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SCHOOLING FOR WORK IN NEW ZEALAND:

A QUALITATIVE STUDY OF THREE HIGH SCHOOLS.

A thesis

submitted in fulfilment

of the requirements for the Degree

of

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by

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To Linda Holmes,

...and progressive teachers like her who dare.

ABSTRACT.

This ethnographic study set out to discover the messages given to students about work within three high schools in a provincial city of New Zealand. Attention was given to overt and covert messages, and to those messages embedded in the structure of schooling itself. The research also ascertained which of these messages students received, and which of them they accepted and contested.

A number of variables which influenced both the transmission and the reception of messages were noted. With regard to teachers, these variables included their ethnicity, their personal ideology, and their group ideology as represented by the ethos of their school. With regard to students, variables included their class location, their gender and ethnicity. A confluence of these factors was observed to determine the nature of educational experiences students underwent at school, and the kinds of messages they received - both overtly and covertly - from teachers.

This study contributes to the debate within the "new" sociology of education in that it focuses on the relationship between schooling and the established order in society. The data collected show that more often than not, school structures (form), the curriculum (content) and classroom processes (pedagogy) function to serve the interests of the social order, and specifically to satisfy the needs of industry rather than those of democracy. In various ways, the messages given by teachers and schools are shown to belong to the sphere of teaching <u>for</u> work rather than <u>about</u> work. The difference lies in an education which teaches critically about societal structures with the hope of eventually transforming them into more equitable ones, and an education whose main concern is to reproduce citizens who fit the established structures. While teachers are described functioning in the latter mode, the contradictions, conflicts and dialectics which were observed are highlighted to show that such reproduction does not take place without contestation - both on the part of teachers and on the part of students. This contestation in itself opens up spaces wherein students and teachers can exercise agency and autonomy to question - and formulate alternatives to - the structure.

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There is a proverb in Maoridom:

He toa takitini taku toa
Ehara i te toa taki tahi.
My strength comes from all my friends,
past and present.

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CONTENTS

Abstract iii

Acknowledgements iv

Contents v

List of Tables ix

PART I:

Chapter 1 School and Society in New Zealand: A Background. 1

1.1. Establishing a Context. 1

1.2. School and Society. 2
* The "New" Sociology of Education 4

1.3. New Zealand, Work and Unemployment. 5
* Employment and New Zealand 5
* Unemployment and New Zealand 7
* Explaining Unemployment 10
* Explaining the structure of unemployment 14

1.4. Class and New Zealand. 18
* Class and Education 20
* Social Class and Ethnicty 21

1.5. New Zealand, Education and Social Movements. 23
* Education and Ethnicity 24
* Education and Gender 28
* Education and the New Right 31

Chapter 2 Confronting School and Work: A Literature Review. 34

2.1. Introduction. 34

2.2. Historical Background. 35

2.3. Employment Crisis and Educational Responses. 38
2.3.1. The New Vocationalism 40
2.3.2. The Critical Educators 45
2.3.3. The Rhetorical Humanists 49

2.4. Linking Education and Work. 51
2.4.1. Socialisation 52
2.4.2. Selection 60
2.4.3. Orientation 65
2.4.4. Preparation 72
2.4.5. Education and Development 74

2.5. Discussion and Directions. 78

Chapter 3 Research Design and Methodology. 86

3.1. Preliminary Considerations on Research. 86

3.2. Grounded Theory Methodology. 93

3.3. Case Study Techniques. 97

3.4. Developing the Framework of Grounded Theory. 99
3.4.1. The First School Term 100
3.4.2. The Second School Term 109
3.4.3. The Third School Term 111

3.5. Methodological Concerns. 113

Chapter 4 The Schools. 128

4.1. Selection of Schools. 128

4.2. Towards a Description of School Cultures. 129

4.3. All Girls' High School. 132

4.4. Co-Ed High School. 143

4.5. All Boys' College. 160

PART II:

Chapter 5 Socio-Political Messages about Work. 175

5.1. Teachers' Intended Messages. 177

5.2. Actual Messages. 182
5.2.1. The Nature of Work. 182
* The changing value of work 191
* Work arrangements 193
5.2.2. The Conditions of Work. 195
* General rights 195
* Trade unions 197
* Women's conditions of work 207
5.2.3. Relations at Work. 212
* Relations between workers 212
* Relations between workers and employers 214
* Ethnic relations in the work force 216
* Covert messages about relations at work 218

5.3. Students and Socio-Political Messages. 225
5.3.1. The Nature of Work. 225
* Students' general reception 225
* The hierarchy of work 229
* The priority of work 236
5.3.2. The Conditions of Work. 237
* Workers's rights and unions 238
* Gender and conditions of work 244
5.3.3. Relations at Work. 247
* Relations among workers 248
* Relations between workers and employers 252

Chapter 6 Messages Regarding the Nature of the Labour Market. 261

6.1. Teachers' Intended Messages. 261
* Private knowledge and public messages 262

6.2. Actual Messages. 267
6.2.1. A Contracting Market 268
* General messages about unemployment 268
* Messages specific to gender 271
* Messages specific to ethnicity 273
6.2.2. Causes of Unemployment. 280
* Intrinsic causes 281
* Extrinsic causes 302

6.3. Students and the Nature of the Labour Market. 305
6.3.1. A Contracting Labour Market. 305
6.3.2. Causes of Unemployment. 313
* Intrinsic causes 314
* Extrinsic causes 323

Chapter 7 The Process of Occupational Choice. 335

7.1. Teachers' Intended Messages. 335
* Be aware of choices 336
* Be realistic 337

7.2. Actual Messages. 341
7.2.1. Main Messages. 342
* Self-Appraisal 342
* Job-Appraisal 344
7.2.2. Modifying Occupational Choice. 346
* Labour market contraction 347
* Gender and occupational choice 348
* Class and occupational choice 352
* Ethnicity and occupational choice 354

7.3. Students and Occupational Choice. 357
7.3.1. Students and the discourse of Choice. 357
* Personal liking 358
* Conditions of work 359
* The opportunity structure 360
* Experiences in the school 361
7.3.2. Students' Reactions. 362
* "Realism" and occupational choice 363
* Gender and occupational choice 364
* Class and occupational choice 374
* Ethnicity and occupational choice 376

Chapter 8 Messages about Work given in Transition Programmes. 392

8.1. Teachers' Intended Messages. 393
* Intended overall goals 394
* Goals for work exploration 402

8.2. Actual Messages. 405
8.2.1. The Form of Transition Education 405
* The recipients of transition 406
* The separate school 407

8.2.2. The Content of Transition Education 410
* Classroom sessions 411
* Work exploration 417
8.2.3. The Pedagogy of Transition Education 423

8.3. Students and Transition Education. 427
8.3.1. Reception of Transition Education 428
8.3.2. Acceptance of Transition Education 430
8.3.3. Contestation of Transition Education 437
* Contestation of goals 438
* Contestation of targeting 439
* Contestation of label "deficient" 441
* Contestation of "relevant" curriculum 443
* Contestation of work exploration 449
* Violent resistance 451

Chapter 9 Discussion and Directions: A Conclusion. 455

9.1. The Major Findings in Context. 456
* Givers of Messages - the Industrial Impulse 456
* Givers of Messages - the Democratic Impulse 459
* The Receivers of Messages 464
* The Context 466

9.2. A Contrasting View of Education. 468
* Skilling and Deskilling 468
* Critical Education 470

9.3. Directions for Future Research 481

Appendix A Description of Research 484

Appendix B Initial Set of Grounded Theory Categories 485

Appendix C Interview Schedule for Students 487

Appendix D Interview Schedule for Careers Advisers 489

Appendix E Interview Schedule for Transition Teachers 491

Appendix F Interview Schedule for Principals and Staff 493

Bibliography 494

LIST OF TABLES.

Figure 1. 3
Figure 2. 35

PART ONE

CHAPTER 1.

SCHOOL AND SOCIETY IN NEW ZEALAND: A BACKGROUND.

This chapter provides a background to the major issues considered in this study. It first describes the theoretical predispositions which informed the researcher's approach to the field. The perspective adopted links schooling to the wider structure, and aspects of the latter are described with reference to a segmented labour market and increasing levels of unemployment. The subordinate and dominant relationships different groups of people have to this structure are described. Finally, an account is given of how New Zealand education is currently being formulated in the context of important social movements related to ethnicity, gender and the "new Right".

1.1. ESTABLISHING A CONTEXT.

This study set out to record the messages a particular sample of teachers and schools gave about the world of work, and the reception given by students to these messages. The first part of this study describes the context within which these transmissions took place, for it is the context which reveals the political and the ideological implications of communication. There are various contexts one could consider. There is the micro-context of the family and culture of the students involved in this study; there is also the context of the particular schools where the researcher carried out his observations. The latter's theoretical predispostions and approach to "reality" constitute another context, as do those of the readers who interpret the data presented in this study. The approach adopted in this research considers all these contexts to be related to a wider, fundamental context, namely the economic structure of society. This, defined by the organisation of production, the division of labour and levels of technology, establishes the macro-context of schooling and of other institutions in society. The social relations (of class, gender and ethnicity) which characterise the present social order are seen to structure the processes of formal education.

In approaching the field, the researcher was guided by a theoretical perspective which considered that macro- and micro-contexts would interact together to influence the lives of the different participants in the study. The structured beliefs and practices of the teachers (as givers of messages) and students (who receive and accept or contest these messages) were considered to be in themselves a crucial aspect of the school's contribution to the social order. Class, gender, and ethnic relations in New Zealand - how these are developed within the family, the neighbourhood, and the school in particular - were therefore seen to establish the limits and constraints of social, political and intellectual life in general. The way these relations are experienced by different people establishes the context for a person's negotiation of meanings and messages. It is important to give an account of aspects of these contexts. First, a detailed description of the theoretical predispositions of the researcher is provided (Section 1.2.). Second, the context of the economic structure, and who occupies dominant and subordinate positions in this structure is described (Section 1.3.). Third, class as a factor which structures inequality in New Zealand is discussed with relation to both society and schooling (Section 1.4.). Finally, social movements which represent different interests within the state are described, especially as they apply to education (Section 1.5.).

1.2. SCHOOL AND SOCIETY.

Within the perspective adopted by the researcher, any study of the relationship between education and work, and of the specific school-to-work messages, has to be placed in a context which highlights the intricate relationships between macro-economic forces and the realities of people's everyday lives. Moreover, these social relationships - of class, gender and ethnicity - are considered to be relations of domination and subordination, with some groups benefitting more than others from the same socio-economic organisation. Within this neo-Marxist approach, the

> *dominant class, race and gender groups are enabled to control or influence in their own interests almost the entire matrix of institutions which constitute New Zealand society, including the definition and distribution of material wealth, goods, services and socially valued knowledge, while the collective interests of subordinate groups are*

> *not met in the prevailing social and economic organisation.*
>
> *(Jones, 1986, p.75)*

These relations of dominance are not seen as imposed or accepted in a mechanical way - rather, a dynamic and complex interaction often occurs, an interaction characterised by conflict, bewilderment and fortune, good or bad. In the context of schooling, and discussing the complex and dynamic relationship between the individual's everyday life and the wider structure, Dwyer *et al.*(1984) present the following diagram:

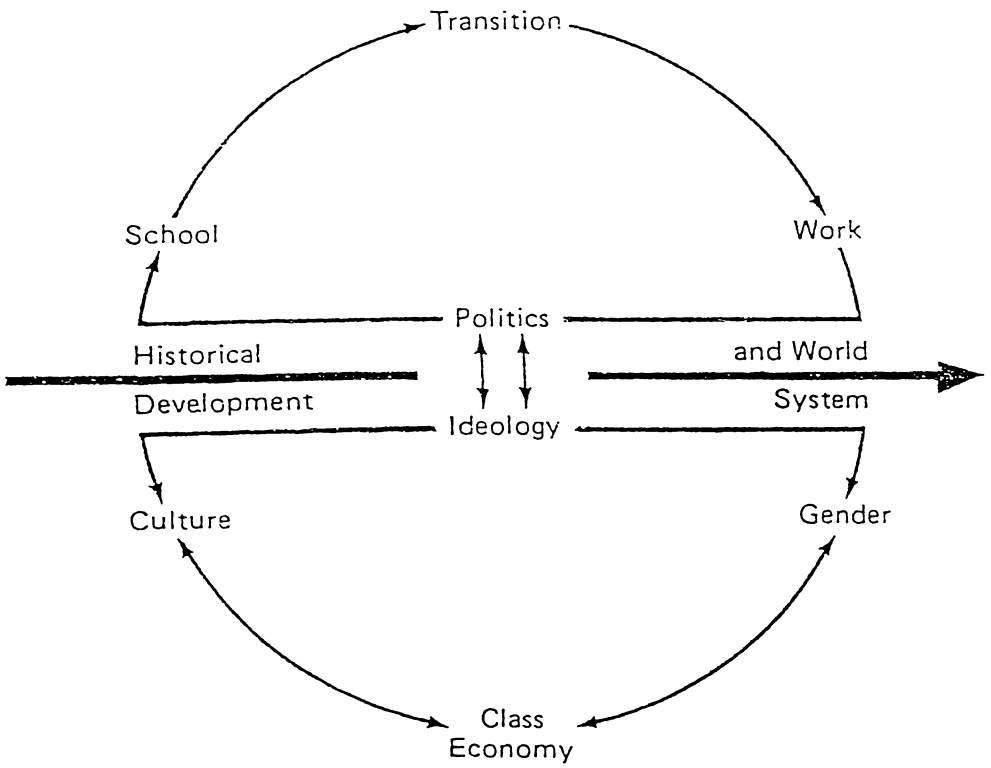


Figure 1.

In this study, Chapters 1 and 2 focus on the context - the lower half of the circle in the diagram above - to show that limitations may be imposed on the political and education systems by the economic base. The latter part of this study focuses on the top half of the circle in the diagram, namely with the ways in which schools structure and influence the transition between schooling and work. Apple (1986c, p.321) summarises well the potential of neo-Marxist accounts such as that of Dwyer *et al.* in providing a number of insights for our understanding of schooling. The model illustrates the utter centrality of capitalism as a massively structuring force which has a major impact on every other

structural relationship and antagonism. It gives due importance to the determinations of social practice, for no social practice takes place on an unstructured terrain. The neo-Marxist model also considers the parallel stucturing power of class, gender and race. Finally, such a perspective provides a sense of the social totality, and of the differences and contradictions among practices in the economic, political, and cultural spheres which comprise this totality. Dwyer *et al.'s* model does not fall into the trap of reductionism or determinism of structural explanations such as those of Althusser which merely represent a simple base/superstructure relationship. Politics, schooling and work are not simply a "reflection" of more fundamental elements.

The "New" Sociology of Education.

A development in educational debate which has appropriated the insights of neo-Marxism is the so-called "new" sociology of education. Young's (1971) collection of readings led to new directions which suggested an interpretation of schooling that incorporated an account of structurally-organised relations of power. Following Bourdieu and Passeron (1977), knowledge itself was to be viewed as a form of social control, with schools as agencies of cultural and economic reproduction. It was argued that schools functioned to preserve the distinctions in each generation of children the distinctions of earlier generations and the present distributions of wealth. While initially this process of reproduction was presented in a deterministic fashion, later research presented schools as another site for progressive struggle.

In New Zealand, the insights developed by the "new" sociology of education were taken up relatively recently. Moss and Ramsay (1983) identify a start with Bates who, in 1977 and 1978, raised issues which linked schooling with power in New Zealand society. Bates (1978, p.18) argued for research which focused not merely on the form and content of school curricula, but rather which would make explicit *"the content, form, structure and framing of what counts as knowledge in the classroom"* where the curriculum is being put into action. Since Bates, a substantial amount of work has been done in New Zealand within this framework at the theoretical

level, reaching a climax in Codd *et al.'s* (1985) publication of a collection of readings under the title *Political Issues in New Zealand Education*. In various ways the readings tackle some of the central concerns of the "new" sociology of education, which Ramsay (1984), following Bates (1978) and Giroux (1979), has organised around the following nine questions:

1. What counts as knowledge?
2. How is such knowledge produced?
3. Do different groups in the community value different forms of knowledge? If so, are these fairly represented in the school curriculum?
4. How is knowledge transmitted in the classroom?
5. What kinds of organisations and relationships are developed in the classroom? And are these designed to reproduce the values and norms embodied in the "accepted" social relationships of the workforce?
6. Who has access to knowledge, and who controls this access?
7. Whose interests does this knowledge serve?
8. How do the prevailing methods of evaluation (tests, examinations, etc.) serve to legitimise existing forms of knowledge?
9. What ideological appeals justify the system?

A number of these questions are addressed in this study. In this chapter the focus is on the macro-context which affect responses to the questions above. Consequently, elements relating to the social relations as presented in Dwyer *et al.'s* (1984) model are discussed in relation to education. In the following sections, the context of New Zealand schooling is located first in a capitalist system in crisis and secondly in the influence of various social forces (specifically class relations) and social movements (race and gender, and the "new" Right) which both structure and in many ways define student and teacher experiences in schools.

1.3. NEW ZEALAND, WORK AND UNEMPLOYMENT.

[1] Employment and New Zealand.

As a capitalist country, New Zealand is characterised by the division of labour into occupations, a process determined by the social relations of society that cohere around the organisation of production. These social relations establish a hierarchy of employment by defining criteria of selection and access to jobs. This refers to a theory of "labour market segmentation", (also called "dual labour market theory") which in its strongest form

(see Wachter, 1974; Reynolds, 1978; Addison and Siebert, 1979; and Wilson, 1979) rests on three related propositions:

1. The labour market is divided (for the benefit of the capitalist) into several categories of occupations each with different criteria of hiring, paying, promotion, rules and behaviour. Such a differentiated (dual) labour market is divided into primary and secondary sectors. Wage rates in the primary sector are set by the supply and demand for particular skills, but in the secondary sector, low wage rates pertain regardless of skills.

2. There is very little economic mobility between the primary and secondary sectors.

3. The secondary sector is characterised by pervasive under-employment, in the sense that secondary-type workers have unused skills and potential.

The occupational experiences within each of the sectors are differentiated in terms of power, independence, authority and reward. The primary sector of the labour market is defined as one composed of jobs which are "career" positions (with promotion opportunities) which are highly paid, have good conditions and security of employment. Wilson (1979) explains that the wide variation of characteristics in the primary sector lead to a distinction between independent and subordinate subdivisions, and it is in the latter subdivision as well as the secondary sector where lower levels of education are generally found. Jobs in the secondary sector are characterised by repetitive tasks, specific supervision and formalised work rules, and generally most of the skills are acquired on the job through practice and experience. Jobs in the this sector are also characterised by low wage rates, poor working conditions and instability of employment, and they lack a career structure and opportunities for promotion. The secondary labour market is composed of workers who move through a random series of jobs which greatly restrict their opportunities for learning new skills or gaining advancement. While such a theory has been criticised for offering mere descriptions rather than explanations for the division of the labour market into "good" and "bad" jobs, the hypothesis has been found useful for drawing attention to the systematic exclusion of disadvantaged social groups (such as ethnic minorities, women, and youth) from the better jobs in the labour market.

Shipley (1982), Freeman-Moir (1984), Khan (1986) and Brosnan (1986) have presented data to show that in New Zealand's segmented labour market, groups identified by their gender, class, youth and ethnicity are being relegated overwhelmingly to the secondary sector and to unemployment. Such segmentation both supports and shapes relations of dominance and subordination. The link of this with schooling is that schools, together with the family, are the initial organisers of these relations. Thus, the school reproduces the social organisation of production by selecting individuals and providing them with differential access to the hierarchy of occupations. Schools therefore participate in and to some extent reproduce the inequalities of capitalist society - the class structure and related systems of patriarchy and racism.

Capitalism in New Zealand is also characterised by a crisis in capital accumulation, which needs to be analysed in terms of the prospects of unemployment which thousands of people face.

[2] Unemployment and New Zealand.

In New Zealand as elsewhere, the burden of both unemployment and of measures to combat unemployment (i.e. monetarist policies, restructuring) are being felt by identifiable groups of people. These are youths, Maori and Pacific Islanders, and women. Despite the fact that various claims have been made that society is on the edge of a new social ethic in which full employment will cease to be a major priority (see Jenkins and Sherman, 1979; Jones, 1985), work still dominates and shapes the lives of people in industrial societies. The type of job individuals hold decides, in large measure, where they will live, how well they will live, their social contacts, the type of recognition they will receive from others, how they regard themselves, and to a large extent, whether or not they will find some purpose or meaning in life (Macarov, 1985).

The following discussion describes first the extent of the problem in New Zealand, and who is carrying the burden of unemployment, and second explanations of the reasons for this. It should be borne in mind that the official unemployment figures referred to are grossly understated. They omit discouraged workers, part-time workers

seeking full-time work, domestic workers, transient workers, agricultural workers, school-leavers and persons who are in training or re-training programmes because there are no jobs for them. As a result, it has been estimated that official unemployment figures should be increased by from 50% to as much as 300% to reflect the real unemployed (see Macarov, 1985, p.632). Census figures come much closer to the truth, and the first releases by the Statistics Department from information obtained during the 1986 census show that the number of unemployed is 108,768.

The phenomenon of mass unemployment has affected youth most of all. Watson (1983), looking at the problem internationally, shows that whereas most countries in Western Europe have between 5% and 13% of their total labour force unemployed, between 45% and 65% of these tend to be young people. In New Zealand, youths constitute the single largest group who are registered unemployed. Teenagers in fact represent 16% of the working age population but make up nearly 40% of the registered unemployed. With over 27,000 young adults (including 8,000 direct school-leavers) unemployed at December 1983, and a corresponding shrinking of at least 10,000 jobs, the mis-match becomes obvious. [1]

Unemployment among school-leavers and young people was first generally recognised as significant in 1978, when a total of 2,810 was reached in February.[2] This number has steadily increased in the intervening years to its peak in January 1984 when registered unemployed school-leavers numbered 10,038. Khan (1986) summarises a number of employment trends relevant to this particular study. These are:

- the long-term duration of unemployment is increasing, with the teenage sector being the most affected.
- in the overall context of employment, there has been an increase in the part-time employment rate at the expense of full-time employment.
- unskilled and semi-skilled occupations are more sought after than professional and administrative occupations by the registered unemployed.

---

1. Source: Khan, 1986 - drawing on various official statistical publications.
2. Source: Department of Labour, 1980.

- more pupils are leaving school to seek unskilled and semi-skilled occupations in the service and labour sectors, than any other type of occupations.

If the future in terms of employment chances is uncertain for a large percentage of school-leavers, it is even more gloomy for youth from ethnic minorities who suffer the double burden of youth and racial peripheralisation. A background paper prepared by the Department of Labour for the Maori Economic Summit of October 1984 showed that the unemployment rate for Maoris was 2.4% in 1951, while the rate for non-Polynesians was 1.3%. This gap had widened to a four-fold difference by 1981, with rates of 14% and 3.5% respectively. Census figures (Statistics Department, 1986) show that almost 15% of the Maori labour force are unemployed, against 6% of non-Maori workers. 49% of Maori students become unemployed on leaving school (Department of Education, 1984).

New Zealand also has a consistently higher rate of unemployment amongst women, especially among young females, than among men (Shipley, 1982). Preliminary figures for the 1986 Census (Statistics Department, 1986) show that overall, the unemployment rate for women is currently 9%, for men 5.2%. 30% of women are in part-time employment. Overall females represent about 40% of the registered unemployed, yet they represent 55% of unemployed school-leavers. Of the 15-19 age group, 50% are unemployed. The Employment Promotion Conference Backgrounder (1985) reports that young females tend to remain unemployed longer than the males, so that in New Zealand, 59% of the long duration unemployed school leavers are female, even though females leave school with the same or better qualifications than males. Research studies have moreover shown that the level of female unemployment is higher than statistical figures because females make up a higher number of the discouraged job seekers and unregistered unemployed.

The New Poor.

Statistics tend to obscure the fact that unemployment, and economic policies and decisions generated to combat it, have devastating repercussions on the everyday lives of people. Britton and Perry (1987) have analysed the effects of restructuring in New Zealand, and found that the burden of the drive for economic efficiency is currently being borne by an identifiable group of victims, with other identifiable groups benefiting. As shown above, youth, Maori and Pacific Island people, and women are victims of one repercussion of restructuring, i.e. unemployment. As with France, the United Kingdom, and the United States for instance, unemployment in New Zealand has become a machine turning out the so-called "New Poor". Easton (1987), one of the best known economists in New Zealand, has argued for the need for an economic policy with a complementary social policy and considers how the lack of this is creating a growing number of poor. Waldegrave and Coventry (1987) have recently claimed that thirty percent of New Zealand's population live in poverty, with "poverty" being defined as homelessness, lack of adequate housing, food, health care, and not having a minimum amount of money for recreation. The poor in New Zealand have to choose between shelter and subsistence. The authors also show that there is nothing indiscriminate about poverty, with groups characterised by race (Maori and Pacific Island people) and gender (women) figuring disproportionately in statistics related to poverty indices, such as lack of housing, low income, and unemployment. The New Zealand Housing Network estimates that there are 20,000 homeless families in New Zealand at present, and Coventry and Waldegrave (1987) refer to a report commissioned by the Race Relations Conciliator which shows that more than 83% of members of the Real Estate Institute give preferential treatment to European over Maori or Pacific Island people.

[3] Explaining unemployment.

Two main accounts are available to explain the crisis in employment, one stemming from the structural-functionalist tradition, the other from the Marxist tradition. Both perspectives

acknowledge that unemployment is a structural feature of modern industrial societies. Structural unemployment results from changes in the structure of capitalist economies such that the number of people without work yet willing to work is greater than the number of jobs available.

Structural-Functionalist Perspective.

The structural-functionalist perspective, which, as Lund (1983) has shown, is the one espoused by politicians, economists and Reserve Bank bureaucrats in New Zealand, suggests that the causes of today's unemployment are basically economic. Employment growth is fuelled by economic growth. The more goods and services produced, the more opportunities there are for people to produce them and the more jobs there are available. Lund (1983) describes an explanation of unemployment in the New Zealand context from this orthodox perspective:

> *If the economy had been able to grow sufficiently, we would not have unemployment. We do not produce more because we do not earn enough overseas exchange. Our economy depends on imports of raw materials, machinery and equipment. On the average, for every job, over $2000 worth of imports is required each year. The bill for imported goods has grown faster than our export earnings. The number of new jobs created has been fewer than the number of people wanting to join the workforce. The jump in oil prices between 1973 and 1980 dramatically increased the cost of imports and restricted the opportunities to expand production and employment in New Zealand. Since the mid-1970s our economy has hardly grown at all. The main problem is a lack of growth leading to a shortage of jobs. Rising unemployment has been the outcome.*
>
> *(Lund, 1983, p.55)*

Such is the account offered by the New Zealand government, not only to explain unemployment, but also to justify restructuring the economy along more "streamlined" and effective ways. As Offe (1985, p.82) notes, structural-functionalist explanations serve to *"stabilise the hegemonic political order and insulate it against doubts or challenges. They construct a disciplined perception of what is normal and what can be expected."*

"Restructuring", "corporatisation", "streamlining", "investment in the new technology" all form part of "monetarist", "free-market" and "enterprise" policies which are justified with such slogans as

"Today's profits are tomorrow's investments are the jobs of the future." Decisions here revolve around a new ideology which considers that since regulated capitalism has failed, the alternative is to de-regulate the economy. The major assumption is that this will lead to an "upturn" in economic growth, and therefore to an increase of employment opportunities. This "trade-off" hypothesis, implicit in much of the economic management of Western governments over the past three decades, links inflation to unemployment and offers policy-makers the choice between reducing inflation at the cost of more unemployment, or vice-versa. From this perspective, arguments are put forward that wages are too high and that employees and the welfare state are living beyond their means.

However, such theories of "trade-off" are discredited when, as Rajan (1987) points out, five years of worldwide economic recovery have not reduced unemployment. Offe (1985, p.82) suspects that the "upturn" in economic growth will have little or no bearing on employment levels, and thus *"taking place, as it were, behind the backs of the working (or rather, non-working) population."*

In New Zealand, Jesson (1987) has given an account of the move from state-sponsored capitalism to free-market economics within the Labour Party. He explains that many of the Party's activists were involved in liberal causes like peace and anti-racism. Their moral rather than intellectual motivation resulted in an absence of ideology and lack of interest in economics. The movement of the libertarian Right with their free-market and monetarist onslaught left the political Left with no theoretical defence against the certainties of neoclassical economics. This brand of economics is based on Adam Smith's concept of the "invisible hand" - the idea that individuals pursuing their own self-interest produce a result that is beneficial to them all. In economic terms, the marketplace, left to itself, will work to a position of general equilibrium, producing the maximum benefit for everyone. The problem is that this policy had <u>already</u> failed under the onslaught of the Depression and large-scale unemployment of the 1930s; indeed, it was this same failure which brought about the rise of Keynsianism, that is, policies of fiscal and monetary management of the economy and the welfare state. Keynsian economics was itself undermined by the 1970s crisis, so that

> *Logically, the traumas of the 70s should have shaken economics as an intellectual discipline. Both major schools, the neoclassical and the Keynsian, had failed the test of experience. Instead, many economists simply dropped Keynes and reverted to the laissez-faire approach of the nineteenth century.*
>
> *(Jesson, 1987, p.118)*

In this regard, Rosenberg (1987) argues that permanent unemployment in New Zealand is not necessary, but is simply a weapon of the ruling business class to keep the workers on their knees, while business itself enjoys absolute freedom to profiteer nationally and above all internationally.

Marxist explanations of Unemployment.

Alternative theories of mass unemployment were developed by Marx, who considered unemployment and crises as endemic in the structure of the capitalist mode of production. The process of capital accumulation requires recurrent crisis, and the Marxist analysis involves an interaction of structural and cyclical forces. The cycle of economic activity and unemployment is linked to the underlying structure and process of capital accumulation, and to what Marx saw as an exploitative capitalist labour relationship. Showler (1981) summarised this process as follows:

> *In an expansion the demand for "variable capital" (labour) increases relative to "constant capital" (e.g. machinery) thereby reducing the "industrial reserve army of the unemployed." This process increases the price of labour, thereby reducing the role of profit from the accumulation of capital. This reduction in profitability slows down the rate of capital accumulation and, therefore, cuts aggregate demand, giving rise to an economic contraction, an increase in the reserve army of labour and a cut in wages. This restores profitability and enables capital accumulation to commence again. This process, combined with Marx's hypothesis of a long-run declining rate of profit, leads not only to recurrent crisis but also to worsening crisis, giving rise eventually to a collapse and overthrow of the capitalist mode of production.*
>
> *(Showler, 1981, p.32)*

Thus a Marxist analysis does not point to measures or policies to reduce or eliminate unemployment. The problem is seen as a fundamental part of the total capitalist system of production (Giddens, 1981), and hence the only hope rests with a revolutionary change in the structure of society. Thus,

> *Marxian unemployment is a structural, not a cyclical problem; and for that reason public investment or expansionary monetarist policy, effective in curing keynsian unemployment, wil merely produce inflation without leading to full employment.*
>
> *(Blaug, 1968, p.16)*

[4] Explaining the Structure of Unemployment.

