the level their parents expected, four were going beyond it, while five were dropping below it. Family background was operationalized through a measure of socio-economic status based on occupation, education and income developed specifically for Canberra's atypical population.² Where a boy's father was deceased, his socio-economic status was based on his mothers' occupation if she worked, or on his father's last occupation if his mother did not work. Categories 1 and 2 of the scale, professional, managerial and technical occupations, were considered high while categories 3, 4, and 5, lower managerial and clerical, skilled and unskilled manual occupations were considered low.

Table 4.2 shows that the association between the boys' socio-economic status and their aspirations is almost as strong as the association between his parents' expectations and his own aspirations. ($Q = .87$)

Table 4.2

The Association Between a Boy's Aspirations and his Socio-economic Background.

	Socio-economic Status Low	Socio-economic Status High	Total
Boy's Aspirations Tertiary	3 (.20)	18 (.78)	21
Boy's Aspirations Non-tertiary	12 (.80)	5 (.22)	17
	15 (1.0)	23 (1.0)	

$Q = .87$

It is clear that the boys' parents had a very strong influence on their educational aspirations. However, aspirations have to do with the future, not the present. Did the boys' parents attempt to influence their present

Examining the cases where boys' aspirations differed from their parents' expectations suggests parental influence could be even stronger than the correlation suggests. Of the nine instances where boys held aspirations different from their parents expectations:

One was a case of misunderstanding of the education system on the part of immigrant parents who wanted their son to be a doctor or a lawyer, but only wanted him to go as far as sixth form.

Two were cases where the boys had decided to go on to university, while their parents, although insisting they go as far as the Higher School Certificate, and being prepared to support them through university, would not push them to go.

One other was a case where the boy's mother (his father was deceased) wanted him to go on to sixth form and he was leaving at the end of fourth form. This boy turned to his elder brother rather than to his mother for advice on educational occupations, and had followed his brother's advice to stay on and do the School Certificate, although he disliked school intensely.

The more immediate decision the boys faced - whether to leave at the end of fourth form or to go on to sixth form - was more striking evidence of the influence of parents. Three boys were going on only because their parents wanted them to. In two cases, all their friends were leaving so the temptation to leave must have been rather strong. In only one case was a boy leaving when his parents wanted him to go on, and here, although the parents would have liked him to go on, they were prepared to let him leave if he really wanted to.

The Implications of Future Aspirations for Present Performance at School.

It is clear that the boys' parents had a very strong influence on their educational aspirations. However, aspirations have to do with the future, not the present. Did the boys' parents attempt to influence their present

performance at school? Research reported in Chapter 1 suggests parents' influence on their children's future is not limited to their influence on their children's future plans. In addition, they encourage their children to pursue a course of action in the present which will ensure attainment of the future goals they hope their children will achieve. The following statement by one of the boys supports this, suggesting that parents are aware of the need for consistency between their sons' aspirations and their present performance in school.

"My parents are hoping I'll finish at sixth form - but if I don't do well in the School Certificate, they advise me to quit school and find a job labouring or something."

To discover if the boys' parents actively encouraged them to take school seriously, and to work in the present towards their future goals, the boys were asked:

- "How do your parents feel about school?"
- "Do they think it's important or unimportant? Why?"
- "Are they interested in how you're going?"
- "How do they show their interest?"

All but four boys thought that their education was very important in their parents' eyes. Almost three-quarters of these thought this was so because their parents saw education as the route to a 'good job'. One boy replied when he was asked why his parents thought education was important:

"Because you have to get a good education at high school to go to university and you have to go to university to get a good education for a good job - a high job that interests you and gives you good money."

Only a quarter of the boys thought their parents valued education most for its intrinsic 'intellectual' value. The lack of emphasis on the intrinsic value of education was not surprising since almost half of the boys had either a father or mother employed in the Commonwealth Public Service, where educational qualifications are vital for promotion.

Their parents' attitudes had a very definite impact on the boys. Just as the majority of parents saw education as the route to a good job, so the boys themselves had come to value education mainly for its

occupational implications. Only four boys said it was not important to them to do well in school, and two gave as the reason for this the fact that how well they did did not affect their future job. Of the remaining 39, almost two-thirds said it was important to do well to get a good job later on. Thus, the boys reflected their parents strong awareness of the future implications of present academic performance. This was demonstrated very clearly in the congruence between the boys' present performance and their educational aspirations.

The boys intended to complete their education at three main levels: at the end of fourth form after obtaining the School Certificate; at the end of sixth form after obtaining the Higher School Certificate; and at the end of a university degree, or a college of advanced education degree or diploma. As Table 4.3 shows, there was a very close relationship between the boys' educational aspirations and their academic performance. All of the boys in the top third of the class were going on to tertiary education.

Table 4.3

The Association Between a Boy's Aspirations and
his Academic Performance.

	Classified in Bottom Third of Group in Academic Performance	Classified in Middle Third of Group in Academic Performance	Classified in Top Third of Group in Academic Performance	Total
Boy's Aspirations Tertiary.	2 (.17)	9 (.60)	12 (1.0)	23
Boy's Aspirations Sixth Form	4 (.33)	4 (.27)	-	8
Boy's Aspirations Fourth Form	6 (.50)	2 (.13)	-	8
	12 (1.0)	15 (1.0)	12 (1.0)	39

Almost two-thirds of the middle third also intended to go on to tertiary education. Since all but two of the top two-thirds of the boys were in the top half of the form, these aspirations are not as overambitious as they may seem. Just over a quarter of the middle third were leaving after sixth form, and about an eighth after fourth form. Of the lowest third, only two intended to go on to tertiary education, a third were leaving at the end of sixth form, while half were leaving at the end of fourth form. Thus, the boys did see their academic performance as being strongly linked to their future goals. The direction of the relationship between academic performance and aspirations could not be established from these data, which were cross sectional, but specific examples suggest that the relationship goes both ways. Two boys had lowered their aspirations because they were not doing as well as friends with similar aspirations. Another two were studying hard to bring their academic performance to the level required for their aspirations.

While almost all parents thought it was important to have an education, they differed greatly in what they meant by 'an education'. Thus for four parents, 'an education' meant passing the School Certificate, while for two other parents, 'an education' meant going "as far as I can go - post-graduate work and that sort of thing". The achievement of different educational aspirations demanded quite different levels of academic performance in the present, and parents with different educational expectations exerted different amount of pressure on their sons to do well in the present.

On the basis of the boys' responses to questions given above, their parents were classified into one of the following four categories:

- (i) not interested, or not as interested as other parents.
- (ii) interested, but exerting no pressure on the boy to study.
- (iii) interested and exerting some pressure on the boy to study.
- (iv) interested, and exerting a lot of pressure on the boy to study.

There was a clear association between a boy's parents' expectations for his education and the pressure put on him to study. That is, overall, the

him and the extent to which they encouraged him to work hard and do well, as Table 4.4 shows.

Table 4.4

The Association Between Parents' Expectations and Encouraging Behaviour.

	Parents' Do not Mind	Parents' Expectations Fourth Form	Parents' Expectations Sixth Form	Parents' Expectations Tertiary	Total
Parents Interested and Pressure a Lot	1 (.25)	5 (.50)	16 (.64)	22	
Parents Interested and Pressure a Little	-	2 (.50)	4 (.40)	4 (.16)	10
Parents Interested but do not Pressure	2 (.50)	1 (.25)	1 (.10)	3 (.12)	7
Parents Take no Interest	1 (.25)	1 (.25)	-	2 (.08)	4
	4 (1.0)	4 (1.0)	10 (1.0)	25 (1.0)	43

The majority of parents with university expectations put a lot of pressure on their sons to study hard. A majority, but not quite as large a majority of parents with Higher School Certificate expectations, also put a lot of pressure on their sons to study. The majority of parents with School Certificate expectations put only little pressure to study on their sons. Not one of the parents in this group put a lot of pressure on their son. Finally the majority of parents who did not mind when their son completed his education put no pressure on him to study. That is, overall, the

higher the parents' expectations, the more pressure they put on their son to study hard. Thus parents' expectations did lead them to encourage their son to pursue the sort of behaviour in the present that would lead up to the achievement of the goals they held for him.

Their parents' behaviour had a definite impact on the boys, as the following exchange suggests:

Interviewer: "How do your parents feel about school?"

"They don't really worry about it. If I come home and say I got a good pass, they say 'That's good.' If I say I just passed, they just say 'Oh' - they don't take any interest at all."

Interviewer: "Do they think school is important or unimportant?"

"I think they think it's important - but they don't do anything about it - they don't give me any encouragement to stay on, and then if I say "Oh, I've been thinking about leaving at the end of the year" - "Oh you don't want to do that'."