Both structural-functionalist and Marxist theories attempt to explain why some groups are more vulnerable to unemployment than others. These groups have been identified above to be youth, people from ethnic minorities, and women. Each are addressed in turn.

[a] Youth and Unemployment.

Structural-functionalist explanations of youth unemployment would suggest that there are many factors which reduce the chances of young people being employed. There is often the presumption among employers that young people represent lower productivity in comparison with skilled adults. Employers might think of adults as being more reliable and responsible, with experience and skills already acquired, and therefore they do not have to incur the high costs of training young people on the job. Other reasons put forward to explain high youth unemployment are: high levels of pay for young people as compared with adult pay rates; a lack of skills among young people when the labour force requires skilled personnel; and the displacement of workers by new technology together with structural changes within the workforce as a whole which reduce the demand for unskilled or semi-skilled jobs. The increasing participation in the workforce by women is also seen to play a significant part (Catherwood, 1985).

The Marxist perspective would however emphasise the fact that, as forms of labour, older workers are more subject to the discipline of the wage, and have always been preferred to younger ones, whether in terms of technical agility, experience, work socialisation or physical strength and dexterity (see Williamson, 1983). Before the 1970s employers were quite willing to recruit school-leavers because the adult labour supply was used up.

> *The present youth unemployment reflects the situation in the labour market as a whole and the permanent availability of adult labour. Youth is therefore a form of the reserve army of labour, drawn on when needed, laid off when not.*
>
> *(Finn and Frith, 1981, p.74)*

From a Marxist perspective, Khan (1986) considers most arguments offered by the state to explain high school-leaver and youth unemployment as a strategy to legitimise a failing capitalist economy. He argues that a better explanation is offered by a theory of labour market segmentation. He refers to studies which suggest that the experiences one is exposed to in high school are generally congruent with the kinds of activities one would be confronted with in the secondary labour market. Moreover, workers in

> *the secondary sector with its "peripheral" occupations...are more apt to fall victim to seasonal ebbs, to find themselves superfluous in periods of low economic activity. As such, the segmented labour theory accounts for the high school-leaver unemployment not as the resultant cause of "inherent problems within the ill-trained labour force"...but rather as a direct result of the way the labour market is segmentally organised in the capitalist economy, and which works against school-leavers gaining employment at times of restructuring.*
>
> *(Khan, 1986, p. 35)*

Such an analysis has been significantly absent from responses made by the state to the problem of youth unemployment, and in New Zealand as in many other western countries, the blame has been placed on the young unemployed themselves, or on secondary schooling in general, for not equipping them with the "necessary skills". Indeed, although recent reports[3] are largely sympathetic to unemployed young people, there is always the underlying assumption that if only these youths had been better trained, if only they had learnt more vocational and life skills, then they would get employment. It is a personal deficit model that is advocated, where unemployment is seen to be caused by individual lack of skill or knowledge (Gordon, 1985b).

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3. See the reports by the New Zealand Planning Council (Catherwood, 1985) and by the Ministers of Education, Employment and Maori Affairs entitled *Skills for Young People* (July 1985).

[b] Ethnic Minorities and Unemployment.

An example of structural-functionalist explanations of high unemployment among Maori and Pacific Island people is the background paper prepared by the Department of Labour for the Maori Economic Summit of October 1984. Basing its calculations on a Department of Statistics study, the paper concluded that to a large degree, the difference in unemployment between Polynesians (including Maori) and non-Polynesians could be attributed to the different demographic structure of the populations as regards:

Age: Maori and Pacific Island Polynesian populations are much more youthful than non-Polynesians. Thus, 63.4% of Maoris and 60.7% of Pacific Isalnd Polynesians were aged under 25 in 1981, compared with 43% of non-Polynesians. The disadvantages youth finds in the labour market are therefore accentuated in a more youthful population.

Sex: The unemployment rate of 15 to 19 year old Maori females is the highest of any sector of the population at 41.3%. This compares with a rate of 33.1% for Pacific Island Polynesian females and 12.5% for non-Polynesians.

Region: The Maori population is mainly concentrated in certain areas of the North Island, forming over 17% of the total population in Northland, South Auckland - Bay of Plenty, East Coast and Hawke's Bay. These are also the areas with the highest registered unemployment rates.

Educational Level: The Education Statistics of New Zealand for 1983 show that in 1982, 64.7% of Maori students left without any school qualifications. The equivalent non-Maori percentage for the same year was 27.3%

The differences in unemployment between Polynesians and Pakeha (European) could also be explained by such factors as occupational distribution, income differentials, cultural characteristics regarding work, and discrimination. A study by the Population Monitoring Group (1985) shows how lack of educational attainment leads to Maori and Pacific Islander concentration in low-skilled jobs such as production, transport equipment operating and labouring occupations, and have therefore suffered with the decline of the manufacturing industry. Indeed, the twelve most common occupational groups of Maoris are also the twelve occupations where there is the highest likelihood of being made redundant. The effect is greater at older ages, where the gap between Maoris and the total population increases. This implies that Maoris remain

in jobs with a higher likelihood of unemployment, whereas non-Maoris move into "safer" occupations.

Marxist accounts of unemployment would insist that such explanations are not enough on their own - rather, reasons are sought in political relations of dominance and subordination, relations which the Maori and Polynesian can only experience as subordination to Pakeha rule in all aspects of economic and cultural (ethnic and educational) life. Bedggood (1980), Spoonley (1978, 1982) and Spoonley and Shipley (1982) have provided evidence to support the argument by Steven (1978) that Maori and Pacific Island people act as an easily disposable reserve army of labour.

[c] Gender and Unemployment.

Structural-functionalist accounts to explain the high incidence of unemployment among women would highlight the fact that employers prefer stable workers - they therefore prefer to offer women the part-time and temporary jobs which they see as commensurate with the eventual leave from work they have to take for child-rearing. Within a Marxist framework, Steven (1978) considers that women, together with Maori and Pacific Islanders, perfectly fulfill the conditions to become the reserve army of unemployed. To function as a reserve army, workers must be capable of being hired and fired at short notice without provoking other workers and without any inconvenience to capital. According to Steven the reserve army must be:

> *(a) unable to claim the right to work; when they get jobs, they must be seen as recipients of an enormous favour;*
>
> *(b) unskilled, so that they can be easily hired and fired without disrupting production or wasting training time;*
>
> *(c) as low paid as possible, partly in order to keep the wages of other workers down, partly to prevent too great a fall in family income when they are laid off;*
>
> *(d) physically different from other workers and victims of some social prejudice, in order to minimise the danger of social solidarity.*
>
> *(Steven, 1978, pp. 127-8)*

1.4. CLASS AND NEW ZEALAND.

The statistics presented in the discussion above have focused on age, ethnicity and gender as factors which structure the subordinate position of groups in New Zealand society. Another factor is class. The question of class is problematic in New Zealand, especially when the term refers to more than the nominalism of socio-economic status. In a Marxist sense of the term, one's occupation and income level contribute significantly to one's social class, but they do not define it. Following authors like Wright (1978), Bourdieu and Passeron (1977) and Anyon (1981), social class is in this study considered to be a series of relationships, so that a person's social class is defined by the way that person relates to the process in society by which goods, services and culture are produced. Connell *et al.* (1982) argue that emphasis should be placed on the processes producing social groupings, rather than the categories they produce; and on the activity of people, not merely their location in social space. Within these processes, people relate to several aspects of the production process primarily through their work. Anyon (1980) wrote:

> *One has a relationship to the system of ownership, to other people at work and in society and to the content and process of one's own productive activity. One's relationship to all three aspects of production determines one's social class; that is, all three relationships are necessary and none is sufficient for determining a person's relation to the process of production in society.*
>
> *(Anyon, 1980, p.68)*

There has been no analysis carried out in New Zealand which gives a satisfactory account of the contemporary class structure in the terms defined above. It is therefore difficult to analyse the subordination of the "working classes" in New Zealand in other than theoretical terms. Jones (1986, p.87) notes that despite the fact that sociologists like Pitt (1977) and Spoonley (1982) have argued that class exists in New Zealand, *"...the continuing official and popular ideology/mythology is that New Zealand is a largely unstratified and egalitarian society."* She moreover rightly points out that much of the existing debate misses the point that New Zealand has a capitalist economy, and therefore is objectively socially divided by differences in control, power and wealth which

are features of the exploitative production relations of capitalism.

In a consideration of class in New Zealand, a difference has to be made between what Jones (1986) refers to above as *"objective social division"* and actual class consiousness. Thompson (1978) makes the distinction between a class-in-itself, which is merely a class in objective terms, a class without revolutionary consciousness, and a class-for-itself. The former, through class struggle and class organisation, can be transformed into the latter.

> *Class happens when some [people], as a result of common experience (inherited or shared) feel and articulate the identity of their interests as between themselves, and as against other men whose interests are different from (and usually opposed to) theirs.*
>
> *(Thompson, 1968, p.9)*

In New Zealand there is as yet little sign of class consciousness, although it could be argued that with the increasing differences between the "haves" and the "have nots" - as described above - increasingly there exist the material conditions needed to change the New Zealand working (and non-working) class-in-itself into a class-for-itself. Various reasons have been put forward to explain the lack of class-consciousness in New Zealand. Bedggood (1977) argues that one reason is the belief in the welfare state. Ramsay *et al.'s* (1983) study of working class schools in South Auckland suggests that teachers and workers place a pathetic faith in the school system and the welfare state to equalise opportunity. Ramsay (1984) relates this to Lukes's (1974) discussion of power, and suggests that New Zealand workers have been socialised to believe that a liberal democracy exists and that the existing social order is appropriate. Jones' (1986) ethnographic study similarly showed that her five Pacific Island "Mason girls" believed firmly in the meritocracy of schooling. Bedggood (1980) describes well the climate which militates against the possibility of the development of class struggle:

> *The collectivism of trade-union consciousness, potentially capable of acting in defence of cuts that are enforced by highly repressive laws, becomes besieged by anti-communist hysteria and extreme right-wing strike breaking. The collectivism of women in the face of a concerted attack on their rights and welfare is driven back by the sexism of authoritarian males. The aristocracy of labour uptight and upright in its respectability turns*

> *against the welfare scroungers, and the state employers. The collectivism of Maori people is transformed by racism into the threat of the "gang", and the rapidly growing lumpenproletariat (not altogether Polynesian) will find itself harassed and victimised as the criminal class.*
>
> *(Bedggood, 1980, pp.164-5)*

Class and Education.

Lack of class consiousness does not mean that students from the working classes in New Zealand experience schooling in the same way as their middle-class counterparts. A considerable amount of research from various countries has shown a strong correlation between social class and the student's achievement at school. Some of this research has been summarised by Kelsdall and Kelsdall (1971) who identify the following points, which apply to contemporary New Zealand. Thus,

1. Children from lower classes enter school with initial handicaps when compared with middle class and upper class children.

2. Even when lower class children enter on the same footing as upper class children, differences in attainment soon appear.

3. These differences grow greater as the school experiences progresses.

4. Lower class children leave school earlier than other groups, irrespective of their ability or attainment.

5. Lower class children leave school with lower academic qualifications than other children.

Many studies in New Zealand have borne out these research findings. Lovegrove (1966), Vellekoop (1968, 1977), Harker (1975), Robinson (1984), and Lauder *et al.* (1985) have shown that there is a positive correlation between the "level" of parents' occupational status on the one hand and the "level" of educational and occupational aspirations and the attainment of their children on the other. Such studies have shortcomings in this sort of analysis because, as Jones (1986) points out:

> *When "class" is used in these studies it is seen as synonymous with or reducible to occupational groupings or "socio-economic status". This form of categorisation of "class" groups in New Zealand society has little explanatory value, and often does no more than group people who have nothing in common but their income...Used in such a way, "class" is stripped of its potential use in analysis. It becomes merely a descriptive category, devoid of*

> *intrinsic reference to relations between economic classes, to differential power and control, to conditions of work and social existence and how these are reproduced.*
>
> *(Jones, 1986, pp.77-8)*

Jones' (1986) study (reviewed in Chapter 2) is probably the first in New Zealand, therefore, to go beyond the criticism of tautologism which Willis (1983, p.109) makes of class analysis in much educational research - a tautology which says that working class people suffer educational and cultural disadvantages and people who suffer educational and cultural disadvantages are working class! Jones (1986) points the way for future educational research in this country, and therefore links her work to this research, in that she tries to explain how unequal class relations and capitalist production might be centrally implicated in school processes.

Social Class and Ethnicity.

Another dimension which needs to be considered in any discussion of class in New Zealand is its relationship with ethnicity. The problems of inequality based on class structure have been mystified in this country by a concentration on ethnicity. Ramsay *et al.'s* (1983) study showed for instance that teachers and parents were more willing to discuss ethnic oppression rather than class oppression. Webster (1986) suggests that as a reflection of social policy, the government's review of the curriculum (1986) avoids a consideration of class inequality and focuses on racial inequality. The Curriculum Review exercise is thus seen to be

> *...in part an evasion of the real problem. That problem used to be class, but class has proved to be an intractable obstacle to liberal reform. So class structural reform is replaced by cultural and ethnic pluralism, thus dressing the familiar problem of egalitarianism in clothes that please social scientists more, because our liberal consciences find talk of class culture painful. Ethnicism as an explanatory variable relieves our conscience and leaves our lifestyle largely intact.*
>
> *(Webster, 1986, p.3)*

Lauder *et al.'s* (1985) major study of 2,500 school leavers shows that it is a mistake to account for school failure solely in terms of race. The authors say:

> *So long as failure is seen as merely related to race and to different social cultures, policy makers do*

> *not have to examine inequality within the economic system and so the privilege of those who have profited from the economic system remains untouched.*
> *(Lauder et al., 1985, p.35)*

The authors show that the existence of inequality is therefore associated with class background over and above ethnic background. It is important to point out, however, that some Maori radical writers in New Zealand have given up on the possibility of a class consiousness growing into an alliance between Pakeha and Maori groups. Awatere (1984) recognises that the white working class share with Maori people the experience of living in ways which are designated to ensure that a few people in the capitalist class benefit from their labour.

> *As such they are natural allies for the Maori, since others benefit from the alienation of something which belongs to them; for the worker, surplus value is alienated; for the Maori, this country.*
>
> *This potential for alliance is however negated by the role that the trade union movement plays within white society. Further, white workers, while they are in one way opposed to the boss class, are in another way locked tight with the boss in racial hegemony. This is the crux of it; whites stick together, whatever their class, for the benefits they give each other. After all, there would be no factories, farms etc if the Maori had not been defeated in the defence of the land by <u>all</u> white classes.*
>
> *<u>All</u> white protest - women, the Left etc - is done <u>within</u> the confines of a total culture. Protest is made against something <u>which is part of that culture.</u> The Maori protest against the imposition of <u>total</u> culture is not against part of it but <u>all</u> of it. Working class alienation is intracultural: Maori cultural alienation is intercultural.*
> *(Awatere, 1984, pp.45-6)*

This discussion of class has to be kept in mind as another aspect of the context for this study. While it is true that *"the class analysis of New Zealand society is seriously deficient...and the assimilation of the mass of the Maori population into the [working] class adds a further implication to the analysis" (Nash, 1981, p.189)* and that *"existing Marxist accounts...fail to reach any agreement about the actual character of the New Zealand class structure" (Jones, 1986, p.88)* - the fact still remains that students and teachers observed and interviewed live out relations of domination and subordination depending only on their gender and ethnicity, but also on their class location.

1.5. NEW ZEALAND, EDUCATION AND SOCIAL MOVEMENTS.

In the above sections, elements within Dwyer *et al.'s* (1984) model presented earlier have been discussed with reference to New Zealand. It has been shown that in this particular stage of the historical development of the world system, political and economic decisions are being made in such a way that some social groups are advantaged while others are disadvantaged in their access to life chances. The groups who are "oppressed" by the particular economic system developed are clearly recognisable by their age, gender, ethnicity and class membership. The focus in this study is on youth - they too feel the burden of domination in various ways, as a confluence of factors locates them firmly within a structure characterised by inequality.

In their capacity as family members, young people experience first hand the effects of the macro-structural forces on their parent/s, and class, gender, ethnic and adult-child relations are played out initially in the family (Arnot, 1984). Young people are also influenced by social forces in their capacity as students, where education constructs a reality and offers meanings to them, often on a differential basis as to their class, gender and ethnicity (Jones, 1986). The relationship of young people to schooling - and through that to the access they have to life chances in the economic system - forms another major context for this study. Early studies from the Left (Althusser, 1971; Bowles and Gintis, 1976), tended to construe this relationship in such a way that the schooling ensured the social and economic reproduction of inequality. Later accounts (Apple, 1980; Whitty, 1985; Carnoy and Levin, 1985) focus substantially more on the political and economic conflicts and social contradictions that do not guarantee that schools will automatically do capital's bidding. Though schools do reproduce unequal relations, they do so imperfectly, and this merely reflects the social conflict that characterises the capitalist society they serve. Carnoy and Levin (1985) point out that:

> *As both a product and a shaper of social discord, the school is necessarily caught up in the larger conflicts inherent in the capitalist economy and the liberal capitalist state.*
>
> *(Carnoy and Levin, 1985, p.4)*

This new direction (see Dale, 1982 and Apple, 1982a among others) has led to an optimism absent from a closely orthodox Leninist theory, (see Sharp, 1980 for instance) where the state coopts democratic initiatives in education and in other spheres of social life. Now, the state itself is considered as a site for struggle. The focus has thus shifted to the accentuation of these conflicts over the state and within it and to the building of social movements that aim to control state apparatuses. Whitty (1985) asserts for instance that action within the state (towards building a more vigorous Left position, action in the educational apparatus, in struggles over the reform of curricular policy and practice) is not only necessary but can lead to progressive agendas if organised around and with mass social movements.

In this study, schools are seen to be structurally connected to the political as well as economic sphere - this fact creates tensions that are fundamentally contradictory. This leads to a culturalist Marxist position whereby culture is neither autonomous nor an externally determined field, but a site of social differences and struggles, relating to larger struggles in society not only of class, but also of gender and ethnicity. It becomes important therefore to look at some of the social movements and various dominant ideas which are in evidence in New Zealand, and which, directly or indirectly, have affected the educational discourse and the experience of students and teachers as lived everyday in schools. While "class", for reasons given earlier, cannot be seen to form part of New Zealand's experience of struggle, ethnicity and gender do. These are therefore considered in turn in the way they influence educational discourse and practice in their role as social movements. Not all social movements are progressive. Indeed, one of the growing forces in new Zealand, as in many other countries, is the "New Right". The effect of this on education is discussed, as it is directly relevant to the experience of schooling provided in New Zealand and to one of the schools studied in this ethnography in particular.

[a] Education and Ethnicity.

Two of the major movements in New Zealand which have been strongly asserting themselves in the general social arena and in education

are related to ethnicity and gender. Taking the Maori question first, various authors have long been claiming, in the general spirit of Maori renaissance in art, culture, language and identity that New Zealand schools should either become bicultural, or, failing that, there should be Maori control of the education of Maori children. In 1973, Ranginui Walker, who has since been in the forefront of the struggle for Maori self-determination (see Walker, 1987), claimed that because teachers are *"predominantly Pakeha and monocultural [they are] generally ignorant of [Maori] culture and not sensitised to react to biculturalism and minority group needs." (Walker, 1973, p.112).*

As has been suggested earlier, the question of race in New Zealand cannot be separated from class interest and domination, because as McPherson (1977) has pointed out, Maori people are overly represented in the nation's working class, and share so many of the cultural, social and economic descriptors of that class that they can be located in an "eth-class" category. Walker (1973) thus argues that education in New Zealand is geared to a single frame of reference which purveys and perpetuates a cultural tradition of West European tradition that is ethnocentric and middle-class oriented. The educational under-achievement of Maoris could be attributed largely to these features of the educational system.

Various attempts have been made to confront the fact that New Zealand schools are failing Maori students, condemning them not only to specific labour market positions, but also to unemployment. Simon (1986) does this by tracing the path taken by various official reports on the question of Maori education. These reports moved from a policy of assimilation - prevalent from the 19th century up to 1961, where it was hoped that the Maori people would forsake their traditional culture for that of the European - to a policy of integration, heralded officially in 1961 by the Hunn report, where the intent was to combine (not fuse) the Maori and Pakeha elements to form one nation with Maori culture remaining distinct.

Other official reports in 1970, 1974 and 1980 (Simon, 1986, p.15) called for the inclusion of *taha Maori*, or Maori culture and perspectives, in the school curriculum to enhance the self-image of

Maori children. In this way, the latter could achieve their full potential as students and as citizens. Pakeha students on the other hand would learn to understand and appreciate Maori values. The year 1974 marked a significant development in department policy: "cultural difference" was to be emphasised rather than merely accepted and tolerated. In this way, cultural diversity was to be presented to students as a form of enrichment which contributed to New Zealand society as a whole. The most recent report by the National Advisory Committee on Maori education, *"He Huarahi"*, was published in 1980, and this continues to stress that the overall aim is the achievement of a *"harmonious multi-cultural society."*

Simon (1986) and others - among them Tuhiwai Smith (1986), Hingangaroa Smith (1986), and Ramsay (1986) - acknowledge the positive development in the official discourse and policies regarding Maori education. They all, however, articulate the same reservation, arguing that calls for a positive valuing and nurturing of cultural diversity, while an advance on perspectives which saw difference as a problem either to be removed or tolerated, need to be linked to injustices in the wider social structure:

> *The multi-cultural policy, although formulated with sincerity, has become ideology in the hands of those less committed than its policy-makers. As a mere "solution in the mind" the policy fails to take adequate account of the asymmetry in Maori-Pakeha power relations and its significance and implications within the educational system. Thus its intentions have been subject to ideological subversion.*
>
> *(Simon, 1986, p.15)*

Simon justifies these arguments in the light of Larrain's (1979) definition of ideology as a solution in the mind to contradictions which cannot be solved in practice, where ideology fulfills its role in society by hiding and explaining away relations of domination and subordination, and by legitimating a social structure which serves the interests of the dominant class.

Maori leaders in the educational field have become increasingly aware of this ideological subversion, and have declared themselves to be sceptical of bringing about equitable change within the present educational system. Some have finally resolved to

establish their own alternative schools. Walker considers this development as

> *a clear signal of a vote of no confidence that* taha Pakeha *can be trusted to implement* taha Maori *adequately in the existing education system. This is because the Maori can no longer wait for favourable attitudinal changes needed in Pakeha teachers for the implementation of the policies laid down for the Department by the National Advisory Committee on Maori Education in its 1980 Report, He Huarahi.*
>
> *(Walker, 1984, p.2)*

Because of the present Labour Government's attempts to review nation-wide the school curriculum, some Maori people have experienced a resurgence of hope and felt that *"the Government had for the first time set up an official channel for the Maori voice on education to be heard across Aotearoa." (Education Department, 1986, page 93).* Sharples (1986) however, as director of an alternative Maori school, reiterates the same doubts as expressed above, for as Larrain (1979) points out, the only way to overcome ideology is to change the conditions that produce it, that is, initiating revolutionary rather than reproductive practice in order to transform social relations so that they are no longer relations of dominance. The Curriculum Committee also expressed its disagreement with separate development of Maori education *"because of the loss to both Maori and Pakeha of the sharing of cultures by learning together." (ibid., 1986, p.100).*

With reference to these different interpretations of what culturally sensitive schooling in New Zealand could be like, Ramsay (1986) cites Gibson (1976) who provides a useful typology of schools which have a multicultural approach. Gibson first describes schools which *"educate the culturally different."* These attempt to promote equal opportunity by adapting to cultural differences and by providing an environment at school similar to that students find at home. Next she identifies schools which *"teach about cultural difference."* In contrast to the first group, these schools promote the value of ethnic diversity and the right to be different among <u>all</u> their student population. Gibson calls the third approach in her typology *"education for cultural pluralism."* This includes but goes beyond the second approach in that it sets out to empower ethnic minority groups. Such an approach eventually leads to the establishment of separate school

systems. Finally, Gibson identifies schools which are designed to produce students who *"...have competencies in and ability to operate successfully in two (or more) different cultures." (Gibson, 1976, p.13)*. She emphasises that in such schools there is a heavy leaning towards *"reciprocity"*, with two-way acculturation taking place. Regarding this approach, Ramsay (1986) notes that the dangers of cultural relativism - as identified by Jeffcoate (1979) - are avoided, as the elements of various cultures are constantly assessed in an interactive process.

It is partly within this context that the description of the three schools involved in this research, and described in Chapter 4, needs to be seen. In the response of these schools to the ethnic question in New Zealand, elements of philosophy and ethos will stand out, reflecting both directly and indirectly the messages they give their student population about work, messages which limit or extend their chances of participating confidently and equally in New Zealand society.

[b] Education and Gender.

The educational and social history of New Zealand women follows the same fortunes of women in other parts of the "western" world, and recent research has described local versions of the subordinate position of women in various spaces in the social arena (see accounts in Tennant, 1977; Olssen, 1981; and Bunkle, 1979-80). This subordination applies to education as well, so that despite the equal access to state primary schools guaranteed by the 1877 Education Act, various inequities in the past and in the present can be related to gender. The authors cited above show for instance that girls often missed out on their education because of *"domestic reasons"*, and that girls' secondary schools were often poorly equipped. This was especially true with regards science and mathematics which were considered to be unfeminine. The introduction of compulsory *"domestic science"* into the schools for girls ensured that a sort of *"sexual apartheid"* was being transmitted through the curriculum.

Middleton (1984), in formulating a sociology of women's education in New Zealand, asserts that

> *A large historical residue of conservatism remains in contemporary thinking about women and education. This conservative thinking manifests itself both overtly and covertly.*
>
> *(Middleton, 1984, p.74)*

Aspects of this conservatism have been addressed in various ways by a number of authors who were largely concerned with describing gender inequality. Whitcombe (1979) has looked at the distribution of women within schools; Ryan (1985) has described girls' curriculum experience; Smith (1980) and Bunce (1980) have looked at sex-roles in schools, while Castina and Claire (1985) have documented teacher and student expectations and attitudes; Abigail (1982, 1983) has looked into the career advice given to girls in a secondary school where she found a high degree of sexist attitudes among careers guidance personnel and teachers.

With reference to such studies, Jones (1986, p.79) considers that few of them *"have attempted to incorporate analyses of class or race into their accounts...or to engage in any serious analysis of girls' education in the context of the structural organisation of power in New Zealand society."* Middleton (1984) however has argued that such studies, in conjunction with the liberating influence of the *"second wave"* of feminism, are forming New Zealand society's consciousness about women and are having positive effects on departmental and other policies with respect to *"affirmative action"* within the system to encourage a wider range of roles for both sexes. Middleton (1984, p.76) claims that as a result, there has been an increased awareness of the extent of inequality between the sexes in schools and the wider society. Among the changes she documents, one can mention the various measures taken to compensate women and girls for the inequalities seen as resulting, at least in part, from stereotyped teaching resources and teacher expectations and behaviour in schools. Another important instance is the National Advisory Committee on Women and Education which was set up in 1979 to advise the Minister of Education on issues of concern to women and education.

This optimism about a changing consciousness needs to be balanced by a recognition of the increasing influence of various right wing groups, including certain fundamentalist Christian groups and educational pressure groups, such as the Concerned Parents'

Association. These have consistently promoted the view that men and women are innately predisposed towards differing social roles and that men are the rightful leaders in the wider society. Their role in determining educational discourse will be considered in greater detail in the next section of this chapter. The economic crisis has also provided an excuse for cuts in education, one result of which was the suppression of virtually the entire structure within the Department of Education for affirmative action for women and girls in 1982 (see Middleton, 1984).

The statistics presented below complete this brief overview of the position of women in New Zealand society with special reference to the site of education. This is fundamental to an analysis of girls' education in the context of the structural organisation of power in New Zealand society. Women in New Zealand are thus grossly under-represented in managerial, executive and professional positions and over-represented in less highly skilled and/or lower-paid jobs (Department of Labour,1980; Hyman, 1981). The 1986 census (Statistics Department, 1987) shows that despite equal-pay legislation, men earn double the average income of women. Women's lack of representation in senior positions is evident at primary, secondary and tertiary levels of education. Whitcombe (1979) for instance shows that in state secondary schools, women comprise 38% of teachers, but only 10% of principals, nearly all of the latter in girls' schools. 40% of women are contained in just five occupational fields (clerical, sales, teaching, nursing and clothing), every one of which is shrinking either due to the impact of new technology, or, in the case of teaching, falling school rolls, and a declining economic climate (Castina and Claire, 1985).

The structural position of women in unemployment has already been discussed; it is enough here to highlight the fact that many more girl school leavers than boys are unemployed and that many of these girls, in contrast with boys, have secondary and even tertiary qualifications (Hyman, 1981). The position of Maori girls is even more serious. Of every ten Maori women under the age of 19, four are unemployed (1982 census data). In the light of such statistics, and as with the ethnic dimension, radical perspectives on feminism have led some researchers to support separate secondary schooling for girls (Macdonald, 1980; Shaw, 1980).

[c] Education and the "New Right".

Reference has already been made to the various right wing pressure groups operating in New Zealand which attempt to influence education and society generally. Different fundamentalist Christian groups and educational pressure groups such as the Concerned Parents' Association (CPA) represent a voice which echoes a major movement throughout the world and known as the "New Right." Apple (1986) argues that many of the tendencies exhibited by the New Right indicate that the State is losing its legitimacy, and that

> *The political Right [in the United States] has been very successful in mobilising considerable numbers of people around a variety of seemingly anti-statist themes. In fact, one of its major victories has been to shift the blame for unemployment, for the supposed breakdown of "traditional values", and for tensions within the family from the economic, cultural and social policies and effects of capital to the school and other public agencies...Its interests are less in addressing the imbalances in the life chances of women, people of color, or labor, and more in providing the educational conditions necessary both for capital accumulation and for returning us to a romanticized past of the "ideal" home, family and school.*
>
> *(Apple, 1986, p.172)*

Ryan (1986) identifies forty organisations and churches in New Zealand that can be defined as being part of the moral right. His analysis locates the moral right as *"the ruling class in disguise"* attempting to win *"moral hegemony"* in New Zealand. These groups are interested in standing up against, among other things, sex education, contraception, sterilisation, abortion, homosexuality and sexual permissiveness, and they consider educational institutions as one important arena in which to voice their concerns. Nash (1980), drawing parallels between the schooling debate in Britain and New Zealand, connects aspects of that debate to movements of the Right, and argues that dissatisfaction with education can be related to changes in the political consciousness of social classes:

> *For the working class and ethnic minorities it is the deepening realisation that despite the expansion of educational opportunities their relative position has remained unaltered. For the middle class it is a more conscious awareness of the essential part schools play in the reproduction of its class*

> *position and a fear that any changes in the existing curriculum and teaching methods may threaten that function.*
>
> *(Nash, 1980, p.118)*

The resultant clamour for *"back-to-basics"* has been given further strength by its alliance with industry, which exerts a growing pressure to establish the needs of business and industry as the primary goals of schooling. To take one example of such a trend, the July 1978 submission to the Parliamentary Select Commission on Education by the New Zealand Chambers of Commerce pointed out that the Chamber had received complaints that standards of school-leavers in basic skills in reading, writing and arithmetic were steadily declining.