Interviewer: "How do you mean encouragement?"

"Well - taking an interest in schoolwork, coming here on Parent Teacher Evenings - looking at your work sometimes."

Similarly, the parents of the much maligned top boy were often blamed for the fact that he studied constantly and did not participate in leisure activities with the other boys. Table 4.5 shows the effect of parental encouragement on the level of study and academic performance of the boys; almost three-quarters of the boys whose parents put a lot of pressure on them studied hard, while none of those whose parents were not interested studied hard. Academic performance showed the same trend, increasing as parental pressure increased. The anomaly was the high level of study and academic performance of boys whose parents were interested but did not pressure them to study. This group comprised two boys who said their parents were interested in how they went in school, but could not say how they showed their interest, and five boys whose parents were very interested but refused to force their sons to study:

"They're not constantly looking over my shoulder. They think if I want

to get on I will, sort of thing. If I don't, well, there's no point in forcing me."

Four of these five boys had university aspirations, and responded to the lack of parental pressure as their parents probably knew they would, by studying reasonably hard.

Table 4.5

The Association Between Parental Encouragement and
Boy's Level of Study and Academic Performance.

	Proportion of Boys in Category Classified High on Study	Proportion of Boys in Category Classified High on Academic Performance
Parents Interested and Pressure a Lot	.73	.64
Parents Interested and Pressure a Little	.20	.40
Parents Interested but Do Not Pressure	.57	.43
Parents Not Interested	-	.25

Thus, parental concern for the boys' future had very real implications for the present. The boys had learned from their parents to view education as a step towards their occupation and were very much aware of the need for consistency between their present academic performance, and their educational goals. They, therefore, responded positively to parental pressure to perform well enough to guarantee the attainment of future goals. But this had very different consequences for boys whose parents had different expectations. While boys whose parents had high expectations were under considerable pressure to study, boys whose parents had low

expectations were fairly free of such pressure.

The Values of Schoolfriends - Academic or Anti-Academic?

In the previous section, it was shown that the boys' parents exerted considerable pressure on them to study hard and do well enough in school to guarantee attainment of their future goals. At this point, particularly for boys whose parents had high expectations, parental pressure may come into conflict with pressure from friends. Chapter three showed that friends were taken by the boys as reference groups for leisure activities, and research reported in Chapter one suggests that these leisure activities may, in the eyes of the boys' friends, become more important than the academic goals of the school, so that status among friends comes to be based on non-academic skills while academic skills not only do not confer status, but may even detract from it.

To discover the boys' perception of the value their friends placed on academic and non-academic skills, they were asked:

"How do your friends feel about the people who do very well in school?"

"Do you think deep down your friends would like to do well in school, or don't they care about this?"

"Would they rather do well in school, or in something else like sport?"

The responses to these questions suggest that the boys see their friends to be almost completely committed to the academic goals of the school. Only five boys felt it was not important to their friends to do well in school. Four of these were in the one clique - three of whom were leaving at the end of fourth form. The fifth boy was the only member of his clique to be going to sixth form. The remaining 38 thought that their friends wanted to do well in school.

Four boys did not know if their friends would rather do well in school or in sport. Five thought they would rather do well in sport, six thought they would like to do well in both, but again the majority, 28, thought their friends would rather do well in school. Any status conferred by sporting prowess simply could not compete with the importance of doing well

in school. Only four of the 11 who thought sport even entered the running suggested that their friends wanted to do well in sport for the status it conferred. The remaining seven simply thought their friends found sport more enjoyable than school. A boy whose closest friend was in the State hockey team summed the situation up when he said:

"There's so little emphasis on sport in schools. I don't think sport is a major factor because sport usually tends to be done outside school and probably different kids do different things. It's not much of a status symbol within the school - which is, I guess, what we're talking about - I think school is the main thing because you're in school and you're doing schoolwork so therefore the status is of doing well in school."

Thus most boys thought it was very important to their friends to do well in school. They perceived their friends' attitudes accurately. When asked if it was important to they themselves to do well, all but four of the boys said that it was.

The reason for doing well may have been to safeguard the future - most boys said they wanted to do well for this reason and most thought their friends wanted to do well for the same reason - but doing well had very real implications for the present. The emphasis on academic achievement meant that academic performance itself came to confer status. Thus for 12 of the boys, doing well was important because it made them feel good, or so they would not be made fun of, or to beat their friends. But not everyone could do well, and, as with any scarce resource that is valued, the boys competed for it.

"There's a hidden sort of competition - no-one ever talks about it but it's there you know. Do well in school and in exams. It's a big competition to see who can do the best. It's a bit stupid but it exists. The kid that beats another kid's pretty happy. I guess it's just natural."

The competition was encouraged by the school system which assessed the boys' work less on its own merit than in terms of how it compared with everybody else's. Each boy was assigned a place in the academic hierarchy relative to all other students and eventually came to judge his own performance in terms of others' performances:

"I sort of get the feeling I'm not doing as much work as I can do. If a person who, last year, got the same as you in school, this year beats you, you sort of think well I can do the same as him."

When asked how well they were going, most boys replied in terms of their position in class. Parents also encouraged the competition because often the only indication for them of how well their son was going was his position in class.

The competition to do well produced ill-feeling that permeated through the whole form. The extent of this ill-feeling can be gauged from responses to the first part of question 11. Only 13 boys thought their friends felt positively, or even neutral, towards those who did very well. 12 said their friends were jealous, a further 12 said they 'stirred' or 'knocked' them, while five said they just did not like them. The hostility was not spread evenly across the group. Four of the five who said their friends did not like the people who did very well were from the lowest third of the class academically and from low socio-economic status families. The boys in this group directed their hostility generally towards the upper half of the class whose apparently effortless success blocked their chances to get good jobs.

"My friends sort of get discouraged because they're always trying to do the work and they don't do it too good, and they think to themselves 'all those brainy kids up there, mucking about - doesn't matter what they do, teachers know what they can do and if they don't do it they still get a good estimate.'... The people that don't do too good, their families are quite ordinary, parents labourers, and I think they'd like to do better than just labourers. But some of them leave school now, because they don't get a chance with these brainy people going on."

The boys in the upper half of the form were equally hostile to the people who did very well, but their hostility was directed specifically at a clique of four boys, the top boy and three others who also did very well in school, but who did not participate visibly in non-academic activities. The boy who himself came 11th out of 110 in the form expressed the feeling of these boys well:

"It's those in the extremes that are looked down upon. Those who do pretty badly are looked down upon. Those who do well in school - it

depends what group they're in - if they're in that misfit group they're despised, rejected because study's their only interest, but otherwise it's a status symbol to come high up. It's a sign of intelligence, not of diligence, which it is with that other group - they're only at the top through their hard work."

Interestingly, the members of the 'misfit group' did no more homework than average, did not find their schoolwork any more interesting than the other boys, and enjoyed the social aspects of school more than the actual schoolwork. They were singled out for condemnation because they did not participate actively in highly visible leisure activities like playing sport, and going round with the group after school.

The boys did not think their friends were anti-academic. In fact, they thought they accepted the academic goals of the school almost completely. But because academic performance was valued so highly, it became the basis of intense competition, and the ill-feeling that stemmed from this competition was directed towards those boys who were seen to do well only because they concentrated on their study to the exclusion of all else. Academic performance alone did not confer status, but rather the reverse. A boy had to demonstrate obvious involvement in some other non-academic area or he was 'knocked', rather than rewarded for his academic success. Thus, at the same time as they upheld the academic goals of the school, the boys put a good deal of pressure on their friends to participate visibly in some non-academic area of activity.

To assess the boys' response to this pressure, the association between a boy's participation in leisure activities, and his friends' participation in leisure activities was measured. In the interview, the boys were asked to name their closest friend, or group of friends. To measure the extent of a boys' friends involvement in leisure activities, all reciprocated friends were classified high or low on the particular activity in terms of the overall distribution of involvement in that activity. The proportion of friends who were classified high was used as the basis of a second distribution of friends' involvement in that activity, and each

boy's group of friends was classified as highly involved, or not highly involved on the basis of their position in the second distribution.

Information was collected on the extent of the boys' participation in three distinct leisure activities - sport, going to friends' places, and going to dances and parties, and on one overall summary of the leisure activities which were most likely to have an adverse effect on study - the number of nights out each week. The summary measure correlated substantially with each of the three separate activities. ($Q = .72, .50,$ and $.68$ respectively).

It can be seen from Table 4.6 that there were very strong positive correlations between the boy's and his friends' participation in all of the leisure activities except going to friends' places. The highest association was for sport ($Q = .90$) and here not only was the extent of a boy's participation closely related to the extent of his friends' participation, but friends all tended to participate in the same sport, though not necessarily with the same degree of skill. The low association for going to friends' places, ($Q = .40$) is perhaps related to the fact that it was a casual activity, unlike sport for example, where the game and training sessions were organised. Much of the visiting at friends' places was done on the way home from, or after school, (hence the lower association with nights out), by the members of the clique who had nothing else to do, or who were closer friends.

From a measure of association alone it is impossible to tell the direction of a relationship. Thus, boys may have played hockey, or gone to dances because their friends did so, or they may have made friends with other boys because they were thrown together by shared leisure activities. Responses to the question on how the boys' friends influenced them suggest that friendships both formed around, and contributed to, involvement in the same leisure activities. Thus, one boy said:

"You usually find friends that have the same interests, and you do

the same things and you both like them, so you've got something to talk about."

While another said:

"Your friends influence what you do, what sort of sport you play - you play it because they play it. Go out to some place because they go out and you don't really like to go out by yourself - you go out to be with your friends."

In the light of these comments, the close association between the boys' participation in leisure activities and their friends' participation in those activities, suggests that the boys were strongly influenced by their friends to join in leisure activities.

Table 4.6

The Association Between a Boy's Participation in
Leisure Activities and his Friends'
Participation in Leisure Activities.

	Q Value
Playing Sport	.90
Going to Dances/Parties	.71
Going to Friends' Places	.40
Going out at Night	.82

Thus, while the boy's friends did not challenge the basic value on education that the boys had learned from their parents, they exerted considerable pressure to join in the leisure activities necessary to demonstrate that they were not 'swots', and the boys responded positively to that pressure.

The Effect of Involvement in Leisure Activities on Academic Performance and Study.

Two things have emerged from the previous two sections. First, the boys

are pressed by their parents to do well in school to safeguard their future aspirations, and, because they accept their parents as reference groups in vocational planning, they respond positively to their parents' pressure. Second, the boys are pressed by their friends to participate visibly in some form of leisure activity to prove that they are not 'swots' and that their academic performance is the result of 'intelligence' rather than 'diligence'. Because the boys accept their friends as reference groups for leisure activities, they respond positively to their friends' pressure. McDill & Coleman have argued that involvement in leisure activities, whether they are anti- or merely non-academic, has the effect of channelling the adolescent's energy away from his schoolwork.

³ How is it possible then for the boys to meet these two seemingly conflicting demands? The effect of involvement in leisure activities on the boys' study and academic performance was crucial for their ability to meet the demands of both parents and peers.

There are two parts to this problem. The first is the relationship between study, academic performance and aspirations. Did doing well enough to safeguard future aspirations demand that a lot of time be given over to study, or could most boys get by without much effort? The second is the relationship between involvement in leisure activities, and involvement in schoolwork. Did the leisure activities necessary to maintain status eat into the time that should be spent studying to a great, or only to a slight extent?

(i) The relationship between study, academic performance and aspirations.

The relationship between study and academic performance was not straight forward. Controlling for IQ, there was overall a substantial positive association between academic performance and study ($Q = .51$, Table 4.7). But the relationship was not equally strong for all boys. For boys with low IQ scores, the relationship dropped considerably. ($Q = .17$). In the low IQ group, only two of the boys who studied hard could manage to lift

themselves to the top half of the class in terms of academic performance. The two boys who studied hardest out of the entire group had both low IQ scores, and low academic performance. This suggests that for boys with a low IQ scores, the schoolwork in fourth form was sufficiently difficult that no amount of study was able to bring their academic performance up to very high level. Not surprisingly then, a majority of these boys were low on study. The situation was very different for the boys in the high IQ group. The association between amount of study and academic performance was higher for this group than for the group as a whole. ($Q = .82$). If a boy with a high IQ score studied hard, he was almost certain to reap the reward of a high academic performance. 12 of the 13 boys with high IQ scores who studied hard were in the top half of the group, and most of the boys with high IQ scores did study hard. However, a slight majority of the boys in this group who were low on study were still high on academic performance. They could do well without much effort at studying. Only two of the boys with low IQ scores could do well without studying hard. Thus, for some of the boys, particularly those with high IQ scores, the work was not yet so difficult that they had to study hard to ensure that they did well.

Table 4.7

The Association Between Study and Academic Performance, Controlling for IQ Score.

	IQ score 110 or less		IQ score more than 110		Total
	Studies Less than 1½ Hours	Studies More than 1½ Hours	Studies Less than 1½ Hours	Studies More than 1½ Hours	
Comes in Top Half of Group	2 (.22)	2 (.29)	6 (.55)	12 (.92)	22
Comes in Bottom Half of Group	7 (.78)	5 (.71)	5 (.45)	1 (.08)	18
	9 (1.0)	7 (1.0)	11 (1.0)	13 (1.0)	40

$$Q = .51$$

Since the boys held aspirations in keeping with their academic performance, and since study was closely related to academic performance, the boys' aspirations should also have affected the amount of study they thought they should do. There was, in fact, a very strong positive association between study and aspirations as Table 4.8 shows. ($Q = .69$).

Table 4.8

The Association Between Study and Aspirations.

	Non-tertiary Aspirations	Tertiary Aspirations	Total
Studies more than 1½ Hours	4 (.27)	16 (.66)	20
Studies Less than 1½ Hours	11 (.73)	8 (.33)	19
	15 (1.0)	24 (1.0)	39

$$Q = .69$$

When academic performance was controlled, the relationship slightly strengthened as Table 4.9 shows. ($Q = .72$). Controlling for academic performance showed that the relationship was different for boys with different academic performances. For the boys with low academic performance, there was a very strong positive association between study and aspirations. ($Q = .89$). Of the five who intended to go to university, all but one were high on study. To achieve their aspirations, they had to work hard. Of the 13 with low aspirations, 10 were also low on study. Six of the 10 intended to leave at the end of fourth form to take up apprenticeships. A further two had planned to do the same but had only just been persuaded by their parents to go on to sixth form. All these

boys were low on academic performance when compared with the boys with university aspirations, but they were working at the level required by the Apprenticeship Board. Because their aspirations were low they needed only a 'low' academic performance and could reach this without much study, as the following exchange suggests:

Interviewer: "How well are you going in school?"

"Getting along - I could do better if I really wanted to but there's no real need for me to. I only need an ordinary pass. I want to be a carpenter and I only need the School Certificate."

Table 4.9

The Association Between Study and Aspirations,
Controlling for Academic Performance.

	Academic Performance Below Average		Academic Performance Above Average		Total
	Studies Less than 1½ Hours	Studies More than 1½ Hours	Studies Less than 1½ Hours	Studies More than 1½ Hours	
	Tertiary Aspirations	1 (.09)	5 (.62)	7 (.88)	
Non-tertiary Aspirations	10 (.91)	3 (.38)	1 (.12)	1 (.08)	15
	11 (1.0)	8 (1.0)	8 (1.0)	12 (1.0)	39

$$Q = .72$$

The relationship between aspirations and study was far weaker for boys with high academic performance. ($Q = .22$). While the majority of the boys who were in the top half of the class academically did study hard, seven of the 18 boys who planned to go to university were able to reach a high level of academic performance without studying very hard. Thus, one boy who hoped to become a doctor of medicine was able to get away with about a half an hour's study a night. When asked how well he was going, he

replied:

"I'm passing, not brilliantly, but I'm passing quite well. In Maths I didn't do as well as I'd like, but I passed and that's all I'm worried about this year."

One other boy also intended to become a doctor, but his academic performance was low and he was studying at least two hours each night in an attempt to bring his level of performance up.

Thus, the relationship, between a boy's aspirations and his academic performance determined the amount of study he had to do. For the boy who wanted to go to university but who was not doing very well in school, study was vital. For the boy who wanted to leave at the end of fourth form and could pass at ordinary levels without much effort, and for the boy who wanted to go to university but could pass at advanced levels without much effort, study was far less important. This isolated two groups of boys on whose free time school did not make many demands.

(1) the group of boys who did little study, were low on academic performance and had low aspirations. Because their aspirations were low, there was no pressure to lift their academic performance, and hence no pressure to study hard.

(2) The group of boys who had high aspirations and could reach a high level of academic performance without having to study hard. They already had academic status and because they did not have to study hard, they were free to pursue the other avenues to status.

(ii) The relationship between involvement in leisure activities and involvement in schoolwork.

Did the leisure activities necessary to maintain status intrude to any great extent on the time that the boys should have spent studying?

As stated before, the boys' participation in three distinct leisure activities - playing sport, going to dances and parties and going to friends' places - and in one summary measure designed to get at the impact of leisure activities on study - the number of nights a boy went

out each week - was measured. The relationship between each activity and the boys' study and academic performance will be discussed separately.

(a) Sport.