Other areas where the *"New Right"* has extended its influence vis-a-vis education include the proposal of voucher plans, as put forward by the Opposition's Minister of Education, Ruth Richardson, which makes schools more like the idealised free-market economy. Openshaw (1985) and Snook (1985) have documented concerns over declining *"standards"* and *"inappropriate"* textbooks and subjects. Sex education, peace studies and social studies have all been the subject of criticism by the Concerned Parents' Association. The new social studies syllabus, for instance, was strongly criticised by the Association for advocating what *"...could almost serve as a definition of secular humanism" (Quoted by Openshaw, 1980, p.132)* because children are encouraged to examine different value systems and to evaluate these and their own beliefs in the light of such stated cultural absolutes as respect for human dignity, acceptance of cultural differences and the upholding of social justice.

Openshaw (1985) also warns that although the Concerned Parents' Association and similar pressure groups are regarded with scorn by some educationalists, the views they represent are more widespread in New Zealand than many suspect. The groups consolidate themselves by establishing informal links with other groups and individuals possessing a similar outlook in New Zealand and overseas, and have been able to draw support from a wide variety of people from all walks of life.

An interesting and recent development has been the appropriation of the back-to-basics discourse by radical theorists, such as Knight (1986), who demonstrates that demands for a return to the basics are justified - what ought to be opposed are pressures to limit education to the basics. He also draws on educators such as Dewey, Freire and Cagan to re-define the basics for a genuinely humanistic and progressive education (Knight, 1986, p.53). Such a definition holds potential in informing public discourse on schooling, especially in the light of what the Curriculum Review Committee (Department of Education, 1986) reports, summarising responses by the public to the question: *"What do You Expect from our Schools?":*

> *There was a shift in public opinion from the idea of the basics consisting solely of reading, writing and arithmetic, to one which includes more of the knowledge, skills and attitudes students need to cope with the realities of daily life.*
> *(Curriculum Review, 1986, p.25)*

The definition of that knowledge, and those skills and attitudes will, obviously differ upon prior basic assumptions about what constitutes humanness, human needs, and a democratic society.

SUMMARY.

This chapter has given an account of the main context in which the ethnographic study of the school-to-work messages can be located. Attention was focused on the macro-context, and aspects of New Zealand as a capitalist country, and its relationship to schooling, were explored within the tradition of a neo-Marxist, culturalist approach to education. The relationships between the economic base and other contexts have been shown to be constrained, but not totally determined by the macro-context. They are also subject to various other forces - social movements which serve both progressive and conservative ends - and therefore stand along with, or in opposition to the main discourse of the state. The following chapter gives a review of some of the fundamental theoretical and empirical research which has been carried out in various countries and which attempt to analyse one of the relationships between some of the contexts described in this chapter, namely the bonds between education and the world of work.

CHAPTER 2.
CONFRONTING SCHOOL AND WORK:
A LITERATURE REVIEW.

In the previous chapter, schooling has been related to society and to specific movements and interests in contemporary New Zealand. This chapter highlights one particular aspect of that relationship, and presents empirical and theoretical research concerning the link between schooling and work. It focuses on studies carried out in "western" capitalist countries which face similar economic and legitimation crises and have developed similar strategies in response. New Zealand is placed in the context of both the crises and responses, and an attempt is made to re-examine the traditional bonds between school and work. It is only after a consideration of such macro-issues that a reappraisal of the overt and covert messages about work given by schools to students can be linked to questions of equity, power and control.

2.1. INTRODUCTION.

The literature which has developed from the debate about the relationship between school and work is extensive, especially so since the arrival of the so-called "post-industrial society" and the crisis in employment, both of which have brought to the surface the problematic between what students expect from schooling, what schooling promises them, and what life after school presents them with. A DIALOG search from the ERIC database carried out by the researcher gives a good indication of the research being carried out in this area. Under the Identifier *"Education/Work Relationship,"* the database came up with 2643 items; the Identifier *"Careers Education"* produced 9208 items, and *"Preparation for Work"* 283 items. A set co-ordinating all the above but limited to the years 1984-1986 produced 211 items. Many of these were found to be specific to American situations, and from a functionalist rather than a critical perspective. Thirty five percent of the final ERIC items were of theoretical significance to this study. This literature, together with a large number of other studies carried

out in Western Europe and North America (including Canada) is presented in this chapter.

There are no claims for comprehensiveness; what is attempted here is a presentation of the major ideas relevant to the subject, argued on the evidence presented by some of the major studies available. It is hoped that this "conceptual map" will help untangle the complex web of discourse surrounding the education and work nexus and give a theoretical and empirical context for the presentation and analysis of the messages about work given to students by the schools studied. The following diagram gives the sequence of the major organising ideas in this chapter:

Background:

Historical Relationship Between Schooling and Work.
The Crisis in Employment...leading to a Legitimation Crisis.
Educational Responses to the Crisis:

a.New Vocationalism *b.Critical Educators* *c.Rhetorical Humanists*

Development:

A new challenge to the Relationship between School and Work:
The contribution of the "New Vocationalists",
the "Critical Educators" and the "Rhetorical Humanists"
to a Re-Examination of the Traditional Bonds:

a.Socialisation *c.Orientation* *e.National Develpment*

b.Selection *d.Preparation*

Figure 2.

2.2. THE HISTORICAL RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN SCHOOLING AND WORK.

There are various historical accounts which tie the development of education and schooling in the West to the demands of the new industrial era. Watts (1985) for instance draws on various sources to show that in nineteenth century England, schools became models

of the factory system, ensuring that the type of worker needed by a society which had just gone through an industrial revolution was actually created. Factories required time-discipline, compliancy, and a readiness to endure repetitive work. The new elementary schools were structured to promote all three, as well as to teach the basic skills of reading and counting that would enable workers to understand and carry out simple instructions. Though such an agenda was later submerged into the hidden curriculum of schooling, it was initially quite an overt and explicit aim. In 1770 Temple advocated that poor children should be sent to workhouses at the age of four, where they should be employed in manufacture and given two hours' schooling a day:

> *There is considerable use in their being, somehow or other, constantly employed at least twelve hours a day, whether they earn their living or not; for by these means, we hope that the rising generations will be so habituated to constant employment that it would at length prove agreeable and entertaining to them.*
>
> *(Quoted in Thompson, 1967, p.84)*

By the end of the nineteenth century, schooling became compulsory in Britain. The subsequent increase in the number and diversity of student population meant that the internal organisation of the schools had to change and adapt to meet the apparent range of needs.

Whitty (1985) follows Williams (1965) in locating three different interests in the notion of compulsory schooling. There were the *"public educators"* who argued that men had a natural right to be educated. There were the *"old humanists"* who argued that a limited education in appropriate attitudes and habits - diligence, thrift, sobriety, deference to superiors, etc. - was necessary for social and political stability. Finally, the *"industrial trainers"* linked their concerns with those of the latter group to focus on the social character required by the work-place. Their views tended to predominate in determining the content of the elementary school curriculum and the method of pedagogy, with its emphasis on formal instruction requiring pupils to perform specified tasks within set periods of time determined by their teachers.

An increasingly technological society, following the dynamics of differentiation and specialisation, led to the development of

schools mirroring the same characteristics. Thus we find the emergence of different kinds of schooling, different subjects, different teaching methods, and different expectations about schooling. This produced a system of what Turner (1960) termed *"sponsored"* mobility, in which students were selected early for their status in terms partly of appropriate skills, but also of appropriate expectations, standards of behaviours, and values (Watts, 1985, p.11).

The rise of liberalism in the West injected a new egalitarian spirit into schools with the progressive movement of the 1950s and 1960s, but its appeal was to the middle classes, and its messages and methods were individualistic, so the diluted spirit of progressivism entering the public school system encouraged meritocratic ideals under the guise of *"individual differences"*. The system of *"sponsored"* mobility was thus replaced to some extent by a system of *"contest"* mobility. Turner (1960) likened this to a race in which all compete on equal terms for a limited number of prizes, and in which premature judgments about the results of the race are avoided. Little if any attention was given to the ways groups from different classes, races and genders obtained advantageous positions in that race.

Schooling therefore continued to serve the interests of the economic order by providing the labour market with school leavers whose differnt kinds and levels of training fitted them to the kinds and levels of work available. This despite the fact that, overtly at least, almost all pupils became subjected to a more academic curriculum, with increased emphasis on the acquisition of knowledge and the ability to reproduce it on paper for the benefit of examination assessors (Dore, 1976). Watts (1985) remarks that despite the fact that the content of the curriculum became less relevant to the occupations which many pupils would come to perform, its connections with the world of employment grew no less:

> *Its basic rationale was that it provided a meritocratic foundation on which selection for occupational destination could be based. If secondary schools in particular no longer prepared pupils for particular forms of employment in such an overt and direct way as hitherto, what they did continued to be influenced and justified by the extent to which it determined access to employment.*
> *(Watts, 1985, pp. 12-13)*

The revisiting of the paths taken by education since the Industrial Revolution leads to a recognition that a number of the taken-for-granted assumptions about the apparently "natural" elements of modern schooling, such as the hierarchical arrangement of academic and manual subjects, had a beginning in a particular historical reality and in particular decisions made to satisfy particular and competing interests. While New Zealand seems to be remote from such vested interests in the discourse surrounding nineteenth century schooling, the fact that its education system has been so closely modelled on that of its "mother country" meant that it inherited many of the same characteristics (Cumming and Cumming, 1978), and in importing structures, it also imported ideologies.

An examination of historical educational roots also shows that, in Britain as elsewhere, the professionalisation of education and of the public adminisration of schools helped to fossilise structures and practices developed in a distant past. Toffler (1970) could therefore warn:

> *What passes for education today...is a hopeless anachronism...our schools face backwards toward a dying system. Their vast energies are applied to cranking out industrial man. It was for this reason that education, in its very structure, simulated industrialism.*
>
> *(Toffler, 1970, pp. 360)*

2.3. THE CRISIS IN EMPLOYMENT AND EDUCATIONAL RESPONSES.

Toffler wrote the above when the world was poised on the brink of a major economic crisis, some of the effects of which have been considered in the preceding chapter. Rising levels of inflation accompanied by increasing rates of unemployment caused consternation in economic policy-making as economists and governments strove to understand and control a situation not experienced before and extending beyond the realms of popular economic theory. What had been, in a period of economic expansion, a simple, straightforward link between increased opportunity in schooling, and economic growth as a personal as well as a social goal now became problematic. Conventional wisdom had previously reinforced the meritocratic ideology discussed above, where ability and effort led to attainment and an appropriate job, and failure was the result of deficiencies in the individual. A "good education" had become the key to social mobility:

> *Until only a few years ago the transition of young people from school to working life was not a major problem for governments. Although the level and type of education and training provided was not always consonant with the needs of the economy, economic expansion was on such a scale that school leavers on the whole had little difficulty in finding a job that seemed appropriate to their educational achievement. By means of apprenticeship, on-the-job training or additional training, they were able to raise their initial qualifications. For the most gifted among them the requirements of an expanding economy opened up promotion and career prospects.*
>
> *(OECD, 1977, p.44)*

Such a linear progression was shattered by the crisis in employment, which has produced what Habermas (1976) has called a *"legitimation crisis"*. Educational and occupational systems declare the need for motivation, but when the socio-cultural system fails to provide this motivation, in this case through its failure to provide employment, a motivational crisis, the basis of a legitimation crisis, occurs. In many ways education lost its legitimacy not only with students who failed to get the "reward" they had striven for and been promised; it also lost its legitimacy with sections of the public and with governments.

Nash (1980) describes a New Zealand version of this legitimation crisis, drawing parallels with what happened in Britain. Here as elsewhere, education in the 1950s and early 1960s was viewed as the key solution to the many dimensions of "development" - increased productivity, improved health, reduced birthrate, the modernisation of industry and agriculture, and the development of stable governments. By the mid-1970s however, disillusionment with the results of investment in education and training had set in almost worldwide. Education was blamed for increased unemployment, reduced educational opportunity, a widening of the disparities in income - and much else besides. In this situation, various groups emerged to generate "new" forms of discourse about education. These are considered in turn under the headings of "the new vocationalism", "the critical educators" and "the rhetorical humanists".

2.3.1. THE NEW VOCATIONALISM.

A lot has been written about the so-called "Great Debate" in education (for a definitive account, see Whitty, 1985) which began in Britain, but had definite parallels not only in New Zealand (Nash, 1980) but elsewhere. As Wiener (1981) suggests, it is useful to see the "Great Debate" as one of a succession of attempts by the *"industrial trainers"* - in Williams' (1965) typology - to change the balance of the curriculum compromise in their favour.

Elements of this "Great Debate" included demands for greater standardisation of the curriculum and attempts to define and defend a core of "central" curriculum subjects. This has meant a return-to-basics program emphasising literacy and numeracy, and a movement away from the more progressive education of the 1960s to prepare students better for a competition for a declining number of jobs. Thus, the supposedly peripheral subjects - what their detractors often term the "frills" - have come under scrutiny and attack wherever the crisis in capital accumulation has taken place. Whitty (1985) gives an account of such critiques in the U.K., and Wexler *et al.* (1981) and Openshaw (1980), among others, describe similar attacks on the curriculum in the United States and New Zealand respectively. Cathcart and Esland (1985) show how in the U.K.,

> *...in spite of the rapid rise in youth unemployment in 1976, the Right has succeeded in retaining the offensive against liberal education, has continued to promulgate the myth that young people (and their teachers) are responsible for their own unemployment, and, largely through the invoking of the economic survival, has begun the process of decomposition of elements of liberal education.*
> *(Cathcart and Esland, 1985, p. 178)*

In a major study of unemployment in the early stages of the economic crisis, Carnoy (1977) pointed out that it is much easier to address youth and education and blame them for the crisis rather than look at the source of it and try to redress the economy. In the United States, Apple (1982a) considers such trends as a reflection of an old strategy:

> *When larger economic and governmental crisis erupt, export the crisis outside the economy and government onto other groups. That is, rather than attention*

> *being directed toward the unequal results and benefits produced by the ways the economy is currently organized and controlled, schools and teachers will be focused upon as major causes of social dislocation, unemployment, falling standards of work, declining productivity, and so on.*
>
> *(Apple, 1982a, p.54)*

A recent chapter of the "Great Debate" is an increasing emphasis to make schooling more responsive to the needs of industry, creating what various authors (Gleeson, 1984; Bates *et al.*, 1984; Dale, 1985) are calling the "new vocationalism". This "new" educational discourse hinges around the idea that the provision of continued in-school, and new post-school training and education programmes will provide a much closer link between schooling and work, as well as a more highly skilled, flexible and adaptable workforce. Such provisions are also seen by the "new vocationalists" as a means to lessen unemployment as young people choose training rather than work. Moreover, as young people become more highly trained, they will be better able to make choices about work.

Grubb (1985) discusses at length the attraction of vocationalism, and throws light on its revival after its demise in the more egalitarian 1960s.

> *Vocationalism is powerful because it appeals to many groups, especially in its more general forms. It gains support from students in search of jobs; businesses in search of trained workers; education in search of students and an important social function; and politicians in search of popular reforms that appear to address social and economic problems.*
>
> *(Grubb, 1985, p. 547)*

He also notes that the attraction of vocationalism comes from its ability to serve several contradictory roles of education simultaneously. It promises to reward individual students while still addressing more collective goals like unemployment and national development. It also promises equality of opportunity through education within unequal societies where the pressures to reproduce inequality are even greater. Given a continuing dualism in thinking about human capacities and therefore about education, vocationalism promises to serve simultaneously the "hand" and the "mind", the practical and the abstract, the vocational and the academic.

Carnoy and Levin (1985) and Apple (1986a) among others show that the discourse of the new vocationalists has gained currency in the United States. The social and educational thrust of the 1950s and 1960s had been towards equality and other democratic ideals.

> *As long as the economy grew steadily, rising levels of taxation to support the achievement of those ideals were viewed as a necessary cost of prosperity. With the onset of lower growth rates, inflation, and falling real wages in the 1970s however, the coalition of diverse groups supporting the egalitarian dynamic decomposed into divisive groups fighting for decreasing resources. This conflict enabled opponents of the social, racial, and gender gains to assert their agenda.*
>
> (Carnoy and Levin, *1986 , p.47*)

Apple goes on to argue that schooling increasingly became challenged to make US industry competitive again through the increased rigour of education and training. Commissions of enquiry followed and various reports were issued, with two becoming especially important in terms of national sponsorship and dissemination. *"A Nation At Risk"* and *"Action for Excellence"* argued that much of the economic malaise of the nation was attributable to its educational weaknesses and recommended specific reforms for raising educational standards. The terrain of the debate thus shifted from a concern with inequality and democratisation which had characterised the previous decades, to one of efficiency, standards and productivity. A large part of the solution to the crisis is seen as making schools and their curricula more responsive to industrial and technological needs.

In Europe too vocationalism became a new focal point of interest. Two major projects organised first by the Council of Europe's Council for Cultural Co-Operation (1979-1982) entitled *"Preparation for Life"* and then by the European Community (1976-1980; 1983-1986/7) entitled *"Action Programme: Transition of Young People from Education to Adult and Working Life"* served to focus attention on the relationship between education and work. The former project reported on curricular experiments for preparation for work in ten of the Council's member states, and made specific recommendations. Declarations of policy were made by various Ministers of the member states, linking education to economy even more officially.

The second project was especially influential as it involved hundreds of schools and training institutes in thirty areas of Europe, including the U.K. (see Wilcox et al., 1984; Varlaam, 1984). Moreover, an international information network was professionally set up, so that thousands of teachers could use the data collected. Curriculum endeavours which linked education to industry were highlighted, and included the development of work experience schemes, careers guidance, education for enterprise, co-operation and partnership with local or regional industries, and alternative curricula. (see European Community, 1984 and 1985). All these elements come together in "transition programmes" which have burgeoned in secondary school systems in many countries. Such programmes will be described in detail in a later section of this chapter in a consideration of the role of education in orienting students towards the world of work.

Gordon (1985) has identified some elements of the "new vocationalism" in New Zealand, especially as they underly the discourse of official documents such as those produced by Catherwood (1985) and Scott *et al.* (1985). In the latter document for instance, the problems of unemployment are located not within the areas of the economy, but in deficiencies in education and in youth:

> *Secondary schools need to ask why so many young people are leaving the school so obviously ill-prepared for adult life.*
>
> *(Scott et al.,1985, p.15)*

Similar statements have frequently been made by New Zealand employers who have accused young people of being less motivated and less willing to work, resulting in their experiencing difficulties in the labour market (see *"Employer"* no.44, 1977; no.55, 1979; *Working Party Report on Unemployment,* 1981). One such statement read:

> *For the youth of today, the immediate problem is one of more competitive entry into employment, rather than unemployment...[young people find it] difficult to compete because they commonly lack one or more of the following: clear ideas on the career they wish to follow; motivation and job-seeking skills; realistic employment within their capacity and adequate numeracy and literacy.*
>
> *(New Zealand Employers' Federation, 1983, p.2)*

The formulation of the structural crisis of the capitalist state as a problem of young people rather than a problem of the economy is

also evident in the post-school training schemes set up in various countries. New Zealand developed its own versions of post-school [1] and within school training schemes.[2] The latter schemes introduce technical and vocational elements into the curriculum for a range of pupils by having closer links between secondary schools and technical institutes, and perpetuate the notion that more education, with an emphasis on training, will lead to employment.

Another area where educational discourse is becoming increasingly informed by the new vocationalism is assessment. Here too employers' needs and criteria are being highlighted and given priority. In New Zealand, the Employers' Federation's publication *"Secondary Education and the Path to Work" (1981)* lists as one of its seven major conclusions its perception that *"there is a need for an additional form of assessment which objectively identifies the skills and talents of each individual, supplemented by a comprehensive School Leaving Certificate." (p.31).*

There is evidence therefore that an ideological shift to what Apple (1986a) calls a "high-tech solution" is gaining ground in New Zealand. In a widely disseminated discussion paper by the New Zealand Vocational Training Council (1986) we read:

> *The unmistakeable conclusion that must be drawn is [the] overwhelming recognition of the importance of education and training in economic performance...The challenge that faces New Zealand is to recognise this in its future policies and so recapture the ground that has been lost in the last thirty years.*
> *(Vocational Training Council, 1986, p.5)*

Shallcrass (1986) points to the need for "a new consensus" about educational priorities in New Zealand; such a consensus is hinted at when the Department of Education's Curriculum Review Committee agrees in its document *"Learning and Achieving" (1986)* that education and training should seek to reconcile humanitarian goals with economic efficiency. Business ideology in the education arena

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1. These included YPTP (Young Persons Training Programme), STEPS (School-Leavers Training and Employment Programme), TAPS (Training Assistance Programmes) and more recently, the Access Scheme - equivalent to the U.K.'s Youth Opportunities Programme and Youth Training Schemes.

2. "Links" was launched in 1986, and is similar to the Technical and Vocational Education Initiative in the U.K.

has thus started to assert itself in New Zealand as elsewhere, using similar arguments and premises. In pursuing this argument, Freeman-Moir (1984, p.236) relates the economic crisis in New Zealand to attempts to restructure industry, to rationalise the labour process and to concentrate capital power into units of monopolistic strength, thus making education vulnerable to critics. Schools and teachers are accordingly blamed for unemployment.

In comparing New Zealand reactions to the economic crisis to other reactions made by other countries, an important caveat has to be made. As Lyn Yates (1986) rightly points out in her criticism of Sharp who applies foreign analyses too readily to an Australian context, *"the nature of education and the possibilities for action also have specifically national and historical dimensions."* (p.126). Thus, like Australia but unlike the U.K., the U.S.A. or Canada for instance, New Zealand has a Labour Government, and although in some respects the character of contemporary New Zealand Labour Government might be equated to conservative governments elsewhere (notably in its increasingly free market approach to the economy), and there have been cut-backs in education spending regarding, for instance, affirmative action for women and girls, there has been a steady growth in the funding of initiatives for multiculturalism. The Curriculum Review (1986) exercise, as well as the new transition training schemes also reflect the government's general policy to shift power into local communities in an attempt to encourage shared curriculum planning and to better respond to local, personal and ethnic needs.

More importantly, historically New Zealand started feeling the effects of widespread unemployment later, and less drastically than its European counterparts. Thus, the "legitimation crisis" in this country is not at an advanced a stage as in countries which have suffered unemployment longer and in greater numbers.

2.3.2. THE CRITICAL EDUCATORS.

Another group of educationalists has responded differently to the crisis, and placed itself squarely in opposition to the views expressed in official documents of the state. They regard the "new vocationalism" as fulfilling a control function which schooling has

been called on to provide following the breakdown of meritocratic ideology. Sharp (1984) for instance suggests that in a situation of large-scale unemployment in a competitive world economy, governments find themselves on the horns of a dilemma. On the one hand, they have to attempt to socialise and occupy the potential unemployed so that this group is not a threat to the state (and education is obviously a prime instrument for this); on the other hand, in the interests of economic competitiveness, they have to restrict spending on education.

To accomplish this, Sharp suggests, governments in all "western" capitalist countries are drawn to make education more efficient and more directly instrumental in producing appropriate skills and attitudes. At the same time however, they are also attempting to divert attention from the processes at work by substituting rhetoric about standards, basic skills, vocational training, accountability for previous concerns with equal opportunity, child-centred progressivism, liberal education, and so on. The views expressed by Sharp are similar to those made by other writers associated with the "new" sociology of education and closely linked to a neo-Marxist and culturalist interpretation of education. Carnoy and Levin (1985), Apple (1986a) and Finn (1982) among others, have criticised the "high-tech" solution to the crisis, where the needs of industry take precedence over the needs of democracy.

Giroux (1985), a prolific writer within the "new" sociology of education perspective, considers the movement in the U.S.A. which is leading towards a "new consensus" that appeals to principles of industrial efficiency, control, and administration as central theoretical elements in developing school programmes. He links the crisis in education to the crisis in democracy:

> *The real crisis in education is one that, in part, stems from the failure of this society to develop a public philosophy that is capable of defending schools as public spheres committed to performing a public service informed by emancipatory and democratic principles. The important point being that it has become increasingly difficult within the boundaries of advanced capitalist society to be able to think in terms <u>not</u> tied to the principles of economic self-sufficiency and individual attainment.*
> *(Giroux, 1985, p.61)*

Giroux, like other critical educators from the Left, argues for a view of public education that takes as its starting point, not the privatistic, technical, and narrow economic interests that currently define the debate on public education, but the relationship of schools to the demands of active forms of community life. Schools are therefore to be seen as places that prepare people for a democracy, and not simply the workplace. Attention is also drawn to those repressive material conditions of school life embodied in hierarchical school structures, the unequal resources that separate poor from affluent schools, and the tracking and sorting systems that cut short the futures and dreams of so many youth from subordinate groups. Giroux (1985) criticises the "structured silence" regarding those ideological conditions in public education that makes invisible the histories, knowledge forms, and social relations of excluded majorities while simulataneously legitimating dominant middle-class and ruling-class cultures and social practices. A reconstruction of public education would thus begin with the imperative to awaken the moral, political and civic responsibilities of all learners.

This perspective therefore attacks the new vocationalism, whose agenda for schools is to produce what Cathcart and Esland (1985) have called the "compliant-creative" workers needed by modern industry. Within the critical perspective too, the liberal humanism of the 1950s and 1960s is not to be substituted by a version of social and economic Darwinism where enterprise and the possession of skills for "technological capability" are the dominant values. Rather, critical educators advocate the need for schools to examine the "what" and the "how" of the curriculum with an emphasis on demystifying academic study and providing knowledge for all students which would enable them to negotiate and change the economic, social and political systems which affect their lives. Rather than dismantling the gains made by the liberal humanism of the previous decades, this perspective builds on and extends this humanism into the social sphere. It sees individual initiative in its social context, and sees the quest for social justice and critical development of the culture in social terms. It requires not only an understanding of work and of the ideas of our culture as essential, but also the idea of power: students come to understand how power is used in society, both in the

arrangements of economic processes and also in the arrangement of everyday social life itself (ideology).

From such a perspective, Simon (1983) turns the "new vocationalism" on its head: instead of teaching <u>for</u> work, Simon advocates that schools present "adult life", "society", the "real world", the "world of work" not as taken-for-granted realities but as the subject of inquiry, where the world is continually being produced and reproduced by the actions of men and women, and often, as Marx said, on terms not of their own making. Simon (1983) thus argues:

> *If the realities of the workplace are indeed sets of social relations defined through power and in support of particular interests, to present them as if they were naturally occurring phenomena, historically neutral and obviously necessary, is to mystify people and to act to render them powerless. By helping people solely to adapt to "what is", you help to maintain what is.*
>
> *(Simon, 1983, p. 238)*

Critical educators consider such an agenda central to the curriculum, and cite research like that carried out by Cathcart and Esland (1985), Rees and Atkinson (1982) in the U.K and by Lind-Brenkman (1983) and Gaskell (1986) in North America which show that schools generally present an idealised view of industry, and that the pedagogical materials presented by teachers generally enjoin students to foster an understanding (i.e."acceptance") of the "wealth creation" process and a recognition that industrial growth, consumerism and new technology are synonymous with progress.

Similar conceptual tools and critiques have been used in New Zealand mainly in evaluating post-secondary training schemes. Gordon (1985) and Korndorffer (1985a, 1985b, 1986) have been especially skilful in drawing from and expanding on overseas literature to highlight the contradictions and shortcomings inherent in the transition programmes developed by the state as an educational response to a political and economic problem. Korndorffer (1986) therefore argues for an education which puts knowledge and power over their own learning into young people's hands, an education which supplies young people *"with the hammer of a materialist understanding of their world and its history that would enable <u>them</u> to work together to change that world." (p. 140).*

2.3.3. THE "RHETORICAL" HUMANISTS.

Another identifiable group who share some perspectives from both the other groups described above (i.e. those supporting a "new vocationalism" and those in opposition to this) place a greater emphasis on the need to prepare youth for increasing amounts of leisure time. Those who write from this perspective point out the benefits of unemployment in that at last education can be "freed" from its utilitarian functions and geared more steadfastly and singlemindedly to personal development and fulfilment (Musgrave, 1977). Generally speaking, proponents of this perspective ally themselves to the social and lifeskills-type of education as formulated in the U.K. by Hopson and Scally (1981), but fail to look beyond this to consider in any depth the ways in which society is structured so that some groups but not others attain postions of power and privilege. It also fails to address in any realistic way the effect of the *"broken transitions"* which unemployment has brought about, and which are well described by Willis (1986).

Arguments in favour of education for leisure tend to be tinged with an idealistic humanism which has not been soiled by the daily hardship many of the unemployed face. An example of this perspective can be found in Sweet (1981):

> *The future generations should realise that their education is for cultural appreciation, work and leisure and that at some time in their lives, they will probably not be gainfully employed and that this period of time can be enriching, that is challenging, enjoyable and purposeful.*
>
> *(Sweet, 1981, p.82)*

Such notions have been rejected by educators from the Right (Deforge, 1981) and from the Left (Pearl, 1978) who see it as a deflection from the real issues which makes no attempt to enable youth to understand and control the events which affect their lives. Offe (1985) finds three major problems with "leisure education" and the "do-it-yourself" type of activities which often consume more earned income than they help to save. Offe enumerates the difficulties, which

> *...have to do with problematic distribution effects which typical households or individuals can overcome only within very strict limits and to a highly variable degree. The scope actually available for "autonomous" activities is typically constrained, first, by a shortage of material resources (such as*

> *physical space and other facilities); second, by a lack of personal qualifications, discipline and psychological dispositions, and finally, by the absence of institutional structures which could guarantee minimum levels of efficiency and continuity, as well as security of expectations and control among their participants.*
>
> *(Offe, 1985, p. 95)*

Offe therefore rebuts euphoric references to the beauty of *"freely chosen activity"* or to *"the bliss of self-exploitation"* which are currently finding favour with some eductionalists, and concludes that people have to be provided with the appropriate institutional and material resources which would enable them to carry out their self-chosen activities. Any other solution would likely *"amount only to a camouflaging of the violence, misery and hopelessness of an economy of lifeboats, in which there would always be too few seats." (Offe, 1985, p.95).* Moreover, as Dwyer *et al.* (1984, p.8) point out, despite the claims that society is on the edge of a new social ethic in which "full employment" will cease to be a major priority, there is little doubt that in the present circumstances the penalties for failure to gain entry to the workplace are as severe as they have ever been.