Sport was far and away the most time-consuming of the leisure activities. Only six boys either did not play at all, or played non-competitively. 17 played once a week, in the compulsory sport period. The boys who played more often than this played three or more times, giving rise to two fairly distinct groups, those who played three or more times, and those who played only during the compulsory period, or not at all.

Did involvement in sporting activities distract boys from their study? Table 4.10 shows that when IQ was controlled, there was no association at all between playing sport and studying. However, the situation was not

Table 4.10

The Association Between Playing Sport and Studying.

	IQ Score 110 or Less		IQ Score More than 110		Total
	Studies Less than 1½ Hours	Studies More than 1½ Hours	Studies Less than 1½ Hours	Studies More than 1½ Hours	
Plays Sport 3 or More Times a Week	4 (.44)	2 (.29)	5 (.45)	6 (.46)	17
Plays Sport Less than 3 Times a Week	5 (.56)	5 (.71)	6 (.55)	7 (.54)	23
	9 (1.0)	7 (1.0)	11 (1.0)	13 (1.0)	40

$$Q = .09$$

the same for boys with high and low IQ scores. For boys with high IQ

scores, playing sport had no effect on the amount of study that was done. A slight majority of those who were high on sport were also high on study. These boys were able to play a lot of sport and still keep their level of study high, although, as one of them commented, it took a bit of organisation. But for the boys with low IQ scores, Table 4.10 reveals there was a moderate negative association between sport and study. The majority of boys from this group who were high on sport were low on study. As Table 4.11 shows, there was a moderate positive relationship between sport and academic performance for both groups of boys. For the high IQ group, the relationship was based on the fact that there was a large number of boys who were high on both sport and academic performance. Nine of the 11 boys who were high on sport were also high on academic performance. Those who had sacrificed study to sport faced no unhappy consequences. But for the low IQ boys, the relationship derived from the fact that a large number were low on both study and sport. Four of the six who were high on sport were low on academic performance.

Table 4.11

The Association Between Playing Sport and Academic Performance.

	IQ Score 110 or Less		IQ Score More than 110		Total
	Academic Performance Below Average	Academic Performance Above Average	Academic Performance Below Average	Academic Performance Above Average	
Plays Sport 3 or more Times a Week	4 (.33)	2 (.50)	2 (.33)	9 (.50)	17
Plays Sport Less than 3 Times a Week	8 (.67)	2 (.50)	4 (.67)	9 (.50)	23
	12 (1.0)	4 (1.0)	6 (1.0)	18 (1.0)	40

$$Q = .33$$

(b) Dances and parties.

The low level of attendance at dances and parties suggested that the boys had not yet reached the age where mixed social activities made really serious incursions into their time. As one boy replied when asked how often he went to dances:

"Dances? Never. I've been to a couple of the school socials but that's about it. I don't do anything there except run round teasing everyone."

A member of the group who went most frequently to dances and parties commented that he preferred to go with his elder brother 'because my friends just get all self-conscious, and don't dance'. Most boys had only been to three dances or parties that year, and those three were socials organised by the school. Only eight of the boys were at the stage of going out to dances or parties as regularly as once a fortnight or more.

Not surprisingly therefore, as Table 4.12 shows, the majority of boys who were high on going to dances and parties also managed to keep their level of study high. Boys from both the low IQ score group, and the high IQ score group, who were high on dances and parties were likely to be high on study too.

Table 4.12

The Association Between Going to Dances/Parties and Study

	IQ Score 110 or Less		IQ Score More than 110		Total
	Studies Less than 1½ Hours	Studies More than 1½ Hours	Studies Less than 1½ Hours	Studies More than 1½ Hours	
Goes to Dances/Parties more than once a Month	3 (.33)	4 (.57)	5 (.45)	8 (.62)	20
Goes to Dances/Parties less than Once a Month	6 (.67)	3 (.43)	6 (.55)	5 (.38)	20
	9 (1.0)	7 (1.0)	11 (1.0)	13 (1.0)	40

However, Table 4.13 shows that the situation was quite different for academic performance. Almost all of the boys with high IQ scores who were high on dances and parties were also high on academic performance. But the majority of boys with low IQ scores who were high on dances and parties were low on academic performance. As with sport, the boys from the high IQ group demonstrated their ability both to do well in school and participate actively in an outside activity.

Table 4. 13

The Association Between Going to Dances/Parties and Academic Performance.

	IQ Score 110 or less		IQ Score more than 110		Total
	Academic Performance Below Average	Academic Performance Above Average	Academic Performance Below Average	Academic Performance Above Average	
Goes to Dances/ Parties more than Once a Month	5 (.42)	2 (.50)	2 (.33)	11 (.61)	20
Goes to Dances/ Parties less than Once a Month	7 (.58)	2 (.50)	4 (.66)	7 (.39)	20
	12 (1.0)	4 (1.0)	6 (1.0)	18 (1.0)	40

$Q = .42$

(c) Going to Friends' Places.

Going round to friends' places was one of the most common ways of spending leisure time. For some boys it provided a substitute for mixed parties centering round drinking and dancing. All but 12 boys went to their friends' places at least once a week, a considerable number, 18, went more than twice, while eight went nearly every day. Thus, going to friends' places absorbed all most as much time as playing sport.

Again the effect of going to friends' places on study and academic performance was not the same for boys from the different IQ score groups. It can be seen from Table 4.14 that a slight majority of boys with low IQ scores who were high on going to friends' places were low on study, while a good majority of boys with high IQ scores who were high on going to friends' places were also high on study.

Table 4.14
Academic Performance

The Association Between Going to Friends' Places and Study.

Goes to Friends' Places	IQ Score 110 or less		IQ Score more than 110		Total
	Studies Less than 1½ Hours	Studies More than 1½ Hours	Studies Less than 1½ Hours	Studies More than 1½ Hours	
Places more than twice a week	4 (.44)	3 (.43)	3 (.27)	6 (.46)	16
Places twice, or less than twice a week	5 (.56)	4 (.57)	8 (.73)	7 (.54)	24
	9 (1.0)	7 (1.0)	11 (1.0)	13 (1.0)	40

$$Q = .26$$

Further, as Table 4.15 shows almost all the boys from the low IQ group who were high on going to friends' places were low on academic performance, while a good majority of the boys from the high IQ score group managed to be high both on going to friends' places and on academic performance.

Table 4.15

The Association Between Going to Friends' Places and Academic Performance.

	IQ Score 110 or Less		IQ Score more than 110		Total
	Academic Performance Below Average	Academic Performance Above Average	Academic Performance Below Average	Academic Performance Above Average	
Goes to Friends' Places More than Twice a Week	6 (.50)	1 (.25)	3 (.50)	6 (.33)	16
Goes to Friends' Places a week or Less	12 (1.0)	4 (1.0)	6 (1.0)	18 (1.0)	40

$Q = -.4$

(d) Nights Out.

The number of nights a boy went out each week was used as a summary measure which focussed on those leisure activities most likely to disrupt study. It was assumed that the boys would regard the afternoon after school came out as free time, and leave their homework until night time. Their descriptions of how they passed the time between getting out of school and going to bed supported this assumption. Further, as a category based on the amount of time passed, rather than on specific activities, it was hoped that nights out would pick up leisure activities the researcher was unable to foresee. In fact it did. Overall, nights out came very close to being a summary of leisure activities. There were five major categories of outings: (1) going to friends' places, which constituted

22% of activities mentioned; (2) playing and watching sport, 18% of activities mentioned; (3) hanging round the shops, 16% of activities mentioned; (4) going to the pictures, 17% of activities mentioned, and (5) going to parties and dances, 11% of activities mentioned. Many of the outings were specifically on Friday and Saturday nights and the majority of boys went out once or twice a week. However, 16 boys went out at least one night during the week, suggesting that their leisure activities did perhaps intrude on their studies.

How much did going out at night affect the boys' study, and their academic performance? Overall, there was no association between going out at night and study, but again there were differences between boys with high and low IQ scores. Table 4.16 shows that boys with low IQ scores who were high on nights out were almost all low on study. But boys with high IQ scores who were high on nights out were slightly more likely to be high on study. Thus, going out at night was more likely to be associated with less attention to study for boys with low IQ scores.

Table 4.16

The Association Between Going Out at Night and Study.

	IQ Score 110 or less		IQ Score more than 110		Total
	Studies Less than 1½ Hours	Studies More than 1½ Hours	Studies Less than 1½ Hours	Studies More than 1½ Hours	
Goes out More than Once a week	4 (.44)	1 (.14)	6 (.55)	8 (.62)	19
Goes out once or less a Week	5 (.56)	6 (.86)	5 (.45)	5 (.38)	21
	9 (1.0)	7 (1.0)	11 (1.0)	13 (1.0)	40

$Q = -.03$

From Table 4.17 it can be seen that the situation was even clearer for the association between nights out and academic performance. Not one boy from the low IQ score group who was high on nights out was also high on academic performance. But for boys with high IQ scores, a large majority of those who were high on nights out were also high on academic performance.