In New Zealand, Bassett (1984) has criticised the discourse of rhetorical humanists, pointing out that the notion of leisure involves some concept of freedom and choice, and must consequently exclude overtones of oppression or coercion. In a New Zealand context too, Gordon (1985) has challenged the dominant discourse which blames youth for lacking the necessary skills to obtain and keep jobs, or to survive periods without work. She comments:

> *It is difficult to conceive of what the person with such life skills would be like. Is this the paragon who, in the face of no paid work, continually threatened by homelessness, poverty that leads to the neglect of health and dental care (and other modern necessities), no transport and continual alienation from mainstream society, will develop useful hobbies and a keen interest in free cultural activities?...The best way to ensure good life skills is to provide good life chances.*
>
> *(Gordon, 1985, p.55)*

2.4. LINKING EDUCATION AND WORK: RECONSIDERING THE TRADITION.

In a previous section it has been suggested that various forces and interests influencing the discourse about the school/work nexus surface and submerge at various historical periods. The predominance of business interests, efficiency and production (as represented by the new vocationalism) or of democracy and equality has to a large extent defined the bonds between schooling and work. Traditionally, the dominant theoretical focus used to formulate the issues and questions on education and the economy has tended to be functionalism. Halsey *et al.* (1961) maintained for instance that

> *...as the economies of the advanced countries are increasingly dominated by scientific and techological innovation, education and the economy become more closely geared, until the education system occupies a strategic place as a central determinant of the economic, political, social and changing relations of education.*
>
> *(Halsey et al., 1961, p.3)*

A central feature of this functionalist perspective is the way in which the educational system is construed as being essential for economic growth and the development of resources in an industrial society. It is argued firstly that schooling provides each generation with the skills demanded by increased technological and occupational requirements; secondly that the selective mechanism of schooling helps to allocate individuals to particular jobs; and thirdly that schooling contributes to consensus and to a cohesive society.

By the 1970s however, Marxist and neo-Marxist perspectives attracted a considerable following among sociologists of education, and the traditional bonds between education and the economy were subjected to a number of challenges based on empirical and theoretical work. Contributions from different educational perspectives and reflecting the concerns of the "new vocationalists", the "critical educators" and the "rhetorical humanists" are here organised around the categories traditionally used to represent the bonds between school and work. These refer to the role of schools in <u>socialising</u>, <u>selecting</u>, <u>orienting</u> and <u>preparing</u> students for work, and therefore in enhancing their and their nation's economic development.

2.4.1. SOCIALISATION.

In his account of the development of the "new" sociology of education, Whitty (1985) notes that various types of macro-theory emerged during the mid- and late 1970s as candidates in the quest to explain the relationship between education and the wider structure. Most of these were, to a greater or lesser extent, influenced by Marxism and could be roughly categorised as correspondence theories, reproduction theories and hegemonic theories. Hogan (1982) also notes that such socialisation models gained pre-eminence in examining the relationship between work and schooling. These specify

> *...some organizational feature of the school that is believed to be responsible for socializing children into the normative requirements, the values, behaviours and dispositions, of the world of work.*
> *(Hogan, 1982, p.55)*

Merton (1957), Callaghan (1962), Cronin (1973), Tyack (1974) and Katz (1975) represent one account from the socialistion model which highlights the formal bureaucratic features of schooling, including the centralisation of control and supervision, the standardisation of procedures, the rationalisation of the education process in the form of class grading, uniform courses of study, standardised written exams, competition for grades, intense activity, and strict behavioural rules. Hogan (1982) notes another approach proposed by Dreeben (1968) that links ecological features of the school with the normative requirements - universalism, specificity, achievement, and independence - "required" of modern occupational life. Dreeben (1968) stressed that the age-graded, relatively autonomous classrooms of specific size, composition, degree of differentiation, scheduling and reward structure provide students with the social experience necessary for learning occupational norms.

The Macro-Perspective.

However, the best known account from a Marxist perspective focuses on the processes by which schools reproduce the social relations of production. This account was developed in the United States by Bowles and Gintis (1976) and their argument highlights the form

rather than the content of the educational encounter. It minimises the significance of the overt, as opposed to the hidden curriculum of schooling, in securing social reproduction and the legitimation of inequality. Their basic argument is that the relations developed variously between teachers, administrators and students correspond to the relationships developed in the workplace. The fragmentation of the learning process, the students' lack of control over their own work, the attitudes required of them, and the extrinsic motivation via grades, all reflect the capitalist productive process. Thus schools prepare young people for the social relations of production by imposing equivalent relations upon them from an early age.

In addition, Bowles and Gintis (1976) argued that the different levels of the educational system could be seen to feed workers into different levels in the occupational structure, and the internal organisation of these different parts of the education system produced different habits and personality traits appropriate for different positions in the hierarchical divisions of labour. Thus, working class schools tend to be authoritarian structures in which the norm of rule-following is emphasised. In contrast are middle class schools which encourage a greater degree of independent activity, thus preparing workers who would not require constant supervision. The highest levels of education gave students even greater freedom and initiative since in the workplace such qualities were likely to be used in the interests of enterprise rather than against it. Bowles and Gintis also argue that capitalists directly intervened in the formation of the education system, and that every major transformation of the educational system and ideology has been precipitated by a shift in the structure of production, in the class composition of the workplace, and in the identity of the oppressed groups. Thus, capitalists structure the schooling system to meet the needs of capital, which reason, together with the undemocratic nature of economic life, has resulted in the schools' failure to fulfil their egalitarian and developmental objectives.

Bowles and Gintis (1981) were later to revise their initial thesis in an attempt to overcome some of the central weaknesses inherent in their work and identified by sociologists of education both

outside and within the Marxist camp. Criticism was levelled at their statistical methodology (Coxhead, 1977) but the major flaws were in their account of the rise of mass schooling, their picture of the capitalist system of production, and in their characterisation of the correspondence between education and work (Hogan, 1981). As it first stood, "Schooling in Capitalist America" was within the tradition of "scientific", "economistic" Marxism, inasmuch as the model of capitalist society the authors presented was structuralist. Their initial work emphasised the structural integration of the institutions of capitalist society, and in so doing denied institutions such as schools any autonomy from the economic base. This reveals the work's ideological link to European sturcturalism as represented by its main figure, Althusser. Bowles and Gintis' work is also structuralist in that it presents a structurally determined view of human beings in capitalist society, thus denying the importance of human agency.

Their structuralist and deterministic account has therefore been seen to lead to a language of pessimism rather than one of possibility, one which presents a monolithic view of domination and an unduly passive view of human beings (Giroux, 1986). Burbules (1986) notes that correspondence and reproduction theories formed the early phase of radical scholarship in education, as characterised not only by Bowles and Gintis, but also by Althusser (1971). This approach typified the *"thesis of inevitability"*, which meant that despite some *"contradictions"*, schools must function in this way. Aronowitz and Giroux (1985) point out that this approach *"offers little hope for challenging the repressive features of schooling." (p. 71).*

What Burbules (1986) terms the *"second phase of radical scholarship"* in education took these *"contradictions"* and saw within them spaces for radical transformation. Gramsci rather than Althusser became the theoretical base, and Marxist scholarship attempted to typify his *"pessimism of the intellect and optimism of the will."* A major influence in this context has been Willis, whose *Learning to Labour* (1977) stressed the concept of *"resistance"*, that is the capacity of students to engage in various rebellious and oppositional activities that to some extent *"penetrate"* structures of domination. Hence, while reproduction

occurs in that working class kids do get working class jobs, it does not occur smoothly or without contestation. Willis' analysis appears to fit more closely with empirical reality and goes beyond the monolithic view of the correspondence principle.

In this regard, Apple (1981) warns:

> *By focusing on schools only as reproductive institutions, we may miss the dynamic interplay between education and an economy, and be in danger of reducing the complexity of this relationship to a base parody of what actually exists at the level of practice.*
>
> *(Apple, 1981, p.6)*

Finn (1982) has also shown that it is historically incorrect to define the work schools do merely as producing *"factory fodder"*, because education has been the object of other, sometimes contradictory demands. Thus, educational policy has had to deal with among others the demands of parents, and those of working class and other subordinate social groupings.

This emphasis on contradictory demands forms the cornerstone of Carnoy and Levin's (1985) major thesis in their latest work where they demonstrate how education has to respond to pressures exerted by social movements. With reference to *"Schooling for Work in the Democratic State"*, Apple (1986) notes that Carnoy and Levin's thesis *"bears the marks of the concerns of the early to mid-seventies with the relationship between economy and schooling and is a return to the economic problematic of that period." (p.403)*. Unlike the earlier study of Bowles and Gintis, however, Carnoy and Levin have made use of the advances of radical scholarship in education to both recognise and support culturalist and political theories and have thus gone beyond previously economically oriented investigations. They distance themselves from authors like Apple and Giroux, however, who they describe as representing the *"critical autonomy view"* (Carnoy and Levin, 1985, p.22) and who they see as putting too much emphasis upon culture and ideology at the expense of the link between educational practices and the *"organization of production as the underlying social dynamic." (ibid. p.24)*.

Carnoy and Levin build on the correspondence principle to suggest that the relationship between education and paid work is

dialectical, characterised by a perpetual tension between two dynamics: the imperatives of capitalism and of democracy. Thus, schools respond to the needs of the capitalist workplace and to the values and expectations associated with the democratic rights of citizens. In any historical point in time, there is a tendency for one aspect of the duality to gain primacy at the expense of the other. Thus, when social movements are weak and business ideology strong, schools tend to strengthen their function of preparing and socialising pupils for paid work.

Their work has significant importance in the theoretical development of the "new" sociology of education in that they analyse the role of the State itself as a critical factor in explaining what education does. It therefore represents a continuation of the development of a more sophisticated understanding of the contemporary state (Dale, 1981, 1982; Jessop, 1982; Offe, 1984; Apple, 1982a). Whitty (1985) summarises this development thus:

> *Increasingly...the State came to be conceived as a site of struggle, the outcomes of which could not be taken for granted. In addition, the tendency to treat the state as a unitary or monolithic site was abandoned and replaced by a conception of the state as a constellation of sites whose determination by the economy was both general and varied rather than specific and identical.*
>
> *(Whitty, 1985, p.33)*

The Micro-Perspective.

With the exception of Carnoy and Levin's (1985) work, recent analyses of the role of schooling in socialising students for work have in the main focused on the micro-perspective of how the reproduction process is manifested in classroom dynamics and in the content of the curricula (both explicit and latent). The following are some examples of work within a micro-perspective which attempt to describe the intricate relationship between economic and social forces and the realities of students' everyday lives. There seems to be no empirical work yet in this area to illustrate a more recent phase in radical scholarship (see Proefriedt, 1980; Tozer, 1985) - that of moving from describing resistance to promoting it, and thus undertaking the political and pedagogical strategies necessary to encourage oppositional behaviours in schools.

The best known account from this micro-perspective is Willis's (1977) influential ethnographic study which attempts to reveal the subjective and cultural formation of particular kinds of labour power, particularly what happens in schools to ensure that *"working class kids get working class jobs"*. His ethnography describes a process in which a certain form of male proletarian counter-workplace culture is mediated, via family and neighbourhood, to the school, emerging (in combination with elements drawn from other contexts) as a counter-school culture - the culture of *"the Lads"*. This culture is manualist, rejecting the liberal curriculum of the school and its promises of upward mobility to mental rather than manual work; it is sexist, celebrating forms of male behaviour which encourage oppressive domination of females; and it is racist in its assertion of superiority over students of Asian and West Indian descent.

Through making and re-making their own culture, *"the Lads"* exercise a certain freedom and autonomy, transcending sheer cause and effect mechansisms of social structures which was pivotal to Bowles and Gintis' work as described above. *"The Lads"* also see through, - *"penetrate"* - the ideological mystifications of schooling, such as doctrines of equal opportunity, credentialism and career choice. They reject school work as mental labour, which they associate with obedience, conformity, subordination and lack of "manliness". They evaluate and reject the exchange proposed by schooling: knowledge for respect, guidance for control, success for obedience. To accept such an offer would mean too much for them, for it would cost them too much autonomy, too much masculinity, too much self-direction, in return for what they believe to be the empty promises of conformity and mental work. They thus engage in a struggle to win symbolic and physical space from the institution, its rules and its purpose: to make students work. Against the rules and meaning of the school, they pursue strategies of resistance and survival: truancy, skipping clases, *"having a laff"*, games, sleeping, smoking, and drinking. Such resistance from Willis's neo-Marxist perspective is a contradictory phenomenon, in which the elements of struggle can mean both creativity and oppression, openness and closure, class power and class defeat, self-liberation and reproduction of their oppressed positions. Willis's notions of *"cultural production"* through *"penetration"* and *"resistance"*, and

his theory of the relationship between the family, schooling and work are central to this particular research project.

Another study related to the micro-perspective is Apple and King's (1977) work which shows how the *"hidden curriculum"*, as defined by Jackson (1968), functions within the context of cultural reproduction. Their research in kindergartens showed how concepts of "work" and "play" form part of the deep structure of school life. Thus, the basic and organising framework of commonsense rules that is negotiated, internalised, and which ultimately seems to give meaning to our experience in educational institutions, appears to be closely linked to the normative and communicative structures of industrial life.

> *As part of their initiation into the kindergarten community, young children also receive their first initiation into the social dimension of the world of work. The content of the specific lessons is relatively less important than the experience of being a worker. Personal attributes of obedience, enthusiasm, adaptability, and perseverance are more highly valued than academic competence. Unquestioning acceptance of authority and of the vicissitudes of life in institutional settings are among a kindergartener's first lessons. It is in the progressive acceptance, as natural, as the world "tout court" of meanings of important and unimportant knowledge, of work and play, of normality and deviance, that these lessons ride.*
>
> *(Apple and King, 1977, p.353)*

Anyon's (1980, 1981) work in the United States amplifies and develops Bowles and Gintis' thesis. She found that different social backgrounds develop different relations to capital, and that working class children develop a potential relationship with capital. What makes her study different from earlier empirical examinations of the hidden curriculum is that she examined not so much the creation of specific dispositions and personality attributes, but the fostering of particular relationships to production. Anyon thus identifies, in the hidden curriculum of working class schools in particular, the reproduction of forms of resistance and struggle which also characterise working class resistance and struggle in production.

Carlson (1982) reported similar findings in his examination of the implications of a popular systems approach to individualised instruction, specifically with regard to the conception of the

individual and of work incorporated in and reproduced by individualisation. In an ethnographic study of "McCann School" which used an individualised instructional delivery system, Carlson shows schools to be the primary institutions in which individuals learn to construct the self along economically functional lines prior to entry into the labour market. The overriding logic in the classroom was an economic one of efficiency, productivity, and centralisation of management control, which led to a bifurcated and instrumental individualism as a way of being-in-the-world and relating to work. Thus children at McCann School learnt to look almost exclusively to a private social sphere to supply what was considered as inevitably lacking in work, and to accept this as a reasonable "tradeoff". They learned to view work as a somewhat disagreeable but not overtaxing routine, and to focus most of their interest in a private track of experience which coexisted with, but was seen as separate from, the work track.

Carlson relates these processes to capitalist modes of organisation, where schools are viewed as "carriers" of capitalist modes of consciousness and selfhood. Resistance among the children thus took the same forms as exhibited by workers in an environment which relied on minute divisions of labour to increase output, and these industrial parallels included "soldiering", "doubling-up" and "work stoppage". Carlson also relates the work of the school counsellor to the human relations movement within industry, since both function to *"provide a pseudo-democratic sense of involvement and participation, to mask the fact that children had little real input in the formulation, design, or content of the curriculum." (Carlson, 1982, p.156).*

Another study from this micro-perspective is McLaren's (1986) research, which draws from work in ritual studies to analyse classroom interaction in a junior high school in downtown Toronto. Classroom instruction was discovered to be part of an intricate ritual system and was differentiated along religious and secular dimensions. McLaren discovered two root paradigms pervading all of classroom life, and these - *"becoming a Catholic"* and *"becoming a worker"* - reflected the values of the larger society. McLaren argues that corporate capitalist values associated with *"becoming a worker"* complement closely those values associated with *"becoming a Catholic"*.

While the above accounts focused on social class and the socialisation by school of students into a labour segmented society, there is a growing volume of research to show that such differentiation is also based on gender and ethnicity. Thus, for example, McDonald (1980) shows that the social relations of schooling not only prepare the working classes for obedience, but they also prepare women to be subordinate to men. Deem (1981) argues that within the ideology of the 1960s in the U.K., any notion of preparing girls for a dual role (in waged work and in the family) was confined to middle-class girls. For working-class girls the emphasis remained largely on preparation for marriage and childrearing. In Griffin's (1985) answer to Willis' (1977) sole concentration on male culture, she shows how the rise of unemployment has highlighted issues like the need to strengthen family life.

2.4.2. SELECTION.

Earlier in this chapter the way in which schooling has increasingly moved towards a meritocratic concept - where *"sponsored"* mobility is replaced by *"contest"* mobility - was described. As a result of this development, the educational process has ceased to be concerned simply with the transmission of skills and values, and has increasingly taken on the functions of allocating and selecting as well as training individuals for their adult roles. Dale and Pires (1984) refer to this as the *"technical functional theory"* of the relationship between education and the economy, which states that there is an ever changing (until recently, ever increasing) need for skills in the economy, that these skills can be taught in schools and that the chief function of the education system is to provide its products with these skills. This process ensures both that the economy is provided with the appropriately skilled labour and that schools provide pupils with occupationally relevant skills and knowledge.

> *The nexus of this relationship is the qualification, the credential provided by the education system. In this theory, the qualification demonstrates, or at the very least indicates, the possession of the required skill or knowledge.*
>
> *(Dale and Pires, 1984, p.51)*

Qualifications are thus meant to ensure efficiency, where the most

able people can find their way into the most important and demanding jobs, and equity, making it possible for the social status of individuals to be determined by their talents and their efforts rather than by accidents of birth.

Various studies have shown that justification of this sort of credentialism is in practice untenable. With regard to "efficiency", Berg (1970) and Collins (1979) have provided fairly conclusive evidence that vocational skills are by no means learned exclusively in school, and that better "qualified" employees are not necessarily more productive than less "qualified" ones. Dore (1976) has related this fact to the tendency of professional associations to constantly upgrade the educational qualifications required for entry in the search for reduced supply and increased status. Berg (1970) referred to this as *"meritocratic inflation"* and found that it can proceed to the point where it reduces the workers' productivity and satisfaction because they feel over-qualified and their skills are not being utilised.

Hall and Carleton (1977) in Canada, and Ashton and Maguire (1980) in Britain found that employers do not in practice place emphasis on educational qualifications as schools often imagine they do. MacLean (1980) found that while most of the New Zealand employers he interviewed wanted school-leavers to possess qualifications, very few of them had any idea what was required by particular subjects. Reid (1983) and St George and Smith (1983) found the same patterns among employers with reference to New Zealand University Entrance qualifications. Such evidence reinforces the idea that in the mind of employers, "qualifications" refer to attitudes rather than specific skills.

In a British study of the recruitment procedures of the Ford Motor Company, Salaman (1979) found that selectors were looking for candidates who showed an ability to internalise the values and attitudes the company stressed. Ashton and Maguire (1980) showed that even at the higher levels of the occupational hierarchy, qualifications are often necessary but not sufficient. Thus, their study showed that employers used qualifications as a convenient pre-selection device, but thereafter paid little attention to them.

Vinokur (1982) has moreover pointed out to the central weakness of technical functional theory as lying in its narrowness of assumptions. These assumptions seem to draw on, and to be possibly valid for only a very limited range of occupations, where a range of implicitly high-level skills can be shown to be both closely specifiable and to be patently tenable. Dale and Pires (1984) note an even greater obstacle to the theory, given the arguments about the "deskilling" implications of jobs (Braverman, 1974).

In spite of these fundamental critiques however, Blau and Duncan's (1967) status-attainment model has, as Fitzgerald (1986) shows, been supported by a solid body of empirical work, so that while research has proved that credentials don't necessarily help people do jobs better, there can be no denying that they do help them get them and advance in them. Dore (1976) developed a very comprehensive taxonomy of the links between education and earnings, and distinguished only one mechanism - that in which parental wealth and connections are crucial - which might easily operate independently of educational certification.

The equitable concerns certification claims to defend, where talents and efforts rather than social background are supposed to determine status, are also subject to scepticism. Collins (1979) in the United States, and Bourdieu and Boltansky (1978) and Bourdieu and Passeron (1977) in France came to similar conclusions even though the former focused on the "sinecure" sector which is bigger than the fractions of the upper middle-class on whom Bourdieu and his colleagues concentrate. Thus, Collins (1979) sees credentialling as a vehicle used by the groups he investigated to exploit the possibilities provided by an expanding society in order to establish themselves in secure and improving occupational niches. Bourdieu's (1978) upper class use credentials as the last defence of their privileged position, in the wake of changes in the structure of the economy and the nature of authority. Changes in the inheritance system and economic structure led the upper classes to make more intensified use of the education system to secure the positions previously guaranteed by the direct transmission of economic capital. Bourdieu and Boltansky (1978) argue that this leads in turn to a greater intensification of the use of the education system by all classes and consequent inflation of academic qualifications. This is a method of

> *...conversion of economic capital into certified cultural capital. [This] can constitute a strategy which allows families who occupy the dominant positions in the ruling class to maintain their control over the field of business whilst ensuring for their children, through the intermediary of the school, the qualifications which authorises them to appropriate a part of the economic benefit of companies in the form of salaries.*
>
> *(Bourdieu and Boltansky, 1978, p.209)*

Bourdieu and Passeron (1977) also argue that the more rigorously the relationship between qualifications and posts is codified, the more useful will educational capital be. Conversely, the fuzzier the definitions for posts and required qualifications, the more room there is for strategies of bluff, and the more *"the possessors of social capital (connections, manner, bearing, etc.) can obtain a higher rate of return on their educational capital." (p.145).*

Berg (1970) too has argued that on the one hand, the privileged retain their relative advantage by buying their children a prestigious education, whilst on the other they protect their privileged place within the workplace by joining professional associations which attempt to increase the training time necessary for entrance to the profession. Halsey *et al.* (1980, p.218) have moveover argued that credentials in effect *"sabotage egalitarian reforms [because] as the working class clear one hurdle, another is set up in their path leaving the service class always one flight ahead." (p.218).* Willis (1977) showed that the scepticism about qualifications amongst *"the Lads"* constituted an awareness that no amount of certification amongst the working class will produce more jobs or more job mobility, but that it might produce social legitimation for those who seem to have succeeded through them, and preparation for job discipline for those who have not.

The discussion has so far focused on the factor of social class as a variable in the nexus education/employment, without denying the possibility that, as Dale and Pires point out (1984, p.58), other groups (identified by their trade union membership, ethnic, regional or even neighbourhood attachments) generate forms of special capital exclusive to themselves - such capital is by no means a negligible part of job-getting packages at the lower end of the occupational scale. But the failure of the technical functional theory of credentialling to promote equity is also

clearly and dramatically obvious when we consider other variables, such as gender, ethnicity and age. Williamson (1983) discusses the peripheralisation of youth in the labour market, and Finn and Frith (1981) describe the process of the creation of a reserve army of labour made up of young people which is drawn on when needed and laid off when not.

Fitzgerald (1986) summarises American research spanning three decades to show that the relationship between educational level and occupational attainment breaks down for women and members of black minorities. These groups have been consistently unable to convert their education into financial returns in the same way that is true for white men. Hill (1980) for instance found that white high school dropouts had a lower unemployment rate than black youths with some college experience. Hanushek (1981) reviewed possible sources of black-white earning differences, and concluded that, if schooling and experience levels are held constant, 90% of the earnings gap would be closed if blacks and whites were equally rewarded for their skills.

With regard to women, a U.S. Department of Labour (quoted in Fitzgerald, 1986) study showed that a woman employed full time who finished High School is no better off financially than men who have failed to complete elementary school. Betz and Fitzgerald (1986) showed that although women have historically achieved higher levels than men in traditional secondary education, they have remained over-represented in traditional, low-level and low-paying occupations. Wickham (1986) provides similar evidence for the United Kingdom.

Similar conclusions have been reported in New Zealand research, and some of these have already been discussed in the previous chapter. Hyman (1981) has shown that New Zealand women are over-represented in less highly skilled and/or lower paid jobs, even though, as Welch (1986) points out, a greater proportion of women than men leave school with a higher qualification than School Certificate. MacPherson (1977) and Spoonley (1978) have demonstrated the role of Pakeha "gatekeepers" in barring Maoris and Pacific Islanders from jobs, even when their academic qualifications were higher than those of Pakehas.

Such facts give credence to Connell and his colleagues' (1982) conclusions in their discussion of Australian schools and curricula, wherein they consider the establishment of a link between meritocratic schooling and the labour market. Building on Bourdieu and Passeron's (1977) notion of schooling as trading in cultural capital, Connell *et al.* (1982) view schooling as a set of institutional rules which classify and allocate individuals to positions in society; it symbolically redefines graduates as possessing particular qualities and skills gained through attendance at school, and this occurs independently of whether or not any actual changes in competency, skills or values have occurred. Connell *et al.* (1982, p.197) therefore assert that the school has become a *"sorter and sifter"* and credentialling *"a major form of labour market differentiation."*

2.4.3. ORIENTATION.

A third aspect of the relationship between education and work refers to deliberate curricular interventions designed to help students understand the world of work, and to prepare them for the choices and transitions they will have to make on entering it. What this means in fact is the bringing to the surface and reinforcing of the structures embedded deeply in schooling which have been described under the area of socialisation.

As has already been discussed in consideration of the rise of the "new vocationalism", this demand for "better" orientation for work is gaining more and more currency, its proponents arguing a case that schooling is not efficient enough in reproducing the values and social relations of the workplace. In the U.K., Scharff (1976) and Bazalgette (1978) have argued that schools do not mirror the world of work well enough, but instead encourage patterns of dependency and immaturity which inhibit the process of transition to adulthood and to employment. Wiener (1981) has influentially argued that the *"gentrification of the industrialist"*, through a schooling system which disdains vocational application and particularly industrial manufacture, has contributed significantly to Britain's economic decline. Benavot (1983), examining the global rise and fall of vocationalism through educational history, comments that today's teachers were educated in the

> *...prevalent ideology of egalitarian education [which] tends to view vocational programs with disdain. They are seen as narrow forms of schooling that limit future access to higher educational and occupational positions and retard the development of individual self-expression.*
>
> *(Benavot, 1983, p.67)*

Small (1973) made much the same points in trying to defend careers education in New Zealand schools. Bates (1984) considers teachers' as accepting a functional model of education, but in so doing, they compromise their liberal educational values. He accounts for this in the context of legitimation and motivation problems. Given a situation in which no amount of qualifications can secure jobs for many young people, it is more difficult to persuade pupils of the value of lessons, and consequently, classroom control and teacher survival during lessons are more often at stake. Something has to be done to make the teacher's life easier. The development of a more vocational flavour in the school curriculum in part represents a concession to pupil definitions of what is relevant and in their interests (Bates, 1984, p.206). A vocational curriculum also attracts students to stay longer at school, and reclaims school-leavers who have not found a job, thus counter-balancing falling rolls, another of teachers' anxieties representing as it does the possibility of redundancy.

One expression of this pressure on education to better orient students for work and to deliver technical competencies, skills and respect for workplace disciplines is the strenghtening of the link between education and industry. Forrest (1983) represents one such voice in British industry, urging a rapprochement with education for a sharing of insights. Similarly Wood (1986), the Director of the New Zealand Vocational Training Council, urged teachers to develop enterprise education courses in secondary schools as a viable challenge to unemployment and to make schooling more "relevant":

> *Economic studies, social studies and career education in the third and fourth forms already have the potential for the development of a module on small business, its significance and opportunities, with a sharp focus on the concept of entrepreneurship.*
>
> *(Wood, 1986, p.29)*

Another attempt to promote a better orientation of students to the world of work and to ensure a close association between education

and industry is the development of the concept of "alternance education", a model launched in Europe by the EEC in the late 1970s and early 1980s, and which encourages a mixture of education and work in a school and on a work site (see European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training, 1980 and 1983). Zgorzalek-Koutcher (1985), in an annotated bibliography based on literature available in French, notes that

> *The majority of authors are in favour of a global policy aimed at a better "alternation" of periods of study and work.*
>
> *(Zgorzalek-Koutcher, 1985)*

In New Zealand, the increasing popularity of an instrumental, alternance-type approach to education can be perceived in the demands made by parents for "life skills" and "preparation for work" programmes, demands which featured frequently in their submissions to the Curriculum Review Committee. The Committee reports:

> *Many asked for work experience to be extended to cater for academic as well as non-academic students (p.33)...parents and community groups saw a need for life skills to be taught. Some asked for education aimed at future careers.*
>
> *(Curriculum Review, 1986, p.61)*

"Alternance" and "enterprise education" are just two instances of various "new vocationalist" initiatives which have developed in education in its efforts to link schooling more closely to industry. Another example is described by Bates (1984) who notes a shift in British schools from "vocational guidance" and "careers education" to a utilitarian and pragmatic emphasis on social and lifekskills which implicitly convey a conception of reified relations between people and work.

Transition Education and the Orientation for Work.

Most of these elements and trends associated with the "new vocationalism" can be found in transition programmes which have been set up in many secondary schools where school-leavers, especially those identified to be "at risk", face unemployment. They are considered in detail as they form one major focus of this study. Transition programmes can be traced to the rise of unemployment, being specifically related to a context where young people increasingly became disadvantaged in labour markets. The declared aims for such programmes are to help young people gain and

maintain motivation for learning, the achievement of a better understanding of the world of work, the development of self-confidence, initiative and creativity, and the ability to make informed and sensible educational and vocational decisions (see European Community, 1984). With the increase of youth unemployment however, transition education established itself firmly within the school system, and from an add-on programme to give help to disadvantaged youth at the end of their compulsory scchooling, it has become a major new curricular project, whose vocational and utilitarian language has gained popularity among students and parents alike.

In New Zealand for instance, Norman and Kerslake (1985) report that in 1983, transition programmes were provided for 27,000 students, or 11% of all New Zealand's secondary school students. Eight hundred programmes were provided by 237 schools with a total of 122,000 programme hours (a mean of 150 hours per programme). A Department of Education Circular (1984/37, quoted in Corban, 1985, p.11) shows that in 1979, 22 teacher equivalents were approved by the Government to be employed for transition programmes in secondary schools. This figure was increased to 33 in 1980, to 50 in 1981, to 90 in 1983, and to 100 in 1984. The tendency to open transition courses to students other than those "at risk" is referred to by Norman and Kerslake (1985):

> *Of the students involved, 15% participated in programmes designed for students considered to be "at risk" to unemployment, 26% in "work exploration programmes" and 59% in programmes with "other" purposes.*
>
> *(Norman and Kerslake, 1985, p.1)*

The number of research projects and lengthy research reviews in a number of countries [3] are evidence of the increasing importance of transition education as a feature of the discourse in education centring around the demands of the "new vocationalism". A number of responses itemised in New Zealand's *Curriculum Review Report (1986)* indicate parents' support for the teaching of "transition skills" within the mainstream curriculum, and for orientation-for-employment type programmes including leisure education, budgeting,

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3. For instance: Australia: Sturman, 1979; Anderson, 1981; Cole, 1981; New Zealand: Ambrosius, 1983; Kerslake, 1984; Corban, 1985; the U.K.: Clarke, 1980; Wilcox and Lavercombe, 1984.

life skills, and work experience.[4] Most of these suggestions were justified by parents with reference to increasing unemployment.