Table 4.17

The Association Between Going Out at Night and Academic Performance.

	IQ Score 110 or less		IQ Score more than 110		Total
	Academic Performance Below Average	Academic Performance Above Average	Academic Performance Below Average	Academic Performance Above Average	
Goes Out More than Once a Week	5 (.42)	-	4 (.66)	10 (.56)	19
Goes out Once a Week or Less	7 (.58)	4 (1.0)	2 (.33)	8 (.44)	21
	12 (1.0)	4 (1.0)	6 (1.0)	18 (1.0)	40

$$Q = -.44$$

Thus, participation in leisure activities was associated with a quite different commitment to study and academic performance for boys with different IQ scores. With regard to sport, going to friends' places and going out at night, high participation in an activity was likely to be associated with a low level of study for boys with low IQ scores. In quite the reverse situation, participation in any of these activities was likely to be associated with high levels of study for boys with high IQ scores. With regard to academic performance, the situation was even clearer. For all activities, high participation was linked with low academic performance

for low IQ score boys, and with high academic performance for high IQ score boys. Further, for all activities except going to friends' places, boys with high IQ scores were more likely to be more involved than boys with low IQ scores.

Boys from the high IQ score group, then, were able both to do well enough in school to safeguard their future aspirations, thus satisfying their parents, and to participate in leisure activities necessary in the eyes of their friends to balance out their academic performance. The high level of participation of these boys both in schoolwork and in leisure activities suggests they were able to fit a lot of things into their time, for example, the boy who came ninth in the form studied about two hours each night, and played basketball six or seven times a week. These boys were probably more willing to fit more activities into their time because they were rewarded by their friends for their academic performance only if they also participated visibly in leisure activities.

For boys with low IQ scores, it was almost impossible to participate highly in leisure activities and to do well in school. High leisure participation for these boys was generally associated with low academic performance. However, what constituted 'doing well' in school was closely related to the boys' aspirations and their parents expectations. Almost three-quarters of the parents of boys with low IQ scores held low aspirations for their sons. In all cases but one, the boys shared these expectations. Thus, although the performance of these boys was classified low in comparison with that of the boys with university aspirations, it was quite high enough to ensure acceptance into the occupation both they and their parents were aiming for. It has already been shown in Table 4.9 that most of the boys with low aspirations were able to maintain the academic performance necessary for the attainment of their aspirations without studying hard. It has also been shown in Table 4.4 that the parents of these boys were less likely to press them to study. Thus, like

the boys from the high IQ group, boys from the low IQ group with low aspirations were able both to do well enough in school to safeguard their future aspirations, thus satisfying their parents, and to participate in leisure activities. Since academic performance was generally valued, these boys were denied one important source of status. They were very aware of this. One of them said:

"None of me mates are going on. Most of them hate school think they're not smart enough. There's sort of two groups in this school - all the smart ones and they're all high and mighty - and there's another group that I'm in - sort of split the form, we just don't muck around with any of those other kids."

Because they did not need to do well in school, these boys were free to participate in the leisure activities, particularly organized competitive sport, which perhaps offered them an alternate route to status. Certainly boys from the low IQ group who were deeply involved with sport took their sport more seriously than many high IQ boys. One boy from the low IQ score group had just changed football clubs because

"I didn't like Souths very much. They used to muck round at training and that - didn't train much. I like to be fit."

At the same time, a basketball team composed mainly of boys from the high IQ group had collapsed because members were not coming to practices.

Thus, most boys were able to satisfy the demands of both their parents and their friends. This was reflected in the high degree of parental satisfaction with the boys' leisure activities. The boys were asked how their parents felt about the way they spent their free time. In contrast to their obvious concern as to how well their son was doing in school, most parents seemed to be quite liberal with regard to their son's leisure activities. About a quarter would have liked their son to spend more time on study, but most were mainly concerned that the time was spent constructively, rather than just lazed away. The attitudes of the parents whose sons' high participation in leisure activities was associated with low academic performance were examined more closely. The results are

shown in Table 4.18. With the exception of the boys high on dances and parties, the boys who were high on a leisure activity at the expense of their academic performance were much more likely than the rest of the boys to have parents who exerted little pressure on them to do well. It has already been seen that even those classified high on dances and parties did not go to them frequently, so that this leisure activity did not intrude into the boys' study time. Of the remaining three boys who were high on participation in leisure activities, low on academic performance and high on parental pressure one was high on study, one other was most involved in sporting activities and had parents whose pride in his sporting prowess matched their concern for his study, while the remaining boy had rejected his parents and their ideas completely.

Table 4.18

Level of Parental Encouragement for Boys High on Leisure Activities and Low on Academic Performance.

	High Participation on Sport	High Participation on Dances/ Parties	High Participation on Friends' Places	High Participation on Nights Out	Total
Parents Interested and Pressure a Lot	1 (.17)	3 (.43)	3 (.33)	1 (.12)	8
Parents Interested and Pressure a Little	3 (.50)	2 (.29)	3 (.33)	4 (.44)	12
Parents Interested but Do Not Pressure	2 (.33)	2 (.29)	2 (.22)	4 (.44)	10
Parents Not Interested	-	-	1 (.11)	-	1
	6 (1.0)	7 (1.0)	9 (1.0)	9 (1.0)	31

However, high participation in leisure activities was associated with

Conclusion and Summary.

In this chapter, the pressures that parents and friends put on the boys in the school situation were examined. The school situation was specifically selected for investigation because the literature on the youth culture suggests that here peer and parental values will come into conflict - peers emphasising achievement in non-academic areas such as social activities and athletics, parents emphasising the academic achievement necessary for the attainment of future educational and occupational goals. By observing the boys' responses to these pressures it was hoped to discover if they were able to satisfy the demands put upon them by both parents and friends, when these demands were different, or even in conflict.

It was found that the boys were highly responsive to parental pressure in the area of vocational aspirations, and that they shared their parents' awareness of the importance of doing well at school in the present to safeguard those aspirations. However, because the future vocational implications of school made present academic performance very important, a strong sense of competition, rarely mentioned but still undeniably there, arose. The ill-feeling and insecurity which grew out of the sense of competition was expressed in the form of hostility towards those boys thought to do well only because they did nothing but study. Considerable pressure was put on the boys by their friends to participate visibly in leisure activities to demonstrate that they were not 'swots', and that their academic performance was the result of intelligence, rather than diligence. Thus, while friends basically supported parental values on the importance of academic achievement, the possibility of conflict between peer and parental norms arose as peers pressured the boys to join in leisure activities which, other research has suggested, may intrude into time that should be spent studying.

However, high participation in leisure activities was associated with

low academic performance only for some of the boys. An examination of the relationship between participation in leisure activities, academic performance and study revealed that the effect of involvement in leisure activities was different for different boys. Boys from the group with high IQ scores were able to do the amount of study necessary to achieve the high level of academic performance congruent with their aspirations and still participate highly in leisure activities. For boys from the group with low IQ scores participation in leisure activities was usually associated with low academic performance. However, since most of these boys had low aspirations, and came from families with low expectations, their academic performance, although low beside the academic performance of boys with tertiary aspirations, was quite adequate to achieve their aspirations. Thus they too were able to participate in the leisure activities which perhaps compensated for their low academic status without coming into conflict with their parents.

Thus, overall, parents and friends shared the fundamental value on the importance of education, and, because of this, although they did put different demands on the boys in the one situation, the boys were able to meet the expectations of both parents and friends in the areas their opinions were considered important.

Footnotes

- 1 Anderson, D. & Beswick, D.G. in Secondary Education for Canberra.
- 2 The Socio-economic status scale used was developed for the Canberra Mental Health Survey, 1971, and allows more precise differentiation between the clerical grades of the Commonwealth Public Service and the ranks of the Armed Services than do other scales.
- 3 McDill, E.L. & Coleman, J.S. "High School Status, College Plans, and Interest in Academic Achievement: a Panel Analysis", American Sociological Review, 28 (6), 1963.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSION

The subject of this study was the interrelation of peer and parental influence on the adolescent. The basic issue investigated was the adolescent's ability to satisfy the demands of both his parents and his friends even when their demands were different and perhaps conflicting. The problem was approached from the perspective of reference group theory.