Organisational Approaches to Transition Education.

Transition education has made an appearance in a number of ways in the secondary school curriculum. The school can limit itself to providing some generally applicable life-skills, which are infused in the curriculum through such subjects as Social Studies, Parentcraft and so on. Often, such programmes include a unit on coping with unemployment. The official position taken by the New Zealand Committee of Inquiry into Curriculum, Assessment and Qualifications in their document *"Learning and Achieving"* (Department of Education, 1986) seems to favour this approach when they conclude:

> *The Committee studied the report of the Advisory Committee and agrees with its view that transition education should be seen as an integral part of students' general education and dealt within traditional subject content, rather than as a special addition to the curriculum. This implies that, wherever possible, each subject studied should include elements relevant to the students' future on leaving school.*
>
> *(Dept.of Education, 1986, p.41)*

Such an approach has been criticised by the Association for Teachers of Transition at their first General Conference (1986)[5] who came out in favour of transition education both infused generally throughout the curriculum as well as in the form of a programme at the end of compulsory schooling. Such a programme could last for one school term to a whole academic year, with specialised transition teachers developing courses to suit the needs of the students participating. Great variety characterises the curriculum of these "terminal" programmes, with emphasis generally being placed on vocational orientation or living skills. Work exploration normally takes up a large proportion of the time of such programmes.

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4. See Curriculum Review Report, 1986, pages 17-21; 27-29; 33-35; 61.

5. Notes of proceedings taken by the researcher at Lincoln College, Christchurch, August 1986.

A third approach is "alternation" between periods at school and periods in industry. This is supposed to instil a sensitivity to industrial needs as well as to encourage participation and co-operation between schools and industries in the community. A fourth approach to transition identified by IFAPLAN (European Community, 1984) in bringing together reports about transition provision in the European Community, is the attempt to make schools the scene for job creation programmes through the setting-up of co-operatives, often not based in schools. Such incentives require the help of industries, and an example of such a scheme is the SPIRAL experiment in Ireland (see Janbowicz and Rowlandson, 1981), where pupils between 11 and 16 years of age operate businesses set up as limited companies, with parents and businessmen in the community providing money, and produce goods for sale. Watts (1983) describes other possibilites, while Wood (1986) suggests a model for New Zealand transition programmes based on experiments with enterprise education in the United States.

Transition education has been criticised for reinforcing the reproductive function of schooling in preparing students for a segmented labour market, as well as for non-existent jobs. Cole (1981), considering transition programmes in Australia, concluded that many of them are "reactive" responses, with teachers and the education system generally acting in isolation from other important arenas of social and economic life. Dwyer *et al.* (1984) suggest that add-on transition programmes are a reflex response to the challenge of new problems, and continue the tradition of curriculum response over the last decades which has always been to add new programmes when new initiatives are demanded of schools. Schools therefore assuage their conscience because they have done something, while the mainstream curriculum continues functioning unchanged.

In New Zealand, Shuker (1983) locates transition responses in the curriculum within various images of schooling. Thus, transition programmes inspired by a technocratic image of schooling fall in line with the state's major priority of fitting education more closely to the restructuring and development of the economy, and therefore involves the provision of future workers with sets of characteristics which will increase their probability of

employment. Other transition programmes are inspired by an existential image of schooling and therefore stress the liberatory opportunites offered by the present crisis, providing leisure education as a way of living with unemployment. Such an approach has obvious affinities with proposals made by the "rhetorical humanists" referred to earlier. A third ideological underpinning for such transition programmes relates to a reproductive image of schooling, where projects like work experience, vocational guidance and transition teaching serve to reproduce labour power, namely the skills, attitudes and knowledge necessary to being a productive worker.

Cole (1981), Kemmis *et al.* (1983) in Australia and Shuker (1983) in New Zealand, among others, all identify a fourth type of transition programme, one organised around the transformative and socially-critical image of schooling. Such a perspective falls within the agenda of the "critical educators" as described earlier. The agenda therefore changes from one of helping students "cope" with unemployment and disadvantaged positions in the labour market to one where they are helped to gain an understanding of themselves and the complexities of their culture, and to respond to the demands of social change. Messages are thus no longer organised around the imperative of teaching <u>for</u> work, but become more concerned with teaching <u>about</u> work. Within this image of schooling, transition programmes are politicised and become another potential site for transformation, because problems are located within schooling and the economic system rather than on the borders of both.

In this way, the orientation aspect of the link between education and work and the rise of what has been called *"the preparation for life curriculum"*(Wilcox *et al.*, 1984) could provide a space for the provision of *"really useful knowledge"*, especially if this is related to a critical understanding of society. So, Wilcox and Lavercombe (1984) amplify Stronach's and Weir's (1983) social theorem, adding a third caveat which links them to the concerns of educators from the Left. The theorem reads:

> *1. High unemployment leads to the expansion of vocational preparation;*

2. *Vocational preparation becomes personal development in consequence of the paradoxes it faces;*

3. *Personal development courses, in working out these paradoxes, offer the possibility of opening up a radical critique and revision of the existing secondary curriculum.*

(Wilcox and Lavercombe, 1984, p.24)

Schooling to change the workplace.

Another group of educators follow Dewey in suggesting ways schooling can orient students to the world of work. They have argued that education should develop workers ready to change the production systems they find outside school. Deforge (1981, p.36), the Council of Europe's expert on matters related to education and work, argues that *"the production systems must be changed first, and be changed by the worker himself, from within, with all the weight of the skills acquired in the course of his education."* Wirth, (1981, 1983) argues that changing the schools to meet the requirements of industrial democracy will produce better workers and higher levels of academic achievement. He also expresses a hope that business will use schools to produce workers suited for an industrial democracy. Spring (1985), reviewing Wirth's book (1983), criticises the latter's optimism and suggests that the major concern of business is with the schools' capacity to produce workers socialised for specific sectors of the labour market and with assuring an inexpensive source of labour.

2.4.4. PREPARATION.

The most explicit traditional bond between education and work is that of promoting the acquisition of specific skills and knowledge which students will be able to apply in a direct way after entering employment. This function has occasionally gained favour with various educators throughout history. Thus, at the turn of the century, Sneddon tried to promote vocational education in the United States, only to meet Dewey's firm opposition:

> *The kind of vocational education in which I am interested is not one which will "adapt" workers to the existing industrial regime; I am not sufficiently in love with the regime for that. It*

> *seems to me that the business of all who would not be educational time-servers is to resist every move in this direction, and to strive for a kind of vocational education which will first alter the existing industrial system, and ultimately to transform it.*
>
> *(Dewey, 1915)*

Dewey (1916) was later to elaborate on this point and place it more firmly in a socio-political context:

> *Any scheme for vocational education which takes its point of departure from the industrial regime that now exists is likely to assume and to perpetuate its divisions and weakesses, and thus to become an instrument in accomplishing the feudal dogma of social predestination...To split the system, and give to others, less fortunately situated, an education conceived mainly as specific trade preparation, is to treat the schools as an agency for transferring the older division of labour and leisure, culture and service, mind and body, directed and directive class, into a society nominally democratic.*
>
> *(Dewey, 1916)*

Besides the ethical and democratic problems with vocational education as pointed out by Dewey, there are also pragmatic difficulties with this model of education. There is ample evidence to show that vocational preparation should be left to employers (who do a better job of it in a shorter time) and to other post-secondary institutions (Collins, 1977; Berg, 1970). Cathcart and Esland (1985) however note that

> *We now find that the "irrelevance" of education for the lower-achieving 40% of school-leavers is used to legitimate the strengthening of selection and the allocation of this band of young people of a more "relevant" technical and vocationally-oriented curriculum.*
>
> *(Cathcart and Esland, 1985, p.179)*

Bernstein (1971) moreover suggests that moves to include technical elements and everyday realities of pupils in the curriculum are often

> *...not simply for the transmission of educational knowledge, but for the purposes of social control of forms of deviancy, and that usually occurs with the "less able" children whom the school has given up educating.*
>
> *(Bernstein, 1971, p. 58)*

Such directions are apparent in New Zealand schools through the streaming of the less academic students into transition programmes, or, recently, into the LINKS programme. This in effect means that the students involved are excluded from a general education in favour of a more strictly vocational or utilitarian one. Jamieson

and Lightfoot (1982) report that in similar circumstances in Britain, trade unions consistently opposed such vocational education in schools on the ground that it would operate to the disadvantage of working-class children, who would be bound to be pressurised into forms of work which were more appropriate to their social station than to their innate aptitudes and abilitities. Watts (1985, p.20) concludes from evidence presented by Grubb and Lazerson (1981) in the United States that the *"irony of vocational preparation programmes is that they tend to deprive their students of access to what in terms of status and incomes, must be regarded as the real vocational prizes."*

2.4.5. EDUCATION AND NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT.

Despite the fact that human capital theory has been adopted and been found wanting by many European countries, it is currently finding favour with various sectors of New Zealand's population. Human capital theory relates closely to the technical-functional approach to credentialling discussed earlier and has its roots in classical economic theory. It basically argues that if education can provide "enough" of the "right" skills, then full employment will return and so too will, presumably, social stability. Italy and Sweden (OECD, 1985) who had adopted the model report a *"dimunition of the labour market value of qualifications."* In effect that meant that both countries had developed an angry and disaffected group of young adults who possessed high grade technical, vocational or academic qualifications, and who remained unemployed. They have also formed a ready pool of recruits for terrorist groups, such as the *"Brigate Rosse"* in Italy. Thompson (1985) notes a similar declining value of school qualifications in New Zealand, although graduate unemployment has not yet surfaced as a serious problem.

Despite overseas evidence, official discourse in New Zealand still revolves around the area of regarding education as an investment in the country's economic future. Gordon (1984) has shown that the notion that longer periods of schooling is of necessary benefit runs through the history of state schooling in New Zealand. Diorio (1987) has also written about this instrumentalist concern in the official discourse of New Zealand education. Khan (1987) relates

this attitude to more affluent times; he quotes *The Thomas Report* (Department of Education, 1943) and says:

> *At the time of the economic boom in the 1950s and 1960s, New Zealand experienced a considerable expansion of educational services for the purpose of preparing adolescents "for an active place in society, as a worker, neighbour, homemaker and citizen." The liberal perception was that a "free and universal school system" attuned to the needs of technological change in the economy, would not only lead to a more egalitarian society but that a more prosperous society would inevitably result from the greater investment in education.*
>
> *(Khan, 1987, p.32)*

Khan (1987) goes on to suggest that by the 1980s, the focus was not so much on educational "investment" but instead on educational "cut-backs". While this is in some ways true, there have also been various calls to make education more responsive to technological needs with the hope of revitalising the economy. As suggested in the earlier sections of this chapter, the focus has been the reformulation of the goals and philosophy of education to respond to business needs. In this way, education is still seen to be a form of investment.

One of the latest expressions of this belief can be found in a Discussion Paper on *"Education and the Economy"* by the New Zealand Vocational Training Council (1986). Here the educational performance of New Zealand students is compared with their American, Japanese and German counterparts, and the conclusion drawn is that the New Zealand figures *"should cause us great concern" (p.19)* It shows that 33% of New Zealand school leavers enter the labour force without a recognised qualification, and that 33.5% of seventeen year olds are still attending school compared to 88.1% in Japan.

However, the Council fails to show that the actual qualifications of school leavers, together with increasing levels examination passes in diverse subjects, are at their highest level in the history of New Zealand's state schooling. For example, in 1982, 53% of males and 58% of females left secondary schools with School Certificate in three subjects or more, compared to 33% and 34% respectively in 1963 (Education Statistics of New Zealand, 1971 and 1983). The rise of career education and transition courses in the 1970s has meant a higher level of preparation for work. Also,

acknowledging difficulties of reconciling variables in comparing different countries, the International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement (IEA) revealed that New Zealand fourteen year old students achieved a higher mean in reading than students in any of the other fifteen countries studied, though they did less well than those in Japan or Scotland in Mathematics, but were on a par with England and the United States (quoted in McQueen, 1986).

Despite such facts, further claims and accusations have been made by Triffin (1986) among others, who points the way towards education's investment in the new technologies with *"higher education...more closely aligned with the needs of the marketplace"* and more responsive to *"the changing needs in the economic climate."* As it is, Triffin felt, New Zealand was, in effect, *"teaching its children for life on the dole"* rather than providing them with information-age skills which were in grave, short supply (and which would, presumably, revive the New Zealand economy). McKenzie (1984) assumes the education and work relationship as taken-for-granted, and argues that

> *New Zealand's future as a trading nation in 1984 and beyond will stand or fall not solely upon the calibre of its commercial and professional leadership, but also upon the intelligence, vitality and adaptability of its workforce in general.*
> *(McKenzie, 1984, p.2)*

Catherwood (1985) points out that the modern labour force has a rapidly declining need for unskilled work, and related this to the fact that the unskilled bear a disproportionate share of unemployment. He also concludes that one effect of the new technology is the reduction of the level of skill required in the teenage workforce (*page 46*), and yet he contradicts himself by arguing that unemployed school leavers are deficient in skills they will need in "life".

Hicks (1984) has shown that in 1980, 53% of males and 55% of females seeking work had no secondary education qualifications, and that only 12.4% of the unemployed had University Entrance or better. But, to make the conceptual leap and conclude, as many have done, that a more highly skilled student population will lead to employment is illogical, for while the assertion might apply at

the individual level, total employment will only increase once there is an aggregate increase in job vacancies. In a British context and using similar arguments, Finn and Frith (1981) point out:

> *Unemployment would not be cured - though it might be marginally reduced - by achieving a greater correspondence between what employers want and what young people possess...[the] effect would not be to increase the number of jobs available, but rather to change the way in which the jobs that exist are distributed: [such] policies simply raise the level of competition for each job.*
>
> *(Finn and Frith, 1981, p.65)*

Thus, although evidence for the widespread and long-standing belief that an increasing technological society requires a skilled populace, research in the last two decades has begun to clearly indicate that this belief is questionable (Braverman, 1974; Littler, 1982). Rather, what has been shown is that the increasing technocratisation of society has resulted in increased skill requirements for some and a decrease in skill for others (Hill, 1981; Gordon *et al.*, 1982). Increased application of technology has in many cases reduced complex mental or physical skills to routine task requirements capable of being performed by most individuals without extensive technical training. This seems to be as true in the so-called white-collar professions as it is in more typically blue-collar occupations (Johnson, 1982). Indeed, technology <u>has</u> increased the skill requirements for <u>some</u>, particularly those who plan the techniques of production.

Additionally, Levin and Rumberger (1983) point out that while some "high-tech" jobs (such as those of systems analysts, computer programmers, data-processing machine mechanics, and others) are projected to grow between 74 and 148% by 1990, their absolute numbers are small, while increases in unskilled categories as janitors, nurse-aids, fast-food workers and so forth will grow at unprecedented rates. They conclude that more and more workers will be required by the nature of the economy to take jobs which do not make use of their education and skills.

Within this context, calls for the skilling of school-leavers for the economic revival of New Zealand are, in many ways, misguided. In a British context, Gleeson (1983) unpacks the meaning behind the discourse which urges skilling:

> *The push towards training reform may have little to do with equipping labour with specific technical skills to make it more employable, but perhaps more to do with establishing "substitu criteria" (vocational preparation, work experience, further education and so forth) for controlling the aspirations of disaffected young people.*
>
> *(Gleeson, 1983, p.2)*

Another way education is seen to contribute to the economic development of a country is through manpower planning. The 1986 issue of the *Bulletin of the International Bureau of Education* reviewed policies of education and employment over the past ten years, and noted that manpower planning has found itself in great difficulties. Some of the factors cited are:

* the greater frequency and speed of change in the technology/employment area than in the education/training area.

* the assumption that persons trained in a given occupation will seek that employment.

* the unreasonable assumption of zero labour substitution.

* the narrow focus on wage employment in the formal sector to the exclusion of all other forms of economic activity.

* the focus on growth to the exclusion of equity and social demand.

* the discrepancies between the actual rates of economic growth and the assumed ones upon which the manpower forecasts are based.

* the neglect of occupational mobility.

* the assumption that particular levels of economic development are reached through specific patterns of educational/occupational structures.

To these we can add New Zealand's vulnerability to changes in the international market (such as Britain's entry into the Common Market) which play havoc with plans of vocational training initiated in response to projected manpower needs.

2.5. DISCUSSION AND DIRECTIONS.

In presenting this review of some of the major research results and ideas connecting education to employment, it has been shown that the nexus is formulated within an educational discourse which answers either to the needs of capitalism (the "new vocationalism")

or the needs of democracy (the "critical educators"). An analysis of the literature has strongly suggested that the former's attempts to mobilise education for economic aims are philosophically untenable (because they militate against demands of social equity and a true education unfettered by a utilitarianism which teaches for the established order). They have moreover failed to produce the returns envisaged.

Arguments have thus been presented against a human capital investment model which says that the quality and supply of labour skill determines economic activity and economic growth, and against a "manpower planning" model which ties education too closely to the demands of the economy. The only alternative perspective possible therefore seems to be a labour market segmentation model which, in arguing that it is the quality and structure of economic activity and growth that determines the supply of skills, implies that education can do little until the constraints of the "current" crisis, the new technology and the internal division of labour are removed. Such a view is put forward by Bowles (1976), for instance, when he points out that:

> *Educational reform movements have failed because they sought to eliminate inequalities without challenging the basic institution of capitalism. As long as jobs are defined in that some have power over many and others have power over none - as long as the social division of labour persists - educational inequalities will be built into society.*
>
> *(Bowles, 1976, p.39)*

These arguments, however, tend to leave the education system, the individual person and social groups impotent and alienated from the economy and society. Nash (1981b) for instance finds himself in this dilemma when he shows that *"schools do not create unemployment and they cannot create jobs" (p.12)* and follows that with the seemingly inevitable statement:

> *The probability is that there is nothing that the school can do...At the very most, they can provide unemployed young people with structured ways of using their time.*
>
> *(Nash, 1981b, p.12)*

Such a position is inadequate in the face of student and parent instrumentalism towards education, which is especially strong among those from working-class backgrounds (see Rubin, 1976 and Brantlinger, 1985, for a discussion) and which can only increase with the rise and rise of unemployment. In this context Bates (1984) notes:

> *It is this situation which leads to the apparent paradox of increased vocational preparation in the school curriculum at a time of disappearing jobs; the solution envisages the anxieties which the job market produces and satisfies its customers that everything possible is being done for them. Teachers are then caught in a double bind. By providing job preparation and information, they risk raising expectations which cannot be fulfilled. By not doing so, they risk the accusation from pupils and parents they are assuming and imposing on pupils a future of unemployment. Many respond by providing a judicious mixture of job information and preparation for unemployment, the latter under the guise of "education for leisure" or "coping skills".*
> *(Bates, 1984, pp.206-207)*

This literature review has shown that less deterministic accounts of education which allow it "relative autonomy" have offered a possible way out of the impasse which both proponents and opponents of the "new vocationalism" face. Critical educators set out to bring the "world" into the school not to help students adapt and "cope better" but to help them achieve an intellectual and practical understanding of economic, political and social issues. This empowers youth to address the critical social questions of their times. A crucial agenda in this context would therefore be the creation of a curriculum of *"really useful knowledge"*, the *"knowledge worth knowing" (Hirst, 1970).*

The research review presented in this chapter has also shown that most of the studies which have addressed the relationship between education and work have concentrated on the messages given by the structures of schooling. With a few exceptions, such as the research carried out by Wilcox *et al.* (1985) in the U.K., there has been little attempt to document the covert curriculum in the preparation and orientation of students for the world of work and non-work. Moreover, what attempts have been made have not integrated a description of the overt messages with that of the covert ones, and have therefore missed a central feature of communication where *"the medium is the message" (MacLuhan, 1967).* The exercise of focusing on both the overt and the covert curriculum leads to important insights into the ways an institution like schooling functions in a time of crisis. In the context of the literature review above, questions regarding messages about work lead to a consideration of the extent to which schooling is responding to the needs of the capitalist workplace and/or to the

values and expectations associated with the democratic rights of citizens.

"Schooling for work" in the context of New Zealand research.

The data reported in the second part of this study represents an attempt to discover and document the threads which are being woven in the complex web relating education to work in New Zealand. It is important to locate this study in the context of educational research carried out in the country - in this way, it becomes possible to build on other contributions and highlight new insights and directions.

Jones (1986) identifies two characterstics in New Zealand educational research. First, it has not posed the central political-cultural problematic which begins with systems of the state, the economy and the family, and the structures of language, gender, race and class. Codd *et al.'s* (1985) collection of readings represents an important break from the past in that it asks what effects, intended and unintended, are produced by the educational system in relation to other systems. Second, as Arnot and Whitty (1982) point out in a British context, the educational research carried out so far within the "new" sociology perspective in New Zealand can be identified by its "theoreticism". Ramsay *et al.'s* (1983) and Jones' (1986) work represent the first ethnographic research accounts to look at the relationship between the social order and the processes of schooling. This is not to say that work at the abstract, theoretical level is not important; indeed, this study is informed by such theoretical work. There is agreement here with Bennett's (1980) defence of theory - he argues that the value of experience: *"will depend not on the experience of the subject but on the struggles around the way that experience is interpreted and defined" (Bennett, 1980, p.126).* "Theoreticism" however risks losing the connection between the macro-issues and the everyday lives of people. Such a lack of connectedness with material realities places theoretical accounts, on their own, outside the reach of a number of audiences, not least among them being policy-makers, teachers and students in the educational field.

The same two factors which characterise educational research can be noted in the area considered in this study. Freeman-Moir (1984) has shown that the relationship between work and education in New Zealand remains largely unstudied. He presents a useful scheme to consider the whole issue, and which places education in the context of the wider structure, but points out to the need for empirical research to link the macro-dimensions to the reality of people's everyday lives. To date, the focus has tended to be on an analysis of post-school transition programmes, with substantial contributions by Teague (1985) Gordon (1985), and Korndorffer (1985a; 1985b; 1986; 1987). Research carried out to study the relationship between education and work within secondary schooling has tended to concentrate on transition programmes which reach a minority of students in schools and therefore has few contributions to make to an analysis of mainstream schooling. Studies of the transition-to-work process have moreover generally either used survey and quantitative techniques and are largely a-theoretical (see Ambrosius, 1983; Corban, 1985; Norman and Kerslake, 1985), or dealt with the issues at the level of theoretical abstraction (Nash, 1983, 1984; Khan, 1986). While such studies have made important contributions, they have both, and for different reasons, failed to describe the intricate relationship between macro-economic and social forces on the one hand and the realities of students' everyday lives on the other. Abigail's (1983) influential study, while presenting a wealth of quantitative and qualitative data on aspects of school life which bear on the vocational choice and aspirations of young women, does not pose the central problematic addressed in neo-Marxist work, namely the structuring force of the economy.

A notable exception is Jones' (1986) work in exploring in concrete detail some of the ideological and pedagogical processes through which schooling contributes to social reproduction. She focuses on the commonsense knowledge and classroom practices of two groups of fifth form adolescent girls in an inner-city all-girls Grammar school in New Zealand. Her ethnographic data provides insights into the thoughts and everyday school experiences of some middle class European and working class Pacific Island girls as they seriously attempt to "get school knowledge" and, thus, the credentials which they believe the school offers the motivated and

able. Her study also shows how teachers unwittingly recruit the active participation of students from "race" and class groups in pedagogical interactions which often preclude the working class Pacific Island girls from acquiring the school credentials they seek. This process, and that of the school's "provision" of the middle class Pakeha girls' academic achievement, is then "misrecognised" by the students as the natural and fair outcome of differential talent and motivation.

Jones tends to focus on proving the role of the school she studied in reproducing the social order, calling up her ethnographic data infrequently and selectively. In so doing, as she herself admits, (*ibid.* p.519) she lost some of the complexities and richness of the working class girls' lives. This is a disappointing lacuna if one accepts the urgent need, pointed out in the previous chapter, of providing an account of class formation in New Zealand. According to Hogan (1982), Thompson's (1968) explanation of class formation in England provides many of the essential categories necessary for a general theory of class formation that could be applied to other national and societal contexts. Such categories would have to include first, an account of proletarianisation, and secondly a theory of class culture or cultural production, which includes the notion of class experience. While Jones' (1986) work goes some way to fulfil the second requirement, the fact that she subordinates her data too strictly to a theoretical framework constrains access (at least in the work she has made available up to now) to rich data on the class experience of her Pacific Island students. An added problem is the limited range of her focus on ten female students, of whom five were from the working class, and of these all were Pacific Islanders. As she herself says:

> *The 5 Mason girls at Girls' Grammar are a group which - due to their parents being immigrants, traditionally-oriented and living within a racially-mixed urban setting - may be increasingly less representative of the majority of Pacific Islanders in New Zealand...In short, the variety of processes through which existing "race" and class relations in New Zealand are maintained and modified via education has yet to be explored in education research.*
>
> *(Jones, 1986, p.511)*

The ethnography presented in the present study attempts to illustrate other social relations, particularly as they were found

to apply to groups of students in three secondary schools in a provincial city of New Zealand. It differs from the one provided by Jones (1986) in that it looks beyond the negotiation of meanings as represented by middle class as against Pacific Island students. Rather, it looks at large groups of students who, in participating in different dominant and subordinate positions in society due to their class, gender and ethnicity, negotiate meanings and "make" decisions regarding their actual or projeted transition from school to work or non-work. Moreover, this study shows that in preparing them for work, teachers and schools, consciously and unconsciously, participate in the larger structures to reproduce attitudes and forms of knowledge appropriate for the sort of work provided (or not provided) by capitalist New Zealand.

In investigating the pictures of work which teachers present and the preparation for work and non-work schooling provides, this research proposes to fill a central gap in New Zealand research, a gap which is at the heart of the reproduction in students of the relations to capitalist production and consumption. Here, as has been described in this and the previous chapter, exist competing discourses which attempt to define the very aims and purposes of education, and an account is given showing the various ways in which the "new vocationalism" has infiltrated into the curriculum and structures of New Zealand schooling. Moreover, this ethnographic study attempts to present the processes involved in cultural production and reproduction which are of a complex cognitive and cultural kind. According to Hogan (1982), accounts purporting to explain such processes require three kinds of supporting theories: an account first of the process through which students construct a theory of society, the school, and the relationship between the two. Secondly they require an account of the process through which they evaluate the character of the pedagogical and social exchanges offered by the school and society. Finally, they require an explanation of the acquisition of educational and social aspirations, and how, for groups of students characterised by their gender, ethnicity and class, the tension between their understanding of the world and their aspirations results in the gradual transformation of their aspirations into lowered expectations - and lower educational achievement.

In presenting school-to-work messages, this research contributes to the development of such theories, and provides an account of the cultural forms of the school in New Zealand, building on contributions already made by Jones (1986). Such accounts are indispensable to the portrayal of young people who, in the context of the family, the school and the wider social structure, act as theory builders and relatively autonomous - certainly active - participants in their own development, and for many, their entrapment. The next chapter gives an account of the methodological strategies utilised to record the messages schools give students about the world of work.

CHAPTER 3.

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY.

This chapter first considers general aspects of methodology in educational research. The merits of qualitative data collecting techniques over ones which are purely quantitative are discussed. This leads to a description of the grounded theory approach to data collection and theory construction. Finally, the framework of the grounded theory methodology is examined with reference to the research in question. The mechanics of collection and organisation of data, together with problems encountered, decisions taken, and assumptions brought to the field are also described.

3.1. PRELIMINARY CONSIDERATIONS ON EDUCATIONAL RESEARCH.

Chapters 1 and 2 above have shown that the perspective within which this study was conceived and carried out was informed by the "new" sociology of education and a neo-Marxist, culturalist view of schooling. This perspective has a declared sympathy for qualitative strategies in research which do justice to the intricate relationships between macro-economic and social forces and the realities of people's everyday lives. This, together with Trow's well-known advice that *"...the research problem under investigation properly dictates the method of investigation," (Trow,1957, p.3),* has influenced the researcher to adopt an ethnographic methodology.

The Strengths and Weaknesses of Qualtitative Research Methodology.

Educational researchers have become increasingly attracted by a qualitative methodolody in collecting data. Rist (1984) for instance notes that in the past decade there has been a dissolution of the natural science model of inquiry as the pre-eminent model in policy studies related to education. What in the past has often been acknowledged as *"the only available route to cumulative progress" (Campbell and Stanley, 1963),* namely the "scientific"

approach represented by research strategies which collected and analysed quantitative data, has been found wanting in a number of important areas. Quantitative approaches have therefore not provided data which addressed many of the most pressing issues; nor have they respected the fluidity and change in social environments or examined processes as against outcomes (Rist, 1984).

Shipman (1984), in a paper on ethnography and public policy, describes policy-makers as *"hungry for evidence"* and he regards ethnographic work as having a clear potential role by virtue of the inadequacies of previous work. He says:

> *Much of the justification for ethnographic approaches to research comes from the failures of the positivists to deliver evidence on which policy-makers, including teachers in their classrooms, could depend.*
>
> *(Shipman, 1984, p.12)*

There has been a growing realisation that statistical realities do not necessarily coincide with cultural realities. As a research strategy, quantitative methodologies on their own have failed to be sufficiently flexible and open-ended to accomodate the ever-present serendipitous aspect of human behaviour, and could therefore reflect only on that which stood long enough to be measured in conventional ways. The irony of this is that these static aspects of the environment are often the least interesting, the least critical, and the least amenable to change (Bronfenbrenner, 1979).

On the other hand, by an immersion in a social situation, a researcher using qualitative methodology has a unique opportunity to gain a first-hand understanding of social "realities", involved as he/she is in describing and analysing values, behaviours, settings and interactions of participants. Such a description and analysis could moreover trace these values, behaviours and interactions over a period of time. Asking the question, *"What is going on here?"* is at once disarmingly simple and incredibly complex. In trying to answer this question by immersion in the field, ethnography leaves the participant observer most open to the unanticipated discovery of triangulating chance emergence of data (Webb *et al.*, 1966). In contrast, the rigidity of survey and experimental designs unaided by a strong qualitative component explicitly seek to allow maximum researcher control, while leaving

subjects more free to dissimulate as they are removed from their everyday constraints (Becker, 1970).

Qualitative methodology however has its weaknesses as well as its strengths. Hargreaves (1981) for instance criticises the sociology of education for producing too much a-theoretical empirical work, often ethnographic, which is perhaps grafted onto fashionable theoretical perspectives but which does not represent a form of rigorous testing of theory by which the discipline might be developed. Delamont (1981) suggests that ethnography has been blinkered and parochial, failing to draw on comparative studies of different cultures and on studies of different substantive areas. In his opinion it has also failed to be sufficiently analytical and theoretical. Woods (1984) distinguishes two phases in the development of ethnographic work, the first of which was largely descriptive, with a priority on providing empirically grounded and valid accounts of the perspectives of actors in the settings studied. The second, and more promising phase according to Woods, generates projects which

> *...use existing ethnographic studies as a launching pad, [are] theoretically conscious in the early stages, and engage in theoretical sampling, hypothesis formation and testing.*
>
> *(Woods, 1984, p.14)*

Pollard (1984) moreover refers to the three classic areas of reliability, validity and generalisability. The individualistic nature of ethnographic research has always made the question of reliability an awkward one, and the question of generalisability is challenging given a case-study base, where the ethnography is idiosyncratic to the time of investigation, and its findings may relate only to the group under investigation (Ramsay, 1978).

Towards a Refinement of Qualitative Methodology.

Chelimsky (1983) argues that qualitative research can be improved and its effect on policy-making enhanced if adequate attention is given to what he calls *"technical adequacy"*. This includes a number of factors, the most important of which would be the absence of major conceptual errors, the correct application of technical procedures, and the drawing of conclusions and inferences based on actual data.

The importance of these factors in ensuring the *"technical adequacy"* of qualitative research becomes evident in a consideration of one of the best-known ethnographies, that of Willis (1977) and of criticisms that have been levelled at it during the decade following its publication. Thus, by focusing on Willis' work and criticisms of it as made *inter alia*, by Fine (1979), Atkinson (1979), Gordon West (1984) and Walker, (1986), the reseacher attempted to avoid the same pitfalls these authors highlighted and come closer to a rigorous application of methodology as set out in standard textbooks on ethnography (such as Glaser and Strauss, 1967; Becker, 1970; Bogdan and Taylor, 1975). Attention is therefore given in this research to:

i. Describing entry into the field;

ii. Describing the researcher's expectations and presuppositions at the time;

iii. Analysing the biasing commitments which were involved;

iv. Describing the surprises that were encountered;

v. Enhancing external validity of the research by utilising comparative sampling;

vi. Avoiding Willis' sole focus on class, in considering the experience of being female, or a member of an ethnic minority, or both;

vii. Reconciling the micro-/macro-, liberty/determinism, functional requisite/ action dilemma which remains ambiguously unstated in Willis. In this context, Giddens' (1976) theory of structuration applies. A distinction is therefore made between the two modes of consciousness, i.e. practical and discursive consciousness, with the ability to move from one mode to the other. This highlights the transformative and emancipatory possibilities of schooling (Giroux, 1983).

viii. Generating categories from data. In Willis' case, it is never very clear whether his categories of *"penetrations"*, *"limitations"*, *"confirmations"*, and *"dislocations"*, are derived from *a priori* deductive structuralist theorising about production and reproduction of ideology, or *a posteriori* inductive grounded theory a` la Glaser and Strauss (1967). Atkinson (1979) in fact notes that without a closer articulation of the ethnography and the analysis, *Learning to Labour* remains open to the charge of having *"spot-welded"* a

Marxist analysis together with its descriptive material. Ramsay (1983) makes similar comments with reference to Anyon's (1981) ethnographic work, arguing that

> *...social life is not as predictable as Anyon presents it, and we conjecture about the possibility of an operative mirror effect. Perhaps her research tells us as much about the researcher's predispositions as about the phenomenon studied.*
>
> *(Ramsay, 1983, p.296)*

ix. Displaying the process of analysis as explicitly as possible, so that the conceptualisation can be more open to evaluation and possible revision.

Convergent Methodology.

Another way of improving qualitative methodology is by a judicious use of strategies from the quantitative field. In the past there has been a rigid dichotomy set up between the two approaches to data-collection. However, the fact that *"statistical data can often lead to mathematically correct but socially ludicrous conclusions,"* (Sieber, 1973) does not necessarily mean that surveys and quantitative data cannot exist together with qualitative data in a relationship where there is a mutual contribution. This is sometimes desirable, or even necessary, for the verification of field interpretation, (Webb *et al.*, 1966), for the casting of new light on field observations and for the demonstration of the generalisability of a single observation. Thus, when an observation plays an important role in the theoretical structure of fieldwork, survey data becomes essential for buttressing the argument. Trow (1957) in fact retorted quite sharply when Becker and Geer (1957) asserted the superiority of qualitative strategies, such as participant observation, over quantitative ones:

> *Let us be done with the arguments of "participant observation" versus interviewing - as we have largely dispensed with the arguments for psychology versus sociology - and get on with the business of attacking our problems with the widest array of conceptual and methodological tools that we possess and they demand. This does not preclude discussion and debate regarding the relative usefulness of different methods for the study of specific problems or types of problems.*
>
> *(Trow, 1957, p.35)*

Not only can qualitative data provide an important *"validity check"* on statistical data (Rist, 1984), but research in itself

will advance more rapidly through increased use of multiple research designs and multiple lines of evidence than through any forseeable technical improvements in design and analysis (Lipsey *et al.*, 1984). Convergence or agreement between methods enhances the belief that the results are valid and not a methodological artifact (Bouchard, 1976).

Given these considerations, the researcher came to the conclusion that for the scope of this particular study, use of qualitative research was appropriate to the articulation of the multiple ways in which people understand the world and react to it. It was considered that an examination in their context of the participants' behaviours and beliefs was essential to arrive at an adequate understanding of the construction of meanings relating education to the world of work and non-work and to the diversity of ways in which young people come into adulthood. Indeed, the research questions could not be answered adequately by any other technique.

However, quantitative data-collecting methodology was also used, though this was limited to statistical information made available by different governmental departments or other organisations which could throw further light on the qualitative data collected.

Convergent methodology has, however, some fundamental philosophical questions to resolve. In tracing the transition from conflict to detente to co-operation between qualitative and quantitative inquiry, Smith and Heshusius (1986) have rightly pointed out that compatibility is often based on a confusion over two different definitions of method. Thus, researchers often mirror criteria like "validity", seemingly forgetting that there are very different and contradictory assumptions about the nature of knowledge being made in the two approaches.

> *The phrases "research has shown..." and "the results of researach indicate..." are subject to different interpretations, given different paradigms. For quantitative inquiry, these phrases are claims to an accurate reflection of reality or the claim of certitude that one has discovered some bit of the social or educational world as it really is. For qualitative inquiry, these phrases announce an interpretation that, to the extent that it finds agreement, becomes reality for those people as it is*

> *at any given time and place. The former expresses certitude; the latter presents a description constrained by values and interests to be compared with other descriptions constrained by other values and interests.*
>
> *(Smith and Heshusius, 1986, p.10)*

Qualitative research therefore can at best claim to provide people involved in similar circumstances with material which may be of some use to them in sharpening their own perceptions and procedures, rather than to produce some set of "universal truths". Qualitative techniques such as observation and informal interviewing of different participants in the field are moreover admirably suited to the achievement of competitive definitions of situations and meanings.

It is useful here to consider Bernstein's (1976) synthesis of twentieth century philosophical forces dialectically at work in the shaping and challenging of our views of what constitutes social science, and his injunction that good social and political theory must at one and the same time be empirical (grounded in data), interpretive (dealing with human intersubjective and subjective meaning) and normative-critical (bringing operative ideologies to conscious awareness and make action-value decisions). Soltis (1984) applies this analysis to empirical, interpretive and normative inquiry in the educational arena, calling for

> *...a comprehensive concept of educational research requiring not just a pluralisitc tolerance of different research philosophies, but mutual support, understanding, conversation, and rational critique amongst educational researchers and across traditions.*
>
> *(Soltis, 1985, p.5)*

In this particular study, the researcher follows the concerns of critical theorists like Habermas (1971) and neo-Marxists like Marcuse (1964) who see pure positivism as an ideology focusing our inquiries and lives on the technical, and on finding effective means to get us to educational ends that we take for granted - ends that preserve the *status quo* and the power of the dominant class without regard for what kind of social and human life our current forms of schooling produce and reproduce.

In sharing Habermas' and Marcuse's rejection of positivism the researcher seeks to demystify educational institutions and practices. Following Giroux (1981) and others within the tradition

of the Frankfurt school, the researcher rejects the myth of value-free research into educational phenomena, and accordingly stresses the need for an inquiry that takes into account the historical-ideological moment we live in and the influence it has on us. The link with interpretative inquiry in this particular research is the interest in human intersubjective meaning so that an understanding can be reached as to how education initiates students into a particular understanding of work.

3.2. GROUNDED THEORY METHODOLOGY.

The researcher considered that Glaser and Strauss' (1965) grounded theory methodology, as developed in their study on death and dying, would fulfil the requirements described above in that it:

i. Develops theory from data, and in particular, qualitative data;
ii. Enhances validity and generalisability through the procedure of "constant comparative anlysis";
iii. Provides a vehicle not only for systemising and co- ordinating data collection, but also for the analysis of that data;
iv. Enhances the possibility of use of the research in educational policy-making;
v. Generates possibilities of educative interaction with staff members and other key people in the running of the school.

In describing the grounded theory strategy, an outline of step by step procedures for analytic generation of theory is presented. Comments relevant to this particular research will be developed in greater detail in subsequent sections of this chapter.

STEP 1:

Starting with a *"sensitising concept"* (Blumer, 1969) or topic area, the researcher attempts a rough first definition of the phenomenal form to be explained, ideally drawing upon subjects' understanding of key issues or problems in their worlds. Glaser and Strauss (1967) refer to this within the concept of *"theoretical sampling"*, the process of data collection for generating theory, whereby the analyst jointly collects, codes and analyses the data and decides what data to collect next and where to find them, in order to

develop the theory as it emerges. Theoretical sampling therefore forces the researcher to consider which groups to observe, when to observe them, when to stop observing them and what data to gather.

In order to initiate theoretical sampling, the researcher can collect preliminary data, which provides a foothold from which he can proceed to gather further data - by means of questionnaire, interview, observation and document collection - on the problem or issue investigated. Such preliminary data in the present research consisted of a literature review as covered in Chapter 2, meetings with guidance counsellors in three secondary schools, with other guidance counsellors from schools and the Department of Labour at the local monthly gathering of the New Zealand Guidance and Counselling Association, and through interviews and correspondence with two Transition Inspectors, one based in Hamilton and the other in Auckland. Of theoretical importance were various debriefing sessions held with the researcher's supervisors to outline clearly the predispositions with which the researcher was entering the field. Theoretical sampling was also carried out in the initial phase of the fieldwork through a number of unstructured interviews with students and teachers from the three schools.

STEP 2:

The data collected as a result of the initial *"theoretical sampling"* is grouped in categories, if necessary redefining terms, and specifying indicators. Then, as each category of data begins to emerge, and other data begin to fit that category, properties or sub-themes within that category may be discerned. In turn, hunches or propositions can also be formulated. As with all empirical claims, such propositions must be explicity and logically non-tautologous, that is open to empirical refutation. This analysis of data, which Glaser and Strauss (1967) call *"constant comparative analysis"*, provides the researcher with "leads" for further data collection. Glaser (1978) elaborated on this strategy, noting that although this constant comparative method can be talked about in terms of a series of steps, what really goes on is circulatory: that is, the analysis keeps doubling back to more data collection and coding until *"theoretical saturation"* is reached.

STEP 3:

The investigator then returns to the field, collecting more data by deliberately seeking out negating evidence in order to put his or her propositions to the toughest test. This forces modification of the definitions of the forms or their conditions, or reformulations of the forms or their conditions, or reformulations of the hypothesis to account for all cases encountered. This constant comparison of data within and between categories enables categories not only to be verified, but they also become subject to a delimitation process whereby some may be modified or refined, while others may perhaps be merged with more powerful categories. Battersby (1981) - the first to apply grounded theory to educational research in New Zealand - describes how in the process of studying the socialisation of first year teachers, he had to modify, add and re-group categories to fit the data, so that while an initial analysis of data revealed sixteen categories, a second and closer analysis showed that some of these could be sub-divided, and other new categories were discerned which gave a new and final total of twenty nine categories.

This procedure of constant comparison is repeated conscientiously, seeking each new piece of data until no further modification occurs, nor seems likely. Osborne *et al.* (1980) who, together with Ramsay *et al.* (1983), Fava (1984) and Teague (1985) followed Battersby's (1981) pioneering efforts in applying grounded theory to educational research in New Zealand, note that in their case, they found that

> *...relatively quickly the need to generate new categories was diminished and gradually comments, and associated observations...tended to support views already expressed or perceived rather than to add a fresh perspective.*
>
> *(Osborne et al., 1980, p.2)*

Qualitative research never really reaches a final and complete closure, but the internal logic and consistency of the analysis and its ability to account for and explain all the data will decide how good an interpretation is (Dobbert, 1982). Glaser and Strauss refer to this as *"theoretical saturation"*, which is dependent on the researcher's intuition as well as judgement:

> *Saturation means that no additional data are being found whereby the (researcher) can develop properties of a category. As he sees similar*

> *instances over and over again, the researcher becomes empirically confident that a category is saturated. He goes out of his way to look for groups that stretch diversity of data as far as possible, just to make certain that saturation is based on the widest possible range of data on a category...When one category is saturated, nothing remains but to go on to new groups for data on other categories, and attempt to saturate these new categories also.*
>
> *(Glaser and Strauss, 1967, p.62)*

STEP 4:

At the point of saturation, the investigator may choose to write up a relatively limited report on one or a few forms, or may research further the interrelationship of different forms. The write-up concludes a movement from substantive to formal theory (Glaser and Strauss, 1967), as the researcher leaves *"substantive questions"* - or those focused on the particular setting or subjects under study - to tackle *"formal theoretical"* ones - or those which build up a theory that may have generalisability beyond the study. The addressing of the latter questions leads to grounded formal theory, which is based on both the data of diverse systematic research, and the substantive theories generated from such data. With the focus on generating formal theory, a comparative analysis is made among different kinds of substantive cases and their theories, which fall within the formal area, without relating the resulting theory back to any one particular area (Glaser, 1978).

Glaser and Strauss recommend that in writing grounded theory, data should be provided as evidence for conclusions, thus illustrating how the researcher obtained the theory from data. The researcher can achieve this in various ways. He can

> *...quote directly from interviews or conversations...He can include dramatic segments of his on-the-spot field notes. He can quote telling phrases dropped by informants. He can summarise events or persons by constructing readable case studies. He can try his hand at describing events; and often he will give at least background descriptions of places and spaces. Sometimes he will even offer accounts of personal experience to show how events impinged upon himself. Sometimes he will enroll a narrative.*
>
> *(Glaser and Strauss, 1967, p.229)*

To summarise, a series of strategies has been presented to develop links between theory and research. The researcher first reads through the data that is gathered and gives commonsense impressions in theoretical language. Categories are thus developed, and they are described with data. It is when the data is systematically analysed and constantly compared that a theory results; the theory actually emerges during the very process of doing research. Such an approach emphasises theory generation rather than theory testing, with theories being developed inductively from data as the main task of the researcher.

3.3. CASE STUDY TECHNIQUES USED IN THE RESEARCH.

The nature of the research - with its focus on Social Studies units on "Work", Careers and Transition programmes, visits to work exploration sites, and other instances of formal and informal interaction between and among students and teachers - necessitated a multi-case, multi-site approach to data collection. Nisbet and Watt (1978) point out that case studies refer to an umbrella term for an in-depth and systematic investigation of a specific instance, such as an event, group or institution, using a variety of research methods to gather data. For the sake of comparative sampling the researcher examined three schools, here called All Boys' College, All Girls' High and Co-Ed High School. They are described in detail in the following chapter. The rationale for using this type of approach to data collection was based on the assumption that the data yielded was likely to provide a broad and varied enough base from which to develop theory.

The case study data collection techniques described in this section were in the main inspired by the sequence utilised so successfully in the Learning in Science Projects (LISP) by Osborne *et al.* (1980-1985). The authors set out to investigate problems and difficulties associated with the teaching and learning of science among children between 8 and 10, 11 and 14 years of age, to explore identified problems in depth, and to examine possible solutions to these problems. Their focal concern was the transmission and reception of messages, in this case, messages carrying scientific concepts which meant one thing to the teacher, but which in fact

meant other things to the students. These Projects[1] also highlighted various other issues in science education, and are admirable in their commitment to interview and observation techniques, methods which were developed and presented in a series of Working Papers and which proved invaluable as guidelines to the researcher in carrying out his study.

Other points of contact between the Learning in Science Projects and the present research are the authors' genuine interest in the learner, the subject of the educational process and their real desire to involve teachers in the research and to produce research outcomes of direct relevance to classroom teaching. Their use of grounded theory over and above all links their work to this.

In approaching their research problem, Osborne *et al.* (1980-1985) adopted a sequential methodology, involving observation, structured and unstructured interviewing, and informal discussions. Children were interviewed using strategies designed to establish the various meanings held for words used in science and to assess children's views of various phenomena (Bell and Osborne, 1981; Freyberg and Osborne, 1982). Observations of typical science lessons were made in an attempt to better understand the nature of children's classroom experiences. Both interviewing and observation provided insights into the world of the science learner, so that teachers involved with the project (and the wider "audience" involved in science teaching and curriculum) received feedback on their own science programmes.

The researchers were also interested in tapping the perspective of the teachers, so that eventually a comparison could be made between what the teachers believed they were imparting to their students, and what these same students actually learned from their classroom experience. The teachers' perspective proved to be very difficult to tap. Besides "public" cues such as teacher talk, teacher organised visual aids as well as worksheet and text material, other more direct ways of data collection had to be devised. It was found that the indirect data could sometimes be misleading because

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1. Learning in Science Project: Forms 1-4: 1980-1982; Learning in Science Project:Primary: 1982-1984; Learning in Science [Energy] Project: 1985 - in progress.

> *...the real teacher perspective can be kept "private", only becoming apparent with supplementary questioning. In spite of this problem of access, every effort is made to establish the teacher's perspective since this view of the various parameters of the lesson provides an important framework against which the views of the learner can be planned.*
>
> *(Tasker and Osborne, 1980, p.6)*

It was thus possible to consider the experience of the learner from three perspectives: the learner, the teacher, and the observer. In LISP, this consideration was seen in relation to four aspects, namely the nature of the set task (including purpose); how the task was carried out; the perceived significance of the outcomes achieved; and the significance of outcomes in terms of science learning and teaching (Tasker, 1980). In this regard, the authors note that in considering the experience of the learner from these three perspectives frequently suggested a

> *...lack of correspondence between expected pupil outcomes, as indicated by teacher and/or textbook writer's intentions for specific tasks, and actual pupil outcomes, achieved as a result of watching or carrying out such tasks.*
>
> *(Osborne et al., 1980, p.6)*

The parallel interest between the Learning in Science Project and this study is apparent because of the focus of this research, which is to tap the "school-to-work" messages students receive in an educational setting. An account of the way the researcher explored these messages, together with the method utilised in the sorting of data are presented in the next section. It should be noted, however, that there are major theoretical and ideological differences between LISP and the present study. A main difference is that most of the work of the LISP authors is atheoretical insofar as they fail to challenge the nature of the curriculum itself.

3.4. DEVELOPING THE FRAMEWORK OF THE GROUNDED THEORY.

For clarity in presentation, the different areas of the framework of grounded theory are explored within a chronological parameter (Terms 1 to 3, where a "school term" lasted approximately three months). Some elements obviously spilled over from one term to another, while other elements were relevant for all the three terms of the year.

3.4.1. THE FIRST SCHOOL TERM.

[a] Entry into the field:

With the help of the researcher's supervisors, the principal and staff of each of the three schools to be studied were contacted and informed of the subject of the research and its intended duration. All three principals agreed to take part in the research, and offered their full co-operation. They welcomed the opportunity for an in-depth look into the functioning of their schools, and placed no reservations on access to data. Typical statements included: *"It's good to have a researcher around;" "Count yourself as one of the staff;"* and *"We're open to any sort of investigation you'd like to carry out."*

At the start of the year, the researcher was invited by each of the three principals to introduce himself to all the teachers at one of the first staff meetings. A written outline of what the research project was designed to achieve together with a photograph of the researcher (see *Appendix A*) was pinned on the staff noticeboard. This ensured that the majority of teachers knew about the project, and could identify the researcher. At All Girls' High School particularly, entry into the field was facilitated by various developmental group games organised by the school counsellor to introduce new teachers (and the researcher) to the rest of the members of staff.

[b] Field Relations:

Good relations between the researcher and staff and students were given paramount importance since access to data depended on such relationships. Friendships were generally easily established, both with staff and with students. Careers Advisers, Social Studies and Transition teachers in each school formed the base for the most steady relationships during the whole project. They were all very helpful in that they introduced the researcher to other teachers, and generally channelled relevant information towards the researcher. They facilitated full access to files and other written documents in their offices. This information served as initial data for the grounded theory.

The only problem encountered in the area of field relations in this sense arose from interaction with one Careers Adviser who, being relatively new at his job, felt threatened and under-qualified for his position. It took a lot of time and effort on the part of the researcher to establish an open relationship in this case, and to reassure the teacher that the task of the researcher was not to "inspect" and "pass judgement", but to collect and organise information relevant to educational processes.

The fact that a lot of the data was to be in the form of classroom observation made the issue of relationship and trust paramount. In this respect Nisbet and Watt's (1978) injunction was accorded due importance.

> *Ultimately, the success and failure of your efforts will depend on your ability to develop good personal relationships. Inevitably you will be part of the "living experience" you study, and your personal skills within that social environment will be crucial, both in allowing you access to the data you want and subsequently in giving validity to your findings.*
>
> *(Nisbet and Watt, 1978, p.20)*

Often, the researcher felt that the fact that he was a foreigner was an advantage. Teachers and students were interested in the researcher's different cultural background, and constantly volunteered information about New Zealand which then led easily to further discussions about schooling in general, and their school in particular. A lot of relevant data was therefore collected in this way in the intial phase of the research.

In addition the researcher was often asked to address students and share with them information about his culture. This proved to be an excellent introduction to various classrooms and led to the establishment of good relations with a large number of students. Students were generally interested in travel stories and accounts of social work the researcher had participated in with "Mafia street kids" in Palermo, Sicily. To this end, the researcher occasionally acted as a reliever for absent teachers, a fact which was appreciated by administration and teachers alike. The informal atmosphere created during these periods led to discussions useful in the process of *"theoretical sampling"*, where the researcher could steer conversation into areas relevant to the research questions and at the same time become aware of further *"sensitising concepts"* and vocabulary as used by students.

[c] The Researcher's Persona:

While the researcher spoke of his project as a "thesis", he also followed Corrigan's (1979) example and said that he was collecting information about young people in New Zealand to write a "book" about them. This generated a high degree of enthusiasm among students, who had no difficulty in volunteering information and often asked that their name be included in the book. Since the idea of *"writing a book"* developed because students generally could not relate to the idea of *"writing a thesis"*, the researcher emphasised the latter only with teachers.

From the start of the field work, the researcher opted to dress casually, but decided to use his own Italian-style clothing (which students considered "trendy") in favour of the usual researcher's "undercover" uniform of jeans and T-Shirt (see Kealey, 1984). This helped in field relations with students and distinguished him from teachers, who were generally more traditionally dressed. With some, fashion in clothes proved to be a good starting point for conversation. As the intention was to meet and eventually interview as many students as possible, the researcher generally preferred to have a high profile and be set apart from teachers.

[d] Key Informants:

A group of some ten students from each school became steadfast friends of the researcher, and performed the function of "key informants" in the sense that, as in Willis' (1977) study, they were interviewed regularly throughout the year on an informal basis. The other 340 students were generally interviewed only once. The researcher met these key informants during lunch breaks on the playing field, as well as in the city centre. A lot of important and relevant information was passed to the researcher in this way. Other key informants were teachers who, as mentioned earlier above, were either doing careers work, or else established a close link with the researcher due to association in the staff room.

[e] Sites for Data Collection:

Various sites inside and outside the school were identified by the researcher as possible sources for data. The main areas were staffrooms, classrooms, and playing fields. However, *maraes*, school camps, and areas in the city which the students frequented were also part of the "research field". Because of the nature of the study, various industrial sites where students had work-experience sessions were also visited throughout the year. These included garages, restaurants, old peoples' homes, hospitals, textile factories, food and clothing stores, dairies, farms, veterinary clinics, and an airport. In the first term especially, data was collected by observation and informal interaction rather than by formal interview.

Observations were made on 182 of the 197 school days in 1986. In all, over 750 hours were spent in all the three schools, (Co-Ed High = 257 hours; All Boys' College = 223 hours; All Girls' = 270 hours). Hargreaves (1981) and Woods (1972) have shown in their exposition and analysis of the subcultures of school staffrooms, that teachers' personal orientation is most clearly evident in the staffrooms at times when it served as a private area or "back region". Consequently approximately 200 hours were spent in staffrooms in the present research. Cole (1984) suggests that even in the staffroom, teachers play a role, and that the best is to see them in their private place, the home. A total of nine teachers were informally interviewed in their home, which, although not representing the same effort as then invested by Battersby (1981) in his ethnographic study of first year teachers, was deemed sufficient by the researcher considering the research questions which guided this research.

Battersby and Ramsay (1983) suggest that the validity of research can be enhanced by establishing reference groups and individuals analogous to those currently being studied in order to try out hunches as well as to ensure that the language and symbols being employed are understood by the researcher. In this study therefore, besides the multi-site inquiry as described in this section, the researcher took part in regular meetings of the

District Employment Training Advisory Committee (DETAC), a local body which supervises transition education. The researcher also attended four meetings organised by the regional Association for Transition teachers as well as other meetings organised by the regional careers guidance and counselling association. He participated in the first National Conference for Transition Teachers which was organised in Christchurch in August of 1986. The researcher also attended a week-long in-service course organised for the regions' careers advisors by the Department of Labour, and a weekend seminar about *"Schooling for the Dole"* organised by the local University's Continuing Education Department, and which was also attended by careers and transition teachers. All these instances provided valuable data which generally confirmed observations made by the researcher in the three schools and added to the validity and generalisability of some of the propositions generated.

[f] Initial Data:

Initial information was gathered from students on the basis of a very general and informal set of questions. Here, following Gouldner's (1953) suggestion, the researcher started with a crude list of questions which were modified on the base of experience and insights gained during interviewing. The less structured the interview, the more opportunity there is for the researcher to probe deeply, uncovering new clues and opening up new dimensions of a problem to secure vivid, accurate, inclusive accounts from informants. Examples of informal questions posed were:

* *"How do you feel about school?"*
* *"What do you intend to get out of school?"*
* *"How does one get a job around here?"*
* *"Why is there unemployment in New Zealand?"*
* *"What do teachers say about jobs?"*
* *"How do teachers paint the world of work? Do you agree with them?"*

Often, questions flowed spontaneously from the conversation in answer to remarks made, or anecdotes told. The majority of these interviews were recorded, transcribed and analysed so that themes and categories could be identified. Clarification of student

vocabulary played an important part in this early stage of data collection, not only in terms of simple understanding of idiosyncratic slang (doubly difficult in this case since the researcher is basically conversant with a colonial version of "Queen's English"!), but more importantly in terms of grasping the semantic fields of words used. A case in point would be the frequent reference by students to *"a good job."* Here the researcher would ask immediately *"What's a good job?"* Answers to such questions brought taken-for-granted meanings to the surface, and helped the researcher enter the conceptual world of students and teachers alike. The researcher capitalised on his foreign status by frequently asking questions which, to native New Zealanders, would have been obvious. Thus, questions like *"What is 'transition'?"; "What are 'city council workers'?"* elicited highly relevant responses rather than a sarcastic look of astonishment at such apparent ignorance.

This early phase of data collection was designed to ensure that the research did not become too specific too early. This procedure also allowed the generation of further questions grounded in emerging data. It was only towards the end of the first term, that the process of focusing and delimitation as described in an earlier section of this chapter was initiated. At this point, after spreading the net as widely as possible at the start, it became necessary to focus it on specific issues with specific questions for formal interviews.

The data gathered in the first term was therefore characterised by a great amount of detail, which occasionally seemed irrelevant, but which in some cases later turned out to be of major significance to the research. Battersby (1982, p.3) rightly warns that a researcher is not always in a position to make judgements regarding the relevance of data, a point not acknowledged by Glaser and Strauss (1967). A case in point in the present study was the initial decision to relegate student part-time work outside of the field of interest. This decision had to be revised by the second week of entry into the field when the extent of participation of New Zealand students in what has been called the "grey" and even

the "black economy"[2] became quite obvious. Such participation was vital to the students' construction of the meaning and nature of work. This flexibility was essential as even the initial research focus was redefined by the emerging data. While the researcher had intended to focus on transition education, it soon became apparent that the scope had to be widened to include other sites within schools where messages about work were being given. Indeed, as the research progressed, Social Studies lessons rather than Transition Programmes became the central research site.

The researcher therefore listened to and wrote down any information offered by teachers and students, even when this happened to be only marginally related to "work" and "careers". The following excerpt from the researcher's methodological fieldnotes in the second week of the first term illustrates the everyday life of the researcher in the field.

> *Again, my research prejudices show. I felt I wasn't really interested in what Mr Cox had to say about apprenticeships (it is not my topic, strictly speaking, and my head is swirling with an overload of data as it is) - I allowed my eye to roam around the staff-room, giving away my disinterest. Mr Cox must have "read" this non-verbal cue, and said: "It's not the time to talk, perhaps." I became aware of the dynamics of what was happening between this teacher and myself, reassured him of my interest, and gave him my undivided attention...out of mere politeness and embarassment at being "caught out". That turned out to be a lucky break, considering the relevancy of what he said afterwards. I wonder how many such opportunities are missed! A lesson to learn about being too narrow in my observational interest. I should cast my net wide, at least in the early part of the research.*
>
> *(Fieldnotes, 4/2/86, p.25)*

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2. The "grey economy" refers to part-time and casual work, often after school hours, on weekends, and during school holidays. The "black economy" refers to similar work done by senior students who do not declare it to avoid paying taxes.

[g] The Mechanics of Data Recording:

The procedures for the collection, coding and organising of data was decided upon and maintained throughout the year following advice from supervisers and standard textbooks for qualitative methodology (Bogdan and Biklen, 1984; Burgess, 1984). Observations and interviews were transcribed on the same day they were recorded. A wide, oblong, foolscap-sized page was used, with a margin to the left for number codes referring to categories, a wide middle section for observations and transcripts forming the bulk of the substantive field notes, and a spacious margin to the right for methodological and analytic field notes. The time, date, and location were indicated for every set of notes.