Basic to reference group theory is the idea that an individual can be influenced simultaneously by a number of different reference groups, and that these reference groups may have different values and norms without the individual's being forced to choose amongst them. Previous studies of the relationship between the adolescent, his parents and his friends have tended to portray the adolescent as mainly influenced either by his parents or by his friends. The popular view is that adolescence is a period of 'strain and stress' in which sharp conflict between the adolescent and his parents is only to be expected. Early characterizations of the youth culture supported this view. Thus, Parsons characterized the youth culture in terms of 'compulsive independence of and antagonism to adult expectations and authority'.⁽¹⁾ The most convincing evidence for this position has been given by Coleman, who argued that American adolescents turn away from their parents because they are

'out of touch with the times' and unable to understand much less inculcate, the standards of a social order that has changed since they were young. 2

Cut off by school from the rest of society, adolescents are forced inwards to each other and come to constitute a small society which has most of its important interactions within itself and only a few 'threads of connection with the adult society'.³ The adolescent society is

characterized by values strongly at variance with those of adult society.

Other research has produced results which contrast strikingly with this picture, and suggest that the adolescent is still very much under the thumb of his parents. Elkin & Westley found a peer group that was integrated into adult society and managed by parents to such an extent that the peer group fostered the attainment of the goals the parents themselves held for their children.⁴ Douvan & Adelson concluded that most writers had exaggerated both the adolescent's conformity to peer group norms and the extent of conflict between peer and parental norms. They found the adolescents they studied to be 'bland, docile youngsters' who accepted most of their parents' ideas. They were struck by the absence of the sort of fundamental conflict between adolescents and their parents that could have produced a critical examination by the adolescent of his parents' values.⁵

Implicit in most of these studies has been the assumption that the adolescent will be influenced either by his parents, or by his friends, but not by both. Questions to determine who influences the adolescent often require him to choose between parents and friends, and give him no option to choose both. A few studies have assumed that the adolescent may be influenced by both parents and friends and they have found that, in fact, this is so. The adolescent is influenced by both his parents and his friends, but in different areas - peers generally being taken as guides on issues of short term status centering round peer group activities, while parents are taken as guides on issues of long term status connected with the adolescent's future roles in adult society.

The results of this study support this intermediate position, and suggest that to see the adolescent as mainly influenced by either parents or friends is to overlook the complexity of the adolescent's interpersonal relationships. The boys interviewed nominated both parents and friends as reference groups. There was some evidence to support the claim that

because adolescents spend most of their time together in their own world, their parents' ability to understand them is diminished. More boys felt that their friends understood them better than their parents did than the reverse, and the reason most of them gave for this was the fact they they were with their friends most of the time, either at school, or when engaged in leisure activities out of school. However, there was no evidence to support the claim that parents are displaced by friends. Only a few boys thought their parents did not understand them at all, and these boys thought their friends did not understand them either. Further, the boys all placed a very high value on their parents' ability to advise them, a far higher value than they placed on their friends' ability to advise them. Parents were clearly not rejected as guides to the broader society. Thus both parents and friends were found to figure prominently in the lives of these boys.

While researchers vary in their estimates of the extent of the difference between peer and parental norms, they are almost all agreed that there are differences between peer and parental norms. Basic to reference group theory is the idea that an individual's reference groups may have different norms and values, but that since different reference groups influence different areas of an individual's life, any differences that do exist can usually be overcome by compartmentalization.⁶ Therefore, to understand how the adolescent was able to satisfy the demands of both parents and friends, it was necessary first to identify the area in which each was taken as a reference group, second to assess the extent of conflict between their norms and values, and third, to specify the content of the pressure each group put upon the adolescent in the area in which he accepted it as a reference group. The school situation was selected as the specific area for investigation as the literature on the youth culture suggests that in the school situation, parents and friends will make conflicting demands. The adolescent's

response to the pressure of his parents and his peers in this situation should be a good indication of his ability to meet the different demands of his different reference groups.

(i) Area of Influence.

It was found that parents and friends were taken as guides for different, and in the boys' eyes, quite separate areas of their lives. Parents were taken as reference groups for the long term vocational aspects of school, specifically what occupation to aim for and what subjects to study now in preparation for that occupation. Friends were taken as reference groups for more immediate issues to do with leisure activities. Each of these areas was regarded by the boys as being the province of parents and peers respectively, and each group was thought not to understand, or to be interested, in the area of influence of the other.

(ii) The Extent of Conflict Between Peer and Parental Norms and Values.

No evidence was found for the existence of basic conflict between the values and norms of parents and friends. When asked if their friends' and their parents' ideas were generally alike or generally different, more than half of the boys replied that their ideas were different. But the examples they provided of areas of difference centered round issues of teenage taste - length of hair, style of dress, music. The conflict based on these issues may have been very real to the boys, and to their parents, but it did not challenge deeply held parental values. In fact, peer and parental ideas were thought to be the same on the one fundamental issue raised - the importance of education. It was only in the more superficial areas to do with leisure activities that peer and parental ideas were thought to be generally different.

(iii) The School Situation.

An examination of the content of peer and parental pressure on the adolescent in the school situation showed that they did in fact make

different and potentially conflicting demands on the boys. Almost all the boys shared their parents' fundamental value on the importance of education as the route to a good future position, and responded positively to parental pressure to do well enough in school to guarantee the attainment of their future goals. The result of this was that academic performance became very important and a keen sense of competition grew up. The hostility this produced was expressed in resentment of the boys who seemed to do well in school because they did nothing else besides study. These boys were despised as 'swots' and their academic performance conferred no status because it was the product of diligence rather than intelligence. Thus, because the value of education was recognized there were strong undercurrents of competition and the boys came under considerable pressure from friends to participate visibly in leisure activities - a situation similar to that observed by Parsons when he wrote:

an important part of the anti-intellectualism in American youth culture stems from the importance of the selective process through the educational system, rather than the reverse. 7

Therefore, while parents and friends agreed on the fundamental importance of education, they put different pressures on the boys in the school situation. Parents pressed their sons to do well to guarantee the attainment of their future aspirations. Friends pressed the boys to participate visibly in leisure activities to show they were not 'swots'. These pressures are frequently considered contradictory because the adolescent has limited resources of time, and high involvement in leisure activities means less time for study. However, an analysis of the relationship between participation in leisure activities, study and academic performance showed that it was possible for most boys to meet the demands of both parents and friends. For boys with high IQ scores, it was possible to participate extensively in leisure activities thus satisfying the demands of their friends, and still maintain the high level

of academic performance consistent with their aspirations, thus satisfying their parents. For boys with low IQ scores, high participation in leisure activities was generally associated with lower amount of study and a lower academic performance. However, these boys generally had lower aspirations and an academic performance that was considered low beside that of boys with university aspirations was quite adequate to ensure attainment of their occupational goals. Thus, while high participation in leisure activities for low IQ boys was generally associated with low academic performance, this did not bring them into conflict with their parents. Both these boys and their parents had low goals which the boys could reach without much study. Parental awareness of this is shown by the fact that parents who had low expectations for their sons tended to put less pressure on them to study. (Table 4.4)

Thus, although parents emphasised the need to do well in school work, and friends emphasised the need to participate actively in leisure activities, the school situation was not a conflict situation for these boys. They were able to satisfy the demands of both their friends and their parents.

The conclusion of this study is that the adolescents' studied here were influenced by both parents and friends. The idea of a cohesive homogeneous youth culture in opposition to adult values was not supported. Friends' influence was segmentalized, as Turner has suggested,⁸ in that it was limited to one aspect of the boys lives - the leisure activities around which the peer group centered. Peer group activities were of increasing importance, and on the whole, the boys seemed to think their friends understood them better than their parents. But there were still important areas of the boys' lives which they regarded as quite separate from their friends. Here, parents advice was sought and closely followed. But the boys were not under the thumbs of their parents either.

The boys were building new independent lives for themselves on the basis of their peer group relations, and they were increasingly aware that as a larger part of their lives was spent outside the family, their parents' ability to understand them was diminishing. Rather, the boys turned both to their parents and friends for different things, and although the demands put on them by parents and friends were different, they did not stem from a basic difference in values, and the boys were able to satisfy the demands of both groups.

A Proviso.

The conclusion that the adolescent can satisfy the demands of both his parents and his friends was based on data drawn from a very atypical sample. First, the adolescents studied were Australian, while most of the research on adolescence has been done in the United States. Second, the respondents were not equally representative of all sections of the Australian population. They were drawn mainly from high socio-economic statuses, had well above average IQ scores, and came from very mobile families. All of these factors have been found in previous research to be associated with greater receptivity to parental values and pressures.⁹ Further, the respondents lived in a city where the occupational structure was more obviously hierarchical than elsewhere¹⁰ and this no doubt had a very strong effect on the boys' awareness of the importance of educational qualifications, thus further increasing their receptivity to their parents' pressure. Under more typical conditions, the boys may not have accepted so completely their parents' ideas on the importance of education, the leisure activities shared with friends may have come to constitute more than a secondary source of status, and fundamental conflict of peer and parental values may have occurred.