By the end of the year, a total of 1743 of these pages (equivalent to approximately 4000 A4 size typed pages) had been completed. Other material was collected during 1987 when the research results were communicated to the different schools. Reactions and comments were recorded as "Feedback Fieldnotes". The data was analysed and coded daily, with various respites of between two to three days' duration taken occasionally when material was being generated faster than could be recorded, and when lulls in activities relevant to the research occurred in schools. These recesses, numbering six in total during the year 1986, were useful in providing time for the researcher to re-read and evaluate the material gathered to plan directions for the future, to strengthen the analytic observations, and to assess whether propositions had reached *"theoretical saturation"* or whether further comparative data was needed. The data were read regularly by the supervisors, who offered suggestions, comments and critiques during valuable debriefing sessions held monthly, and occasionally more frequently if the situation warranted it. Some of these debriefing sessions were taped to provide a record of the developmental nature of the research.

The data was coded using numbers (1-29) to cover the categories which had emerged in the field. Colour was also employed to highlight important passages of rich data. The twenty nine categories were subsumed into eight by the end of the second school

term (August), and then into four major categories by the end of the research. The chapters reporting the actual findings of this study (Chapters 5 - 8) are organised around these four major categories. All twenty nine categories were however kept throughout the year to provide a more detailed indexing system to access specific data.

For writing-up data, the researcher followed the practical advice offered by Webb (1966). Fresh paragraphs were started as often as possible to highlight statements and changes of subject, and to make coding visually clearer. Such paragraphs usually contained material relevant to one or more of the categories and a typical entry into the left margin would include various code numbers connected together by lines indicating the relevant categories. Where the material was particularly relevant to one category, the code number which applied was underlined.

Each reference was entered into file cards representing a different category. Each card had a page number and the area of page where relevant information could be found (e.g.^ for top; > for middle of the page) in the fieldnotes. This number was followed by a brief description of the material, usually no longer than one line. The compilation of the index cards was completed during week ends and proved an invaluable tool for quick access to the voluminous amount of data collected.

A typical entry is as follows. Thus on the index card number three, category entitled: "Methodological Concerns" and sub-titled, "All Boys' College":

368^ Gave feedback to Principal: Better communication started

These cards effectively provided a summary of all the material collected, and kept the researcher constantly in touch with the data. The cards indicated the frequency, and hence generalisability, of specific data occurrence. As a general rule therefore, any datum quoted in this research project has a frequency of occurrence of between 5 to 10 times unless otherwise indicated. Frequencies of this level also ensured the verification of actual categories (i.e. minimising differences in data.)

3.4.2. THE SECOND SCHOOL TERM.

[a] Classroom observations:

Term 1 (February to May) was spent in observing each school at work, with a total of 30 hours being dedicated to classroom observation in transition programmes. Term 2 (May to August) and the early part of Term 3 (September to October) were focused more directly on observing lessons related to "careers" and "work" in various areas of the curriculum. All the other sites of the inquiry as described above were visited frequently, and the staffroom and playing-field especially so. By the end of the year, 151 lessons, of at least one hour's duration had been observed. A breakdown of these observations shows that 50 of these lessons were in Social Studies, 30 sessions were dedicated to Careers education and programmes, 35 to Transition Programmes, 23 to English classes, 5 to Secretarial Studies, 4 to Economics, 3 to History, and 1 to Workshop Technology. Assemblies, parents' evenings, and other such meetings are not included within this count. Transcripts of lessons were recorded, coded, and analysed.

As indicated in the previous chapter, classroom observations were carried out in a pre-determined sequence similar to the one adopted by the LISP researchers (see Osborne *et al.*, 1980) and by Dunn (1984). Accordingly,

i. The pre-lesson account of the informing philosophy and content for the planned lesson was elicited (from teacher to researcher);
ii. The goal (when given) for the session, as offered during the lesson itself, was noted (from teacher to pupils);
iii. The researcher's understanding of what transpired in the classroom, having observed the lesson, was included in the fieldnotes (from experience to researcher);
iv. Pupils' accounts of what they experienced in the lesson, after the event, were recorded in interviews (from experience of pupils to the researcher).
v. Teacher's account of what he/she experienced in giving the lesson was recorded in an interview after the event (from teacher to researcher).

This sequence allowed a triangulation of data to occur, whereby, in contrast to Willis' (1977) research, the researcher attempted to get a "full" account from various people in the field, rather than simply from students. Thus, while reliability of ethnographic studies is always problematic as direct replication is not possible, the reliability of observations can be enhanced by such triangulation methods (Bogdan and Taylor, 1975; Ramsay, 1983).

[b] The researcher in the classroom:

The researcher generally introduced himself to the class by explaining where he came from and his intentions about *"writing a book about young people and schools in New Zealand"*. Once a friendly relationship was established, the researcher sat at the back of the class, and usually became part of the class for that particular lesson. When observation extended over a whole unit or, as in the case of Transition Programmes, over all the year, the researcher continued to relate with the students in the playing field after the lesson was over.

To some students the researcher became another of the "adult students" in the school; to others he became a friend, and for some he was just part of class life, especially so in those classes where observations went on for six weeks and more. Only one classroom at All Girls' High School presented difficulties, in the sense that the particular fourth form girls concerned took a long time to get accustomed to a male in a usually all-female environment. Remarks were made about this, to the obvious consternation of the teacher and the embarassment of the researcher. After a week, however, this class too settled down and accepted the fact of having a male adult present.

[c] Refining the framework of the Grounded Theory:

By the middle of the second term, two important steps had been taken to advance the framework of the grounded theory to a more complete stage. The initial twenty nine categories were refined and delimited. A number of categories (for example *"Entry into the Field"; "Methodological Concerns" and "Knowledge of Training Schemes"*) were retained for data collection and indexing purposes,

but no propositions were developed from them because they did not form the focus of the research. Other categories were subsumed into a more general category (for example *"Qualification/Certification"* became a property of the major category of *"Schools"*). This exercise (see *Appendix B* for a full description) left the researcher with eight major categories and forty-four properties. Eighty-five propositions were developed, some of which were already saturated by the start of the third term.

The generalisability of the propositions, dependent on the availability of data gathered thus far, was considered to be either Low, Medium or High at this stage of the research. An example of this is given below with reference to Category number 4:

Transition Education: Property [e]: Reaction by Students/Teachers to Transition Education.

Proposition 1: *The status of Transition Education and its teachers with staff and students depends on their abilty to place participants into employment.*	***High***
Proposition 2: *By focusing on "at risk" students, Transition Education has developed a particular negative association with parents and mainstream students.*	***Medium***
Proposition 3: *To re-establish status, Transition Education is moving towards a model of schooling closely resembling that of the mainstream (e.g. coercive pedagogic style; hierarchical relationships and testing).*	***High***
Proposition 4: *Transition Education has potential for becoming a transformative site in schools, but by ignoring youth culture and real transition concerns, it has succumbed to the pressures of mainstream schooling. This is felt in a confused way by transition teachers.*	***Low***

3.4.3. THE THIRD SCHOOL TERM.

During the third term the researcher continued with his observations as described above. An important step at this stage

was the collection of more data with a view to saturate or reject the propositions whose generalisablity was either Medium or Low, as well as to sample negating evidence in order to put all propositions to the toughest test. For this end, the researcher developed a more sophisticated interview schedule (see *Appendices C, D, E, and F*), which focused questions directly on the areas which needed examination or saturation.

Four such interview schedules were utilised: one for students (with supplementary questions for transition students), one for Careers Advisers, one for Transition Teachers, and one for other teaching and administrative staff. Two other schedules aimed at employers and parents were abandoned due to time constraints of the research. Eleven employers were interviewed informally during visits to worksites where transition students were getting their work experience.

Questions were not necessarily asked in the order they appear on the schedule. The main emphasis was put on establishing an environment which was as natural and relaxed as possible, so that if one question followed spontaneously and logically from a previous response or comment, it was asked rather than what came next in the schedule. The researcher thus kept a fresh copy of the schedule for every interview, and ticked those questions answered, to ensure that all of the scheduled questions were in fact addressed.

By the end of the third term, a total of 370 students and 50 teachers had been interviewed; 187 of the former, and 23 of the latter were females. Generally speaking, students and teachers were interviewed once; however the key informants from both student and teacher populations were interviewed formally and informally on various occasions throughout the year. Students were generally interviewed in groups of three or four, although a total number of thirty were interviewed individually to verify whether the data collected were a function of group dynamics. Formal interviews with teachers were all carried out individually.

Students interviewed were from Form 4 (N=69); Form 5 (N=142); Form 6 (N=65); Form 7 (N=43) and from Transition classes (N=51). Rather

than random sampling, the researcher chose to interview initially those students who volunteered, but made efforts to ensure that all possible variables in terms of social class, ethnicity, and gender were fairly represented. Of the 370 students interviewed, 87 were Maori (of whom 49 were female, and 38 male), and 4 were Pacific Islanders. Students were considered "Maori" when they identified themselves as such. "Working class" students refer to those who come from families which labour in what has been referred to earlier as the subordinate primary sector and the secondary sector within a segmented labour market.

Interviews with students combined all possible permutations of gender, class and ethnicity, and where these did not occur spontaneously, they were so combined by the researcher to enhance the generation of possible new data. Thus, there were single-sex and single-ethnic groups, as well as groups with different sexes, ethnicities, and classes. Other considerations were taken into account, such as in interviewing Maoris who were in the Maori culture group and those who were not. Occasionally, the researcher asked teachers to identify students who fulfilled specific criteria, such as: being skilled at self-expression, or known to come from a low socio-economic background. Such action was taken in an effort to saturate data, or to generate conflicting evidence to put propositions to the test.

Saturation, the point where no additional data was being found to develop new properties of the various categories, occurred three weeks before the end of the school year. The researcher remained in the field, and by exposing some of his theoretical underpinnings with selected teachers, generated interesting data whereby ideological positions became more directly overt. This final stage of the project signalled the start of the reflexive stage of the research, a stage which developed throughout 1987 when the researcher gave feedback to the three schools about his observations and conclusions.

3.5. METHODOLOGICAL CONCERNS.

Reviewing the field research tradition in educational settings, Cocklin (1985) notes that

> *All too often...the research is presented in a manner which implies that no difficulties were encountered, and that, both methodologically and theoretically, the research proceeded along a direct path from "problem" to "presentation".*
>
> *(Cocklin, 1985, p.22)*

A notable exception to this in New Zealand is Battersby's (1981) research, and his critique of the grounded theory strategy. The following represent some of the problems met in this present research, and the measures taken and decisions made to overcome them.

[a] Ethical Problems:

Ethnography has some important ethical problems to overcome, even although they might not be as serious as those faced by the ethnomethodological strategies proposed by, among others, Garfinkel (1967). The close relationships developed during ethnographic fieldwork often lead to the sharing of information of a sensitive nature. In this research for example, a group of fifth form students led the researcher to a hidden plot of land within the school grounds which was being used by them to grow cannabis. This represented a major problem for the researcher, for to break their trust would have led to a loss of a whole group of key informants. In this case no decision was taken, an understandable if unacceptable strategy when faced with "insoluble" dilemmas! When during the feedback stage the researcher finally spoke about this problem in general terms with the school's principal, the latter expressed concern but also sensitivity to the dilemma, saying that he did not expect the researcher to break a trust situation with students (Feedback Fieldnotes, 22/1/87). It is obvious, however, that not all principals would prove to be as understanding as in this case.

On other occasions, information was given about racist remarks against Maori students made by a Pakeha teacher. Again, a decision was required as to whether to act in favour of what was seen to be correct within the institution or within the researcher's own value position, or do nothing out of fear of jeopardising research purposes. On one such occasion, there was a loss of an important friendship with a teacher who reacted badly when challenged by the researcher about his racist attitudes.

Important information about the functioning of the school which this teacher had been channeling towards the researcher stopped coming from then on, and thus a potential key informant was lost. Similar decisions had to be made during the feedback stage of the research. A teacher for instance advised the researcher, on reading his description of her school, that tact and diplomacy would have to be used in feeding back observations to the principal and staff. In fact, she wrote: *"I suggest you hand out copies to the principal from the departure lounge of an international airport!" (Feedback Fieldnotes, 9/2/87).*

In the light of such incidents, the researcher resolved early in the fieldwork to take up a position which absolved him from being accountable to the school administration, and from constraints to reveal any information to them regarding students or teachers. This seemed justifiable. While such a stand did not absolve the researcher from a feeling of responsibility, the acquisition of information was in these circumstances given top priority.

Another ethical problem linked to methodology is the question of anonymity, which the researcher could only guarantee up to a point. New Zealand is a very small country, and as two teachers on separate occasions pointed out, it would be relatively easy to identify which school, and hence which teacher is being talked about. Mercurio (1972) encountered similar difficulties in his ethnography of caning rituals in a high school in the South Island of New Zealand. The researcher acknowledged the problem, but in the majority of cases, it was felt that little was held back in the way of information for this reason.

Generally, the need for anonymity was emphasised only by a few teachers. The latter soon became accustomed to, and did not appear to be threatened by the use of a tape-recorder. If anything, it was observed that note-taking with the use of pen and paper made teachers more nervous. However, an incident which happened at the start of the fieldwork led to a modification of tape recording data. Thus, one careers adviser said at the end of an interview: *"Now that that tape is switched off, I want to tell you something..." (Fieldnotes, 14/2/86, p.175),* and proceeded to give important details of why the careers advisory service in the school

did not liaise closely with the transition department. This information led to the generation of a proposition about the insecurity in both departments, as transition education became increasingly important, it took over roles previously fulfilled by the careers teachers. From this incident onwards, the tape recorder was switched off at the "end" of each interview with teachers. Then a few other supplementary questions were asked casually. At times, such questions evoked further, more openly honest responses which had perhaps been withheld due to the presence of the recorder. Such material was not used in the final report, but proved useful in the formulation of new questions and propositions which could then be explored with subsequent interviewees.

[b] The Participant Observer:

In trying to get information from both teachers and students, it became difficult to appear to be on the "side" of both parties. This was especially problematic as students often spoke in terms of "them" and "us". Awkward situations were sometimes created when the researcher, sitting at the back of the class, was engaged in a conversation by another student. Although this might indicate a high degree of acceptance by students of the researcher as "one of them", it was not easy to reconcile their demands with the teacher's expectations of appropriate behaviour. On one such occasion, the information the student was giving the researcher during a lesson was very important, and the latter decided to engage in a short conversation. When the lesson ended and the students had left the class, the researcher explained the situation to the teacher who felt that no apology was required. On another occasion, a teacher put the researcher in an awkward situation when he was left "in charge" of the class while the teacher went to get some books from her office.

Generally however, a balance was maintained, and good relationships were cultivated with both staff and students. An aspect of the relationship developed with students is typified by the following extract from the fieldnotes. A group of transition students got fed up with school one day, and decided to play truant. The researcher happened to be in discussion with two of them, and a

person in the group asked him not to tell the teacher. Another student in the group commented: *"Oh...he's Ronnie...he's on our side...he won't tell on us." (Fieldnotes, 2/5/86, p.692).* The readiness of teachers to accept the researcher in their classroom and to offer information and access to documents was consistent throughout the year.

A balance had also to be kept between the technique of observing without participating in order to preserve "objectivity" and "neutrality", and the technique of participating and becoming too involved as an actor in the situation to do the observing work properly. The latter also raises issues of the researcher becoming an artifact in the research situation. The research could be jeopardised by the researcher changing the situation through acting upon it. The researcher therefore made decisions to participate only when he was asked to do so, and then only when participation facilitated field relations. On carefully chosen occasions therefore he offered to take a class when a teacher appeared tired, helped set up an exhibition on careers information, phoned employers inviting them to address students on a Careers Day and relieved for absent teachers. The researcher did not assume the role of "teacher" in the classroom, but used these sessions to establish a dialogic relationship with the students (Freire, 1972). Often, participation of the sort described above provided information relevant to the research. When the nature of what was asked of the researcher required him to make decisions affecting the policy of teachers, he explained that he could not participate in this instance because by so doing, he would be jeopardising his research. A case in point was when a Careers Adviser asked for ideas about running a unit on employment and unemployment with a group of fourth formers.

For similar reasons too, feedback was withheld from staff until the end of the fieldwork and the start of the feedback phase in 1987. Questions like *"Have you found weird and wonderful things about us?"* or open-ended statements like *"The kids must tell you a lot of things about the school..."* were either treated jocularly or answered vaguely.

[c] Researcher's Bias:

The influence of researcher bias was felt early in the project, and recognised as a potential threat to the credibility of an emerging theory, primarily because of the intimate link which exists between data and theory in the grounded theory strategy. Glaser and Strauss (1967) suggest that fieldworkers cannot possibly erase all predispositions from their mind. However, the authors feel that the untapped biases of researchers will ultimately be checked in the field because of the nature of the grounded theory procedure. Despite this, the researcher here followed the example of Ramsay and his colleagues (1983) and spelled out his predispositions prior to the commencement of the research. In a number of debriefing sessions with the supervisors, the researcher considered what he thought he might find, and spelled out his own personal ideology. Notes of these discussions were taken, and a whole set of predispositions were written down by the researcher to make them as explicit as possible. This, as has been pointed out earlier, formed part of the *"theoretical sampling"* stage of grounded theory.

While the major ideological bias lay in favour of the "new" sociology of education as described in the introductory chapters of this study, other perspectives (the liberal tradition in education, for instance) were kept in mind as a device to prevent the tunnel-vision effect on observation and analysis. All phenomena were, as far as possible, treated as data, and the contrasting perspectives helped in alerting the researcher to invesigate taken-for-granted assumptions (Ramsay, 1985).

Gadamer's (1979) discussion of modern hermeneutics throws light on such a process. According to Gadamer, hermeneutics is characterised by a reflexivity which enables us to understand the possibility of a multiplicity of viewpoints and *"to respond to opposing arguments by a reflection which deliberately places us in the perspective of the other." (Gadamer, 1979, p.110).* The researcher (or interpreter of text) does not bracket off the "prejudices" he brings with him, and places himself in the position of the "other" in order to understand him or her. Rather, the process of understanding entails a "fusion" of the "horizon" or

life-world of the researcher with that of the researched, and therefore, there can be no one correct interpretation of that reality. Nor can there be any neutral standpoint from which data may be interpreted. Hence, as discussed in a previous section, the empiricist conception of objectivity is seen to be an illusion.

Gadamer also correctly points out that the interpreter of texts or of social situations becomes aware of the structure of his own prejudices: *"Only through others do we gain the knowledge of ourselves." (Gadamer, 1979, p.107).* Thus, while the researcher was aware that new data would be filtered through what Berger and Luckmann (1967) call the "inner self", this same inner self was revealed for inspection and opened up to challenge by emerging data. This process is also important when it comes to writing out the actual report, for it is quite possible that, given different ideological assumptions, quite different interpretations may be made.

Researcher bias and predispositions were generally kept privy from the researched because of problems related to *"observer effect"* (Rose, 1975) or *"impression management"* (Goffman, 1957). Not only is it possible people change their behaviour when they are being observed but it is also likely that if they know the researcher's ideological predispositions, they present behaviours and answers which they think the researcher wants to see and hear. Despite these efforts, some observer effect must be admitted.

At the very end of the research, two weeks before the end of the year when the researcher felt that he had arrived at the *"theoretical saturation"* point, he expressed his concern that nothing about trade unions was being taught. In two of the schools, a unit was inserted about trade unions for the first time in a school-leavers' programme. Also, a careers adviser said: *"We've done so much this year because you have been watching us!" (Fieldnotes 26/11/86, p.1734).* This example illustrates the danger of the researcher becoming an artifact in the social situation researched (Cicourel, 1964).

Thus, as Cole (1984) points out, both research and interviews are

> *interactional settings in which the participants may present themselves in certain strategic ways so that the interview [and the research] is a joint social construction, or, in Silverman's (1973) words, a "managed accomplishment".*
>
> *(Cole, 1984, p.57)*

Interview and other research data must therefore always be viewed in the light of this possibility, and means sought to try to reduce the problem. Observer effect can be contained to some extent by, *inter alia* , unstructured interviews in order to avoid imposition of the interviewer's prior conceptual framework, the use of language and categories which respondents themselves use, and the guarding of the researcher's ideological predispositions from the researched.

There was one occasion in this research where predispositions were shared with a teacher. The researcher had learned through a Careers Adviser that a Social Studies teacher had been threatened with the removal of her status as a classified teacher, partly because she had been "too political" in the classroom. Since she was about to start a unit on "Work" with fourth formers, the researcher asked for her permission to observe her class. The teacher became very defensive and seemed unwilling. The researcher decided to reveal his socialist leanings, and the situation changed dramatically and swiftly, with the teacher taking the researcher into her confidence, and providing data which would otherwise have been lost. She also became a key informant about many of the activities and policies at her school.

[d] Researcher's Gender:

Another aspect of researach bias arises from the gender of the researcher. Some feminist researchers have argued that male researchers should not research social situations where feminist issues are involved. In New Zealand for instance, James (1986) has argued that gender places limits on sociological investigation in which the gender of the researcher becomes problematic. Thus

> *Gender may determine the matter of access, or become an issue for reasons of sensitivity or propriety.*
>
> *(James, 1986, p.19)*

While in this particular research, such issues generally did not hinder access to information, the researcher recognises his role as a "male" as well as an "investigator" in research situations, and

the consequences of gender for sociological inquiry. Frankenberg (1976) and Morgan (1981) are two examples of male sociologists who have examined the effects of their gender on their research practices. In this research, it was decided that a better contribution could be made by considering gender (besides class and ethnicity) as a variable in the transmission and reception of messages regarding work. Besides theoretical grounding in the area of gender and the labour market, the researcher had been sensitised to some of the issues under consideration in his capacity as careers adviser in an all girls' school for two years. Further reading and discussion of relevant problems with female teachers and students helped the researcher become more sensitive to structural injustices to women.

Researcher bias due to gender did occur on one occasion with reference to the vital role housework plays in some of the female students' thinking about their futures as persons and as workers. Despite the fact that in various interviews this issue had come up on more than one occasion, the researcher had failed to understand its significance, until he read accounts such as that of Griffin (1985) which alerted him to the importance of domestic, unwaged labour as a distinct property of a major category in his research. This example also illustrates how the researcher is involved not only in changing the consciousness of "subjects" who see the world differently as a result of being researched, but the researcher's perspective is changed too in the same interactive process. Research is therefore experienced as an educational activity (Novitz, 1982). There is however a recognition that, over and beyond the preparation stated, there are some gender issues which, as a male, the researcher failed to highlight or perhaps even notice. His research should therefore be read in that light.

Another example of how the researcher's gender becomes important in carrying out research relates to some embarassment on the part of female students in describing how they were sexually harassed during their part-time or summer work. Although seven cases of sexual harasssment were reported to the researcher, it is not unlikely that if he had been female, many more incidents would have been reported.

[e] The Researcher's Ethnicity:

Similar problems could arise with reference to the researcher's ethnicity. It would be more than presumptuous for the researcher to claim understanding of what it means to be female, or Maori, or both, when he has never been oppressed by sexism,and only to a degree by racism. At best, the researcher could call upon his resources to engage in an attempt to understand the daily experiences of girls and Maori youths.

Such resources included more than reading. The researcher's training as a professional counsellor helped no end in the establishing of relationships. The researcher also had the opportunity to immerse himself in a *marae* context where the meaning of being Maori was communicated experientially and powerfully, and opened the doors for multiculturalism to become an important goal. His country's own history as a British colony for one hundred and sixty four years generated an instinctive sympathy for the Maori and the survival of their culture. The researcher also increased his understanding through the material culture of *taha Maori*, namely by learning songs and dances, as well as bone carving. His attempts, even when not directly relevant to the research, were appreciated by Maori teachers in schools who saw these efforts as genuine signs of biculturalism. Friendships with them were invaluable because they both provided information of a cultural nature, and checked the researcher's perceptions of issues relating to Maori students. Maori teachers moreover gave him a high standing among Maori students, and on occasions invited him to meetings from which other teachers were excluded, and to the school *marae* (at Co-Ed High School) for cultural events.

Partly because of this, Maori students generally associated closely with the researcher, and indeed, some of the frankest interviews took place with them. A few, when asked why they felt at ease with the researcher, answered *"Because you're not a Pakeha..."* It was only on rare occasions that the researcher encountered the problems Castina and Claire (1985) mention in their study. Commenting on their findings within schools in the same city as sampled in this research, the authors wrote: *"Maori girls were very shy and retiring, and hard to draw out (Castina and Claire, 1985, p.3).*

Various factors could have worked to assist the researcher to overcome such problems. In a sense Maori teachers acted as gatekeepers to information and students, and gave the researcher access to both. Other possible factors could have included similarities in physical features, such as black hair and dark complexion, and non-verbal communication patterns which are closer between Maoris and Mediterraneans rather than between Maori and people of Anglo-Saxon origin. On one occasion, a seventh form Maori student asked the researcher if he was from the Ngati Porou tribe. The following dialogue expresses some of the issues discussed above, and relates to an occasion where the researcher asked a group of four fifth form Maori girls to discuss their feelings about an interview which had gone on for almost two hours.

Therese: *Oh!...You're like one of us...because you're different from Pakehas...you haven't been brought up in the same system...*

Melanie: *You don't tell us: "Sit down! I want to talk to you." You asked us if we wanted this interview.*

Rose: *When you wanted to speak to us...I didn't take it whether you were a Maori or a Pakeha or whatever you were...no...I just said: "I'll suss this guy out..." and then I just waited for you to say a few things...if you could speak to me on a person-to-person...then yeah...I could talk to you.*

Therese: *Yeah...if you had been formal, we wouldn't have been here now.*

(Fieldnotes, 10/4/86, p.585)

This group of Maori students was instrumental in introducing the researcher to other students in a "snowball sample" style, and became reliable key informers.

[f] The Feedback Phase:

Some aspects of feedback have already been discussed above. A major area for feedback begins at the end of the project, when findings are fed back to the sample group. In their research of South Auckland schools, Ramsay *et al.* (1983) did this in two ways - by seeking comment generally from the sample about interim findings, and by utilising a representative advisory committee to comment specifically on the grounded theory as it emerged. In the case of this research, various structures were used to feed back information to the different schools. Early drafts of the chapters

in this report which concern findings (Chapters 4 - 8) were given to a select group of teachers and students from all three schools. Comments were welcomed in a process of reconsideration of the findings, and while not all comments were accepted for the final draft, when disagreements arose the researcher did not hesitate to probe for reasons.

At All Boys' College the principal accepted most of the perceptions the researcher had developed of his school, as well as many of the criticisms made. Although he invited the researcher to speak about the results of the research to a Board of Governors' meeting, the principal admitted that he had little hope of getting the critical comments across to his staff (Feedback Fieldnotes, 22/1/87).

At Co-Ed High, the researcher's perceptions were acknowledged, and he was asked to contribute to an on-going analysis of the social studies curriculum. The research data were also used to inform discussions at meetings of the Committee for Equal Opportunity at the school. One teacher there made the following comment:

> *Yes, I've got to agree with you - We mean well but we're too wishy-washy, not facing up to hard facts, not sufficiently analysing the underlying patterns that cause our problems.*
>
> *(Feedback Fieldnotes, 12/3/87)*

More importantly, some teachers declared an intention to use the research data to guide them in moving from a liberal to a more progressive and critical model of schooling.

At All Girls' High there was an initial defensive reaction and foreclosure to the research findings. A meeting with the principal and other members of the administrative staff, including heads of departments, led to a better understanding of the enabling rather than disabling intentions of the critique of their school (Feedback Fieldnotes, 13/6/87). Initial comments had included suggestions that the researcher had not been *"objective"* and that he had interviewed *"the wrong students"*. The researcher first explained his perspective that knowledge and forms of knowledge can never be objective. He then demonstrated the extent of interviews carried out with over a hundred students from each school, and presented an article entitled*"Ethnicity and the Reproduction of Labour Market Locations: Do Maori Students really have a Choice?" (Sultana, 1987)*

to the staff. The convincing influence of ethnography became apparent with the acceptance of the research, initially by the administrative staff, and through them by other teachers generally. This developed into what was possibly the best structure for feedback, in that the researcher was invited to meet small groups of teachers from each department in turn. These sessions with small groups were very productive and thought-provoking for the teachers and the researcher alike, since they led to a better understanding of "teacher-culture" and the pressure, constraints and everyday realities teachers faced. One teacher wrote the following comment:

> *One of the hard things is to cope with the bicultural drive amid resistance of all types - from students too - and to find time to explore our own position as teachers. Where is the in-service time for us to learn Maori?...To create resources that present the appropriate perspective? If we can't face it ourselves and understand where the students are coming from, how can we do a satisfactory and productive job that meets the needs of those students and the others?*
>
> *(Feedback Fieldnotes, 18/6/87)*

Data from this research were also used in a committee which had been set up at All Girls' High to encourage bicultural awareness.

The responsibility to give feedback was often urged upon the researcher by students and teachers alike. At times, it seemed as if an implicit contract existed between the "subjects" and the researcher, where information was exchanged in the hope of eventual praxis. A group of seventh form girls commented about their experience of schooling:

Janice: *...so much of what we do at school is irrelevant!*

R.S.: *Can you do anything about it?*

Karen: *We can't...we just moan about it...but top people can...and what you're doing can help...finding out our opinions...and I reckon if you go around all New Zealand, you'll find the same sort of thing...*

(Fieldnotes, 18/3/86, p.443)

In addressing the question of impact of the research, it is useful to think in terms of two *"audiences"*, namely the teachers involved in the research, and the wider audience including other teachers, policy makers and curriculum planners. Pollard's (1984) opinion is that it is perhaps realistic to expect to make more impact at the micro level because of the very nature of

ethnographic work, and therefore the movement towards *"discursive consciousness"* (Giddens, 1976) in itself makes an immediate and particular contribution. Being with teachers, talking to teachers, working with teachers - these are essential if a researcher wishes to influence school practices. Indeed, this is when ethnographic data is of most value, because, as with the case of All Girls' High mentioned above, it eventually breaks down much of the defensive resistance which normally follows critique. Such practical action seems to be no less valuable than abstract theorising. Apple (1982) has expressed the view that impacting at the micro level is in itself a correct strategy because of the need to develop counter-hegemonic activity as a social movement in work places such as schools and classrooms.

This approach to reflexivity therefore follows in the footsteps of culturalist neo-Marxists who are beginning where Gramsci, Marx's earlier work and Mills left off to develop analyses which specifically attempt to link ethnography and history, social structures and individual action. This is in itself a challenge to transform critical insight into praxis. Such a research can hopefully give rise to what Gorbutt (1972) calls *"professional awareness"* by *"challenging prevailing practices and assumptions in colleges and schools." (p.7).*

There is also, however, an ethical dilemma in ethnographic research which is not frequently mentioned, and which is all the more powerful since it lies beyond the control of the researcher. This is the appropriation of the research data for ends which contradict the progressive and democratic intentions of the work. A case in point would be the frank interviews with Maori students which are described in various sections in the following chapters. Here the intention of the researcher is to reveal the processes of resistance and cultural production by students who find monocultural schooling as it stands not only irrelevant, but oppressive; the hope is that this will lead schools and teachers to become more sensitive to the realities which groups of students experience in their daily life at school. The same data can however be used for different aims and for a different agenda, namely that of better controlling what is often considered to be pathological behaviour. While data is of course open to

interpretation, ethnographic researchers working in a progressive mode must often face the risk, and fear, of having their labour appropriated for conservative, if not oppressive ends.