Finally the respondents were drawn from fourth form. It may be that in fourth form, the school does not put very heavy demands on students' free time. The boys did, on the average, one and a half to two hours

homework a night. This demanded considerable commitment on their part, but it still left them free to do quite a lot of other things, for example in the afternoon after school was out. Perhaps in fifth or sixth form, the demands of study on free time would have become so great that the boys could not fit both the necessary amount of study and a high participation in leisure activities in, and a choice between the two would have had to have been made.

Footnotes

- 1 Parsons, T. "Psycho-analysis and the Social Structure", p. 681.
2. Coleman, J.S. The Adolescent Society. p.2.
3. ibid. p. 3.
- 4 Elkin, F. & Westley, W.A. "The Myth of Adolescent Culture."
Westley, W.A. & Elkin, F. "The Protective Environment and Adolescent Socialization."
- 5 Douvan, E. & Adelson, J. The Adolescent Experience. p.81.
- 6 Shibutani, T. "Reference Groups as Perspectives."
- 7 Parsons, T. "The School Class as a Social System: Some of its Functions in American Society." Harvard Educational Review, 29(4), 1959, p.250.
- 8 Turner, R. The Social Context of Ambition. pp. 144-45.
- 9 Sewell, W.H. & Shah, V.P. "Social Class, Parental Encouragement, & Educational Aspirations." Bowerman, C.E. & Kinch, J.W. "Changes in Family and Peer Orientation between Fourth and Tenth Grades."
- 10 Anderson, D.S. & Beswick, D.G. quoted in Secondary Education for Canberra. p.12.

APPENDIX 1

INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

1. How long have you lived in Canberra?
2. How long have you been going to this high school?
3. How many brothers and sisters do you have? How old are they?
4. Could you tell me a bit about your friends, do you have one special friend, a group of friends, or both, or what?
Could you tell me their names?
5. We're always hearing on the radio and in the papers about what it's like to be a teenager today - I wonder if you could tell me how you feel about being a teenager.

How is it different from being a child?

Do people allow you to do different things now you're a teenager?
What sort of things?

Do people expect you to be more responsible now you're a teenager?
Could you give me some examples?
6. Who are the people who have most influence on the way you feel and behave? How do they influence you?
7. What subjects are you taking? What levels?
8. How did you decide to take these subjects?
Did they interest you?
Did you ever think about whether they'd help you get a job?
9. Did you discuss what subjects to take with anyone?

Your parents?
How did that discussion go?
Have you discussed what subjects to take next year with them?
10. How do your parents feel about school?
Do they think it is important? Why?
Are they interested in how you're going?
How do they show their interest?
Do they think you work hard enough at your schoolwork?
What makes you think this?
12. When do they think you should finish your education?
13. Did you discuss what subjects you'd take with your friends?
How did that discussion go?
Are they taking the same subjects as you?
Have you discussed what subjects to take next year with them?

14. How do your friends feel about school?
 How about the schoolwork, do they find it interesting or boring?
 Do they find it useful or useless in terms of their future job?
 How do they feel about the teachers?
 How about having to do as they're told all the time?
 What do they enjoy most about being at school?
 What do they like least about it?
 When do they plan to finish their education?
15. How do your friends feel about people who do very well in school?
 Do you think deep down your friends would like to do well in school
 or don't they care about this?
 Would they rather do well in school, or in something else like sport?
 Is it important to them to be well liked or don't they care about
 this?
16. How about you - how do you feel about school?
 Do you enjoy it?
 Do you find the work interesting or boring?
 Is it useful or useless in terms of your future job?
 How do you feel about the teachers?
 How about having to do as you're told all the time?
17. How well are you going?
 Is it important to you to do well or don't you care about this? Why?
 Do you think you work hard enough?
 What would you say you've gained from being at school?
 When do you think you'll finish your education?
18. Do you ever think about what work you'll do after you leave school?
 What do you think you'll do? Why?
 Is this something you feel you must decide, or will it just take care
 of itself when the time comes?
 Do you think you can plan your future and expect it to work out as
 you planned it?
19. Have you ever talked to anyone about what work to do for the rest of
 your life?
 Your parents?
 How do they feel about your choice of an occupation/ the fact that
 you aren't sure yet?
 Do they ever suggest occupations to you?
 What do they think is the most important thing to consider when you're
 choosing a job?
 Do you find talking to them helpful?
20. How about your friends, have you ever talked to them about what work
 you'll do for the rest of your life?
 What do they think is the most important thing to consider in
 choosing a job?
 Would they rather be at school or at work? Why?
 Do you find talking to them helpful?
21. What do you do in your free time? With whom?
 Do you belong to any clubs or activities groups at school?
 What do you enjoy doing most in your free time?
22. Would you rather spend your free time with your family, with your
 friends, or by yourself? Why?

23. How do your parents feel about the way you spend your free time?
Do they encourage you to go out with your friends, or would they rather you stayed at home?
How do they get on with your friends?
Are there any places they won't let you go, or any people they won't let you see?
24. Do you ever find the need to study stops you doing other things you'd like to do?
What do you do when this happens?
25. I have here some statements I'd like to discuss with you. In each case, there are two statements, one about your friends and one about your parents, I'd like you to think about them both and then say which one is most true for you, or if they're both equally true, then we'll talk about them.
- (a) My parents understand me best because they've known me all my life.
My friends understand me best because they're going through the same things as I am.
- (b) My parents are best able to advise me on things because they've had lots of experience with life.
My friends are best able to advise me on things because they know what the situation is like to-day.
26. Very often, different people have different ideas about the same things. Are your parents ideas and your friends' ideas generally alike, or generally different?
Could you give me some examples?
How about: (i) the importance of school?
(ii) doing as the teacher says?
(iii) things that are fun to do in your free time?
27. What do you usually do from the time school gets out until bedtime?
About how many hours homework do you do?
What do you do on weekends?
How many nights do you go out during the week?
How often do you do the following things:
play sport?
go to the pictures?
go to a dance or a party?
go to your friends' places?
read, or other hobbies?
watch television?
go out with your family?
28. Where were you born? When?
29. What work does your father do?
What work does your mother do?
30. How far did your father go in school?
How far did your mother go in school?
31. Do your parents go to Parent-Teacher nights, the Parents & Citizens Association?
32. Do your parents read much? What?

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Alissi, A.S. "Concepts of Adolescence", Adolescence, 7 (28), 1972.
- Baldock, C.V. Vocational Choice and Opportunity. New Zealand, University of Canterbury Press, 1971.
- Berger, B.M. "Adolescence and Beyond", Social Problems, 10 (4), 1963.
- Bettelheim, B. "The Problem of Generations " in Youth: Change and Challenge", Daedalus, 91 (1), 1962.
- Blau, P. & Duncan, D.D. The American Occupational Structure. New York, Wiley, 1967.
- Blos, P. "The Child Analyst looks at the Young Adolescent " in "Twelve to Sixteen: Early Adolescence", Daedalus, 100 (4), 1971.
- Bowerman, C.E. & Kinch, J.W. "Changes in Family and Peer Orientation of Children between Fourth and Tenth Grades", Social Forces, 37 (3), 1959.
- Bordua, D.J. "Educational Aspirations and Parental Stress on College", Social Forces, 38 (3), 1960.
- Boyle, R.P. "The Effect of the High School on Students' Aspirations", American Journal of Sociology, 71 (6), 1966.
- Brittain, C.V. "Adolescent Choices and Parent-Peer Cross-Pressures", American Sociological Review, 28 (3), 1963.
- "An Exploration of the Bases of Peer-Compliance and Parent-Compliance in Adolescence", Adolescence, 2 (4), 1968.
- Bucher, R. "Tape-Recorded Interviews in Social Research", American Sociological Review, 21 (3), 1956.
- Fritz, C.E. & Quarantelli, E.L.
- Campbell, W.J. & McSweeney, R.V. "The Peer-Group Context", in Campbell, W.J. (ed) Scholars in Context. Sydney, John Wiley, 1970.
- Cartwright, D. "Analysis of Qualitative Material", in Festinger, L. & Katz, D. (eds) Research Methods in the Behavioural Sciences. New York, Holt, Rinehart & Winston, 1953.
- Coleman, J.S. "The Adolescent Subculture and Academic Achievement", American Journal of Sociology, 65 (4), 1960.
- The Adolescent Society. Glencoe, Free Press of Glencoe, 1961.

Connell, R.W.

"You Can't Tell Them Apart Nowadays - Can You?",
Paper given to the Sociology Section, 44th
Congress, A.N.Z.A.A.S., Sydney, 1972.

Connell, W.F.,

Growing Up in an Australian City. Melbourne
Research.

New Jersey, Prentice

Hall, John Wiley,

Melbourne, Cheshire,

Age Groups and
Free Press, 1956.

Adolescent
(3), 1957.

quency", in
venile Delinquency.

arental Influence
merican Sociological

in the Junior
ce Journal,

New York, Beacon Press,

Columbia University

in Research and
1969.

New York, Dutton, 1960.

New York, Glencoe, Free

New York, The Dorsey

al Values",
, 1965.

AUSTRALIAN NATIONAL UNIVERSITYTHE LIBRARYA.N.U. THESES

This thesis is issued to you personally.
Please do not allow anyone else to read it
without first applying to the Reference Desk.

Do not leave the thesis unattended. If you
are leaving the library, please return it to the
Reference Desk. Advise the staff there if you
require the thesis again so that it can be kept
for you.

Please do not photocopy any part of this thesis
as the author may have placed restrictions on
copying. Ask at the Reference Desk if you want
to have some pages photocopied.

Please return the thesis to the Reference Desk
when you have finished reading it.

Reader Services Librarian
R.G. Menzies Building

Haller, A.O. &
Woefel, J.

"Significant Others and their Expectations:
Concepts and Instruments to Measure Inter-Personal
Influence on Status Aspirations", Rural Sociology,
37 (4), 1972.

- Connell, R.W. "You Can't Tell Them Apart Nowadays - Can You?", Paper given to the Sociology Section, 44th Congress, A.N.Z.A.A.S., Sydney, 1972.
- Connell, W.F., Francis, E.P., & Skilbeck, E.R. Growing Up in an Australian City. Melbourne Australian Council of Education Research.
- Davis, J.A. Elementary Survey Analysis. New Jersey, Prentice Hall, 1971.
- Douvan, E. & Adelson, J. The Adolescent Experience. New York, John Wiley, 1966.
- Dunphy, D. Cliques, Crowds and Gangs. Melbourne, Cheshire, 1969.
- Eisenstadt, S.N. From Generation to Generation; Age Groups and Social Structure. New York, The Free Press, 1956.
- Elkin, F. & Westley, W.A. "The Protective Environment and Adolescent Socialization", Social Forces, 35 (3), 1957.
- England, R.W. "A Theory of Middle Class Delinquency", in Vaz, E.W. (ed) Middle Class Juvenile Delinquency. New York, Harper & Rowe, 1967.
- Epperson, D.C. "A Re-assessment of Indices of Parental Influence in 'The Adolescent Society'", American Sociological Review, 29 (1), 1964.
- Finger, J.A. & Silverman, A. "Changes in Academic Performance in the Junior High School", Personnel & Guidance Journal, 45, 1966.
- Friedenberg, E.Z. The Vanishing Adolescent. Boston, Beacon Press, 1964.
- Ginzberg, E., et al Occupational Choice. New York, Columbia University Press, 1951.
- Gold, M. & Douvan, E. (eds) Adolescent Development: Readings in Research and Theory. Boston, Allyn & Bacon, 1969.
- Goodman, P. Growing Up Absurd. New York, Vintage Books, 1960.
- Gordon, W.C. The Social System of the High School, Glencoe, Free Press of Glencoe, 1957.
- Gottlieb, D. & Ramsey, C.E. The American Adolescent. Homewood, The Dorsey Press, 1964.
- Gribbons, W.D. & Lohnes, P.R. "Shifts in Adolescents' Vocational Values", Personnel & Guidance Journal, 44, 1965.
- Haller, A.O. & Woefel, J. "Significant Others and their Expectations: Concepts and Instruments to Measure Inter-Personal Influence on Status Aspirations", Rural Sociology, 37 (4), 1972.

- Hargreaves, D. Social Relations in a Secondary School. London, Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1967.
- Hartley, R. "Relationship between Perceived Values and Acceptance of a New Reference Group", Journal of Social Psychology, 51, 1960.
- Hartley, R. "Norm Compatability, Norm Preference and the Acceptance of a New Reference Groups", Journal of Social Psychology, 52, 1960.
- Henessey, B.L. "Planning a Psychiatric Service for the Australian Capital Territory", Australian & New Zealand Journal of Sociology, 4, 1970.
- Kahl, J.A. "Educational and Occupational Aspirations of Common Man Boys", Harvard Educational Review, 23, 1953.
- Kandel, D.B. & Lesser, G. "Parental and Peer Influences on Educational Plans of Adolescents", American Sociological Review, 34 (2), 1969.
- Kandel, D.B. & Lesser, G. Youth in Two Worlds. London, Jossey-Bass, 1972.
- Kelley, H.H. "Two Functions of Reference Groups.", in Swanson, G.E., Newcomb, T.M. & Hartley, E.L. (eds) Readings in Social Psychology. New York, Henry Holt, 1952.
- Kerlinger, F.N. Foundations of Behavioural Research. New York, Holt, Rinehart & Winston 1965.
- Kuhn, M.H. "The Reference Group Re-considered", in Manis, J.G. & Meltzer, B.N. Symbolic Interaction: A Reader in Social Psychology. Boston, Allyn & Bacon, 1972.
- Meyer, J.W. "High School Effects on College Intentions", American Journal of Sociology, 76 91), 1970.
- Murdock, G. & Phelps, G. "Youth Culture and the School Re-Visited", British Journal of Sociology, 23 (4), 1972.
- Myerhoff, H.L. & Myerhoff, B.G. "Field Observations of Middle Class Gangs", in Vaz, E.W. (ed) Middle Class Juvenile Delinquency, op. cit.
- Nelson, J.I. "High School Context and College Plans: The Impact of Social Structure on Aspirations", American Sociological Review, 37 (2), 1972.
- Newcomb, T.M. "Student Peer Group Influence", in Rosen, B.C., Crockett, H.J. & Nunn, C.Z. (eds) Achievement in American Society. Cambridge (Mass.), Schenckman, 1969.
- Nunally, T.M. Psychometric Theory. United States, McGraw Hill, 1967.

- Parsons, T. "Age and Sex in the School Structure of the United States", American Sociological Review, 7(1), 1942.
- "The School Class as a Social System: Some of its Functions in American Society", Harvard Educational Review, 29 (4), 1959.
- Remmers, H.H. & Radler, D.H. The American Teenager. New York, Bobbs-Merrill, 1957.
- Riesman, D. The Lonely Crowd. New Haven, Yale University Press, 1961.
- Rosen, B.C. "Conflicting Group Membership: a Study of Parent-Peer-Group Cross-Pressures", American Sociological Review, 20 (2), 1955.
- Sewell, W.H. & Armer, J.M. "Neighbourhood Context and College Plans" American Sociological Review, 31 (2), 1966.
- Sewell, W.H., Haller, A.O. & Ohlerendorf, G.W. "The Educational and Early Occupational Process: Replication and Revision", American Sociological Review, 35 (6), 1970.
- Sewell, W.H. & Shah, V.P. "Socio-Economic Status, Intelligence and the Attainment of Higher Education", Sociology of Education, 40 (1), 1967.
- "Social Class, Parental Encouragement and Educational Aspirations", American Journal of Sociology, 73 (5), 1968.
- Sherif, M. "The Concept of Reference Groups in Human Relations", in Sherif, M. & Wilson, M.O. (eds) Group Relations at the Crossroads. New York, Harper Brothers, 1953.
- Shibutani, T. "Reference Groups as Perspectives", in Manis, J.G. & Meltzer, B.N. (eds) Symbolic Interaction: a Reader in Social Psychology. op.cit.
- Snyder, E.E. "A Longitudinal Analysis of the Relationship between High School Student Values, Social Participation, and Educational-Occupational Achievement", Sociology of Education, 42 (3), 1969.
- Spady, W.G. "Lament for the Letterman: Effects of Peer Status and Extra-Curricular Activities on Goals and Achievement", American Journal of Sociology, 75 (5), 1970.
- Sugarman, B. "Involvement in Youth Culture, Academic Achievement and Conformity in School", British Journal of Sociology, 18 (2), 1967.
- Toby, J. "Orientation to Education as a Factor in the School Maladjustment of Lower Class Children", in Rosen, B.C. Crockett, H.J. & Nunn, C.Z. (eds) Achievement in American Society. op. cit.

Turner, R.H.

"Role Taking, Role Standpoint, and Reference Group Behaviour", American Journal of Sociology, 61 (4), 1956.

The Social Context of Ambition. San Francisco, Chandler, 1964.

Westley, W.A. &
Elkin, F.

"The Myth of Adolescent Culture", American Sociological Review, 20 (6), 1955.

Secondary Education For Canberra. Report of the Working Committee on College Proposals for the Australian Capital Territory, 1972.