SUMMARY.

This chapter has described the methodological principles and practices of qualitative research which inform the research. Reasons were given for the choice of grounded theory as a strategy for data collection and for developing substantive and formal theories grounded in that data. The framework of the theory as developed in this particular research, as well as the problems encountered and decisions taken, were described. The findings of the research are presented in the following five chapters, starting first with a general description of the three schools studied, giving particular importance to their ethos and structural organisation through which covert messages about work are transmitted to students.

CHAPTER 4.

THE SCHOOLS.

This chapter describes the three schools which were the sites for data collection. The description places them within the context of the various social movements which were earlier shown to have an impact on informing educational discourse and practices in New Zealand. A typology is used to highlight the covert messages each particular school gives its students with regard to work. The structural organisation of each school is shown to manifest a hidden agenda which prepares students for their positions in a segmented and contracting labour market.

4.1. SELECTION OF SCHOOLS.

The three schools selected for this qualitative study are referred to as "All Boys' College", "All Girls' High School", and "Co-Ed High School," indicating the nature of the population in each school. The researcher was guided by various factors in his selection of these three particular secondary schools. All three schools were known to have developed transition-to-work programmes. Three months before the actual start of the fieldwork, the researcher had an informal interview with the local Officer for Transition Education who singled the schools out as being at different stages in the development of transition programmes. In terms of organisation and number of students catered for, All Girls' had the most basic provision for so-called "at risk" students, and Co-Ed High the most developed and far reaching one.

The latter school also had a reputation locally and nationally for being a progressive school, giving great attention to ethnic issues in its curriculum and in its organisational structures. All Girls' High was described to the researcher by various people as a school in transition, in the process of moving from a conservative and disciplinary style to a more humanistic, guidance-oriented one, under the leadership of a relatively new principal who had been at the school for the last four years.

All Boys' College stands separate from the other two schools in the sample in that it is a Private Roman Catholic school which had been integrated into the state educational system following the Private Schools Conditional Integration Act (1975). It also caters for predominantly white and middle class students. The researcher's interest in an integrated school was based on certain predispositions and expectations regarding the ethos and political and philosopohical orientation of Catholic schools. Again, it was expected that a different type of school might help to maximise and highlight messages about work, thus facilitating the generation of further propositions and hypotheses. Given that the researcher wished to investigate the effect of the confluence of ethnicity, class and gender on the messages the teachers gave pupils about the world of work, the three schools were selected so as to ensure an adequate representation in each grouping.

Other factors influencing the choice of these three particular schools were their reasonable proximity to the campus, whether they had been over-researched or not, and of course, whether they welcomed having a researcher for the duration of a year.

4.2. TOWARDS A DESCRIPTION OF SCHOOL CULTURES.

Giroux (1982) offers three important insights in the description of schooling. These insights, which have been developed in the first two chapters of this study, state that:

(a) Schools cannot be analysed as institutions removed from the socio-economic context in which they are situated.

(b) Schools are political sites involved in the construction and control of discourse, meaning, and subjectivities.

(c) The common-sense values and beliefs that guide and structure educational practice are not *a priori* universals, but social constructions based on specific normative and political assumptions.

Every aspect of schooling therefore - whether in its organisational structures, its particular ethos as expressed through rituals, or its curricular structure and discourse - defines a mode for the production of ways of thinking that are fundamentally linked to specific interests within a concrete form of economic and social organisation.

In Chapter 1 schools were described as cultural artefacts, assembled by the social actions of those who inhabit them and founded upon the patterns of meaning that those inhabitants share. They were also seen to be shaped to a greater or lesser extent by various interests which come together as social movements and which, in a New Zealand context, have been identified as those of ethnicity, gender, and the *"New Right"*. Moreover, in Chapter 2 it was suggested that various other interests find a common voice in defining the agenda for education, interests which have been presented in the form of a dialectic between the needs of business and the needs of democracy. Thus, the particular shape and quality each school acquires may be determined by the image of schooling that prevails in the minds of those who control its organisational destiny. As the following description of the three schools in question shows, these people are not necessarily principals, but could also be members of the wider community if they are organised well enough to exert pressure on schools and teachers.

There are various ways of bringing together the multitude of observational data noted during the year about each individual school. A common technique is the use of ideal types, "a representation of particular images of schooling reflecting beliefs, values and assumptions that set limits upon what are held to be appropriate roles and functions for the school to perform".* Codd (1985) for instance suggests four such cultural images of schooling, namely the technocratic, the personalistic, the reproductive and the transformative. Goodson (1983) speaks in terms of three curricular traditions, the academic, the utilitarian and the pedagogic. In this context however, it seems more appropriate to use the typology of Kemmis and his colleagues (1983) because it relates more directly to the education and work nexus which is the focus of this research.

The three orientations towards education identified by Kemmis *et al.* (1983) are the "vocational/neo-classical", the "liberal/progressive", and the "socially-critical". According to the authors, the "vocational/neo-classical" orientation is one in which education is understood as a preparation for work, and differential work at that. This orientation presents separate educational systems, catering for those endowed differentially to

* Codd, 1985, p 26

do skilled or semi-skilled labour requiring well-known and defined competencies, or managerial and professional work, requiring higher levels of general education and abstract thinking. Proponents of this orientation take the view that education merely reflects the principles of wider society. It is a vocational orientation in that it prepares students for work, and identifies and develops the sense of vocation students reveal through their participation in school life. It is *"neo-classical"* in the sense that its views of the substance of education are based on time honoured beliefs about what is worth knowing. This orientation is similar to the technocratic and reproductive images of schooling in Codd's (1985) typology, and to the interests displayed by the *"new vocationalists"* as described in Chapter 2.

The "liberal/progressive" orientation sees education as a preparation for life rather than work, as a personal value to be developed rather than as a set of tools to be used in work. It sees society as open to and needing reconstruction, but takes an individualist perspective on social philosophy, and sees the development of autonomous persons as the aim of education. It is "liberal" in the sense that it sees education as the liberation of persons by reason, both individually (through the development of reasoning) and socially (through democratic processes of reasoned debate). This orientation is similar to what Codd (1985) calls the personalistic image of schooling and it too is, in the final analysis, reproductive. It also has similarities with what in Chapter 2 were seen to be the interests of the *"Rhetorical Humanists"*.

The "socially-critical orientation" (what Codd calls "transformative") is less sanguine about the improvement of society. Changes must be brought about by collective action capable of confronting unjust and irrational social structures. An education from this orientation would engage social issues and give students experience in working on them - experience in critical reflection, social negotiation and the organisation of action. This orientation brackets right knowledge and right action together, and therefore requires participation of the school in the life of its community and of the community in the school. School is a special place where students can develop social life through

considered action, a place where some of the demands of participation in social life are relaxed in order to provide time for learning. The curriculum is made and re-made through a process of negotiation among those concerned. *"Critical Educators"* as described in Chapter 2 above would identify with such an agenda for schooling.

School communities typically embrace protagonists of all three orientations, and the curricula and structures which their schools present are therefore practical compromises between positions. As Ramsay (1983) notes in his response to Anyon (1981), social life is too unpredictable to fit neatly and tidily within a gross framework, be it one of class structure (as in Anyon's case) or in a typology as set out above. As such, schools are not subjected to reification, *"which implies that man is capable of forgetting his own authorship of the human world, and further that the dialectic between man, the producer, and his products is lost to consciousness." (Berger and Luckmann, 1971, p.106).* Rather, this dialectic, and the contradictions within it, are to be highlighted to serve as spaces for reflexivity and praxis.

The following description therefore locates the three schools researched within a social context which is subject to various dichotomies, contradictions and dialectics, and places them within the broad orientations towards structures and curricula as defined by Kemmis and his colleagues (1983).

4.3. "ALL GIRLS' HIGH SCHOOL."

Environment.

All Girls' High stands on the site of one of the city's oldest co-educational state schools, established in 1911. In 1955 the boys were withdrawn when, because of increasing rolls, the original site could not accomodate all the students. A school was set up for the boys in the northeastern part of the city. The two schools remained in contact administratively, having the same Board of Governors. While both schools celebrated various activities together in 1986 to mark the 75th Jubilee of their foundation, it appears that efforts to amalgamate the separate schools were tried and failed. As a prospectus of All Girls' High states:

> *Towards the end of the seventies, strong and persistent efforts were made by educational authorities to combine the boys' and girls' High Schools as a co-educational school. This move was successfully opposed by all those interested in ensuring the continuation of the single sex option for the population of the city...and the surrounding district.*
>
> *(All Girls' High Prospectus, 1986, p.3)*

The school is made up of three large blocks, a hall and administrative centre, a gymnasium and field with swimming pool, a Maori culture centre, and various prefabricated buildings including workshops. It caters for a total population of about 950 students from Form 3 to Form 7 (age range 11-18), and unlike the two other schools in this study, has rising rolls. Of its total student population in 1986, twenty percent were Maori. Its population is a composite one representing most if not all socio-economic statuses. The school stands on a main street, not far from the town centre. A short distance from the school grounds lies a residential hostel accommodating over a hundred boarding pupils, who mostly came from outlying farming communities or towns. Like all state high schools, All Girls' High is a neighbourhood school, with pupils being zoned. Some parents who prefer single-sex schooling enrol their daughters from outside the zone.

Five major points will be made about All Girls' High School. First, its focus on feminist ideals will be described. Second its emphasis on personal relations mixed with a third element characteristic of its ethos, discipline, will be discussed. Fourth, the spirit of academic competition fostered at All Girls' High will be described. Finally, the issue of ethnicity and the particular relationship between Maori students and the school will be explored.

A Feminist Ethos.

The determination to keep the school a single-sex one seems to have gained further impetus under the direction of Ms Wyatt, who became its sixth principal in 1982. In various newsletters, school magazine publications and even on radio broadcasts, the principal and other members of staff told the city about the value of single-sex schools. One such statement by the principal read:

> *It is my belief that girls flourish in a single sex school and that those who have experienced the special nature of single sex girls' education are well equipped to face the world beyond school...It is becoming increasingly recognised that girls' schools foster a climate where one is encouraged to do one's best and where healthy competition is considered desirable.*
>
> *(All Girls' High Prospectus, 1986, p.4)*

In 1986, the tone of the school regarding women's right was far from being a defensive one. The majority of the staff (out of 49 full time and 10 part-time teachers, only 5 were males; all positions of responsibility were held by females; one male was a senior master) strongly supported the principal, with a number of them being active in women's rights movements.

Both liberal and radical expressions of femininism (see Middleton's typology, 1984) were present in the school. A few, generally older staff members of a conservative persuasion expressed their resistance to this general ethos to the researcher only in rare individual exchanges. The males, including at times the researcher, generally sat together in the staffroom, with occasional interaction with other groups which were both female and subject-oriented in membership.

The school environment emphasised the feminist ethos of All Girls' High. Posters and stickers announced brightly and vividly that *"Girls Can do Anything"*, a slogan which was used almost daily throughout 1986 on the television networks. The posters were found everywhere: in the staffroom, on noticeboards, in the classrooms, in the workshops, in the library and canteen, on school bags. The theme was reinforced in a number of ways on the school noticeboards. During the study, newspaper cuttings reporting incidents of sexual harassment, pictures of women doing traditionally male jobs, and some thought-provoking posters including one saying: *"Boys grow up to be something. Girls grow up to be married"* were noted. A magazine on women's issues, *"Women at Work"*, was distributed regularly in the staffroom. Women rather than men were asked to distribute awards on Prize Days in an endeavour to move away - as the deputy principal said in an interview on the local radio station - from the community's image *"of females just sitting pretty."*

The curriculum offered traditionally male options, such as workshop technology, and technical drawing which were taught by three of the male staff and a female student-teacher. As the principal said,

> *...students are actively encouraged to see themselves as succeeding in areas which traditionally have been perceived as suitable for boys and men only. The provision of these opportunities has been strongly supported by parents.*
>
> *(All Girls' High Prospectus, 1986, p.4)*

Feminist issues featured strongly in almost all the areas of the curriculum observed, including English, Social Studies, History, Economics and Careers Education. The feminist emphasis was reinforced by frequent discussions of sexist behaviour. This occurred frequently in the staffroom. Typical of these discussions is the following excerpt from the researcher's observational fieldnotes:

> *The principal recounted to the staff how at a formal dinner, one of the male dignitaries went into some "technical details" which he felt he "should explain for the sake of the lady present." The staff laughed in unison at such a misguided statement, and cries of "chauvinist" were uttered in jest.*
>
> *(Fieldnotes, 24/7/86, p. 1010)*

Considerable pressure was put on the students to include Mathematics and Science in their course of studies. The teachers and principal pointed out to students and parents that such choices led to non-traditional trades or professions, which in turn bore the most promise for employment in the modern labour market. Though a secretarial course was still functioning at the school, one of its teachers told the researcher angrily:

> *There's a lot of subtle and not so subtle pressure against girls doing this course...but they had to keep it going because of the sheer number of students wanting to do it...there <u>are</u> plenty of jobs in this area. And we've had lots of parent pressure to keep it going.*
>
> *(Fieldnotes, 10/4/86, p.564)*

The above description suggests that All Girls' High School functioned consistently and overtly as a political site in the construction of a feminist discourse. That this discourse is reflected in the attitudes of the students is well documented in the field data. For example, a group of senior students said:

<u>*Janice:*</u> *...There's no chance of not having a knowledge about sexism at a school like this!*

Val: *Yeah...we're made more aware of sexism at this school...and we're told not to accept it...and that we can stand up for ourselves.*

(Fieldnotes, 6/10/86, p.1406)

By far the greatest majority of girls interviewed by the researcher commented on the advantages of being at a single-sex school, and on the feminist influence at All Girls'. Generally students, some of whom had been in co-educational schools before attending All Girls' High, felt that in a single-sex school *"there's less distractions"*, *"you're not hassled by boys"*, *"you don't have to act sophisticated..it's easier to have a good time and be stupid...you don't have to impress or give a good impression...you're a lot more yourself...with guys you feel you have to be more feminine...and here, if you feel like being loud, you just do it!"* Students at All Girls' generally felt that they were not missing out on anything by not having boys around, because they met them after school anyway.

With regard to the feminist emphasis, closely linked to a vocational, liberal discourse which suggested that girls ought to be avoiding traditionally female jobs, around forty percent of the girls interviewed from the fourth and fifth form felt that *"the school is going overboard"* about the issue. Many of these felt pressured to think only in terms of *"male"* jobs, and resented that, exclaiming *"If I want to be a nurse, what's wrong with that?!"* *(Fieldnotes, 25/3/86, p.504).* The fact that resistance to the campaign was more in evidence among the junior students, and had become more acceptable to the senior students points towards the effectiveness of the school ethos in forming the subjectivities of students, and to the possibility that stereotyped roles are adhered to more rigidly during the earlier phase of the process of constructing an image of their own femininty, where parental and societal models are still too powerful. Senior students considered the campaign more evenly:

Haupiri: *It's really up to the individual..like if you have traditional views about women, there's nothing wrong with that, because that's what makes you happy...it's not because everybody's being liberated, you have to be like that too...*

Trisha: *Yeah...they're just pointing out an alternative...you're not obliged to go out and do radical things.*

(Fieldnotes, 6/10/86, p.1406)

Subjectivities were observed being formed by the feminist ethos, to the extent that pro-feminist activism surfaced frequently among the girls. On one occasion a group of fourth form students insisted that the English teacher start a letter *"Dear Madam/Sir"* rather than *"Dear Sir/Madam"*. On another, fifth and sixth form students organised themselves into a protest group against an Apprenticeship Field Day organiser for not including women apprentices.

Concern for Personal Relationships.

A further aspect of the ethos which characterises All Girls' High School is its particular blend of discipline, concern for personal relationships, and a marked spirit of competition. From the very start of the year, the principal told the researcher of her wish to encourage the personal development of staff and students (Fieldnotes, 3/2/86, p.4). Ms Wyatt in fact worked closely with the school Counsellor to achieve this aim. For instance, various developmental exercises were organised during the first staff meeting of the year to get new members (including the researcher) known and accepted by the staff.

This concern for human relationships was also reflected by a Programme for Peer Support, based on a model developed by Campbell (1982) in Australia, and co-ordinated by the Counsellor. Senior students were trained in leadership skills, and regularly met groups of junior students throughout the year to offer support and encouragement. Frequently, the principal stated her vision for All Girls' to the staff and parents in the following terms:

> *My dream is that all the girls will walk out of school standing tall...I want the girls in the school to care about people and to care about themselves as people. We want them leaving here standing tall, striding into their futures.*
> *(Fieldnotes, 13/10/86, p.1484)*

Her humanistic (what Codd, 1985, calls *"personalistic"*) vision was accompanied by a frequent denouncement of any sort of violence at school and in society generally.

Discipline.

The type of blend of humanism and discipline to be found at All Girls' High School has been vividly captured by Kemmis (1983) with reference to the liberal/progressive orientation to schooling as described above. Such an education

> *...offers the best access to confidence and competence in the highest affairs of our culture - for those who can get it. It is in the best tradition of liberal education. It offers to liberate kids through knowledge, to make them thankful, to recognise the good, true and beautiful, and to give them faith in their capacities to rise above the circumstances that determine them. It is a noble view, motivated by noble sentiment...For those with the qualifications for access to the high terrain of our culture, it can succeed. And it can put a gloss of civilisation on the "barbarians" among our kids. But it can't help them to rise above the socio-economic structure which determines the opportunity to be civilised as well as to act civilly.*
>
> *(Kemmis, 1983, p.7)*

Thus, discipline at All Girls' High functioned in a way which was consistent with the humanistic ethos discussed. Resistance, dissent and problems were either dealt with firmly by the teacher in class, or referred to the Counsellor. Few students were kept after school, and there were no formal *"cooling out"* spaces for students to be sent to after misbehaving.

The teachers' emphasis on firm discipline was reflected in certain standards demanded of the girls, including correct uniform (worn by all except seventh formers), a ban on jewellery, a demand for punctuality and for "correct" English to be spoken at all times. Smoking was prohibited, though Maori students especially broke this rule continuously in certain areas of the schoolgrounds. Addressing third form students at the start of the year, the principal said:

> *I'm afraid we have to start with a negative note...two Form 3 girls nearly missed starting school today. One of the many spies I have in the school reported them to me...they were seen smoking.*
>
> *(Fieldnotes, 5/2/86, p.38)*

This emphasis on discipline was justified by the principal to the researcher with reference to her experiences in meeting employers around New Zealand. Ms Wyatt had been seconded for a term on this

project in 1986, and she had come to the conclusion that personal qualities were very important to employers, and that school should thus inculcate qualities which employers valued. Students spoke about the *"good reputation"* All Girls' had with employers, and saw this as the main reason for so much pressure being put on them by the school to wear their uniform correctly and behave *"properly"* as they passed through the town to arrive to school.

Power was wielded by the staff, with little delegation given to senior students. In fact the Student Council was not a structure elected democratically by students but rather the getting together of students interested in fund-raising activities for the school. Even decisions about school socials were taken by the staff.

Competition.

The strong spirit of competition fostered at All Girls' High in relation to academic performance supported the school's firm belief in liberating its students through acquisition of knowledge, without, however, making the nature of that knowledge problematic except in its diluted form of wider subject choice for girls. In line with this orientation, and articulated more clearly than in the other two schools sampled, All Girls' students felt that the set curriculum was a given entity, not subject to critical inquiry but to assessment and marking. Two fifth formers said for instance:

Rachel: *They're always going on about how important it is to work hard and get the best grades here...to be on the top and therefore have more chance of actually being chosen for a job...*

Sandra: *Yeah...we have a test a week at least in a subject...they put a lot of pressure on us, and blow us up if we don't bring our homework.*

(Fieldnotes, 2/7/86, pp.897-8)

References to exams and assessment were frequently made in formal and informal interviews. On three occasions, students said they feared being marked down by their teachers for misbehaving, and were aware that bad results would get into their reports and negatively affect their future. One of the more exciting pedagogical approaches to teaching observed by the researcher in all the three schools studied, where students were involved in community research and in knowledge production, was justified by

the teacher in terms of exams: they had to do a research project to pass School Certificate English (Fieldnotes, 10/6/86, p.803). A visiting Inspector from the Department warned the staff to avoid over-assessing. There was a general feeling that though All Girls' High did not officially practice streaming, there was indeed covert streaming within the classroom, with competitive tests *"from the word go... and if somebody's going to be at the top, somebody else has got to be at the bottom...and there's nothing for the dull ones"* (a 5th Former)...and *"...with a lot of teachers, if you can't keep up, they don't want to help you...they don't give you a hand." (another 5th Former).*

One senior student put it this way:

> *The thing is...like when you're young and that you're taught that everybody has talent...and you know...what you're good at...and how you're wonderful people and everything...and then you come to this school, and you get retaught that the only thing that counts is to do well in exams and be bright and things like that...and that's not fair on everybody, because we're all being taught that there's only one thing we should be good at.*
> *(Fieldnotes, 24/9/86, p.1265)*

Ethnicity.

After such a scenario, the problems and frustrations experienced by Maori students at All Girls' High come as no surprise. Maori students often spoke to the researcher about teachers' (often unsuccessful) attempts to put a gloss of civilisation on the *"barbarians"* among them (see Kemmis, 1983 above). They frequently complained that they were not understood, that *"it's all Pakehafied out there" (Fieldnotes, 30/5/86, p.760)*, that most teachers didn't know how to handle their candour and ways of expressing themselves, that teachers drove them to breaking point by their putting excessive and insistent importance on what they considered to be irrelevant to their lives, such as being punctual, bringing their homework, saying "sorry" even when they did not feel it in their hearts. Teachers were generally seen to be unaware of the material reality of the Maori student's everyday life, which often included caring for younger brothers and sisters which often led to lack of punctuality and inconsistency in completing their school work. The fact that the Head Girl was a Pacific Islander did not seem to give

Maori students a feeling of status, both because senior students generally kept to themselves and also because the Head Girl never strongly identified herself as being an Islander.

Claims by the Pakeha students that Maori girls often *"got away with murder" (Fieldnotes, 15/4/86, p.620)* in the classroom do not contradict the first impression presented, but complete it. Maori students were either tolerated, or punished. The few who were affirmed were those who, in one teacher's words, had *"crossed the fence"* and adopted Pakeha ways of behaving, thinking, and even feeling. When interviewed, these students claimed that, in crossing the fence, they had lost their friends and their Maoriness (Fieldnotes, 25/9/86, p.1293).

Staff who were sympathetic to the needs of Maori students did not take the next step, and tended to reject the ideological position that Maori culture and knowledge were worthwhile. Toleration of this sort implies monoculturalism with a heart, which is effectively translated into the sort of tacit agreement between teacher and student which says: *"You leave me alone, and I'll leave you alone."* An analysis of the field notes reveals many instances of this informally negotiated contract being carried into practice. For instance, teachers were observed giving Maoris "time out" from classrooms by carrying written messages to other teachers, by taking back attendance sheets to the Administration Block, or by running the canteen. Later in the thesis it will be argued that this behaviour illustrates the low expectations the Pakeha teachers held for the academic performance of Maori students. This point will be related to an analysis of how such an attitude affects Maori students' life chances.

Not all teachers were tolerant in their monoculturalism. Others were more actively assimilationist in their ideological position regarding Maoris and education. Instances of racism from Pakeha teachers and students were observed both first hand and were also reported to the researcher by Maori students during informal interviews. As in all three schools observed, Pakeha and Maori students stayed apart in the playing field. Definite areas were referred to by students as *"Maori turf"*. A fifth form Pakeha girl expressed a generally felt sentiment: *"It's really weird...if you*

see a Pakeha girl walking around with a Maori girl, you just go...'What's she doing with her?!'"(Fieldnotes, 24/7/86, p.1013).

The few Pakehas who did interact with Maori groups were considered by their fellow students to be rough and tough. Often, these Pakeha girls were from a working class background, suggesting that perhaps class consciousness can at times overcome racial boundaries. Senior students felt that school did not help them confront their racial prejudices, and that teachers were generally wary of even speaking about Maori issues in case their own prejudices came through. A group of seventh formers spoke of the only experience of comradeship with Maori students they had felt during the four years they had spent at All Girls' High, which occurred during a game of softball. However after the game *"...all the fences between us went up again...It was strange." (Fieldnotes, 15/4/86, p.620).* At times prejudices on both sides were expressed in a confrontational way, and at one point during the second term, the staff feared fighting would break out between racially-based groups.

In the middle of all this the sole Maori teacher on the staff strove to create a haven for the Maori students in a prefabricated "Culture Room" standing alone in a corner of the field. Maori students were often referred to her, and they told the researcher: *"She's a hard woman, but she's all we've got." (Fieldnotes, 30/5/86, p.760).* She represented their cases in front of staff, and was instrumental in organising a Teachers' Only Day [1] on *taha Maori*. Organised as it was during the second term, the researcher was able to observe the dynamics of a school trying to move into a new direction and to formulate a new ideology. On five different occasions, individual teachers told the researcher that they felt that the day had been a failure, and that a lot of *"hog-wash"* had been spoken, with a lot of *"pussy-footing around"* on central issues. Such comments were also overheard by the researcher in the staffroom during a lunchbreak following the in-service day. One teacher told the researcher that many of her colleagues felt that Maoris didn't do well at school because *"they are lazy"*

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1. A day set aside in all state schools for the in-service training of staff

(Fieldnotes, 26/11/86, p.1723), but they had not dared speak their mind for fear of offending the Maori teacher.

Despite this, a committee called *Rau Aroha* was set up to look into ways of making All Girls' High more relevant to the needs of Maori students. Murals with Maori symbols were to be designed by the Art Department of the school to give All Girls' High a bi-cultural physical environment. The curriculum was to be examined in order to find spaces to insert Maori cultural elements. While at first the Maori teacher told the researcher that the Committee's attempts were mere window-dressing, and felt that at times it was a *"case of the blind leading the blind" (Fieldnotes, 7/8/86, p.1098)* because of the members' lack of knowledge of or sensitivity to *taha Maori* , she contained her frustration and anger because she saw them striving honestly. *"They are on the right track,"* she said, *"because they are trying to think Maori." (Fieldnotes, 21/10/86, p.1541)*.

The Committee contained some of the more progressive elements of the staff; the rest, though participating in singing Maori hymns as part of the ritual of the daily morning staff meeting, had not been sensitised to the ideological significance of the new direction, and thus a monocultural view tended to prevail. At the end of the year while working on the National Curriculum Review question, *"How do our schools reflect the many cultures of New Zealand?"*, one teacher made an impassioned speech saying that *"school is there to educate, and not to act as a social reformer." (Fieldnotes, 13/11/86, p.1669)*. The speech was greeted by enthusiastic applause by the majority of the staff.

4.4. "CO-ED HIGH SCHOOL."

Environment.

Co-Ed High School is the largest school in the sample, and in 1986 had a total population of about 1,450 students and a staff of 82 full-time and 18 part-time teachers. It stands in a district characterised by a variety of ethnic and socio-economic backgrounds. Thirty percent of the school's population was Maori in 1986. Co-Ed High also attracted a small number of the less

conservative elements of the city's upper middle class, including sons and daughters of university and technical institute lecturers.

At the entrance of the school is a large administrative block which houses offices and a large staffroom. Trophies, Maori carvings and examples of student art work decorate the entrance to this block. The administration centre also integrates an assembly hall. Here various school functions, including drama productions, exhibitions, and prize-giving ceremonies were held. The hall was however too small to accomodate all the student population at once. Students were therefore assembled in smaller groups so that Form Masters and Deans of each form level could address their students. On the two occasions when the principal wanted to address all the students to encourage a knowledge of the whole school community, he addressed them in the quadrangle outside the hall. Twelve blocks, including a library, a deanery, an audio-visual centre, a student counselling centre and a gymnasium stand separate besides and behind the administrative centre. The school also has a large playing field, a swimming-pool and two tennis courts. Two other buildings were being constructed during 1986: one was the school *marae* and the other a community centre for the area.

Most of the classes observed throughout 1986 were equipped with overhead projectors, and noticeboards. These always had illustrations, posters and student work on them. Classrooms often had a disorganised look about them, with desks and chairs being positioned according to the needs of the teacher giving the lesson at that moment. Students therefore did not always sit in rows facing the teacher, but often sat around desks in groups of four or five working together on projects. Importance was given to cleanliness, and students were organised on a roster basis to help in the maintenance of a tidy environment both in the classrooms and on the school grounds generally.

Six major points will be made about Co-Ed High. First, its liberal ethos will be described. Second, the quality of discipline exercised, and the dialectic observed between this and the general liberal ethos will be considered. Third, the school's endeavours to become a community centre will be described, with specific attention to a fourth point, that of the bicultural nature of Co-Ed

High. The issue of gender will also be discussed. Finally, the tension between a liberal and radical conception of education as felt at the school is described.

A Liberal Ethos.

Co-Ed High stands out in the community because it is the only school not to require students to wear uniforms. It has also given up the use of caning, while corporal punishment on boys is used, albeit rarely so, in other schools in the city. Co-Ed High had also made a number of political stands throughout its history since its foundation in 1956. Among these, the most recent were the stand against Apartheid during the 1981 Springbok Tour,[2] and declaring itself a "Nuclear Free Zone", an event which was highlighted when in 1985/86 New Zealand refused to allow American nuclear-powered and armed ships to enter its harbours. The school actively promoted a liberal image of itself among the community, with statements frequently made to the researcher and to parents that *"here we accept those students which other schools have given up on." (Fieldnotes, 7/11/86, p.1633).* The school generally saw itself as different, and *"more progressive"* than other schools in the city.

Co-Ed High expressed its "liberal" ethos in a variety of ways. Students were free to express their individuality in hairstyle and clothing, so that while the general tendency was for very casual attire, a few stood out as members of definite youth cultures around the city, such as Rastafarians and the New Wave group. The principal occasionally made stands when things went *"too far"*, such as when students arrived at school barefoot. The school council, elected democratically by students, was felt by them to be an effective vehicle for expressing their opinions, and although some students felt that *"teachers always have their final say in the end" (Fieldnotes, 6/10/86, p.1396)*, in theory students could

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2. A controversial tour of a South African rugby team which split New Zealand in two factions: those who felt that the tour was about sports, and those who felt that it made a political statement in favour of apartheid. Thousands of people organised themselves in protest groups up and down the country, leading to various incidents of alleged police brutality (see Chapple, 1983, for an account).

actually outvote teachers. Discipline, as expressed in the school's Prospectus, put the emphasis

> *...on the students accepting responsibility for his or her own behaviour and learning the self-control that goes with such acceptance...courtesy and common sense are the twin guides to the rules of the school and to expected behaviour in the many situations for which no rule is set.*
>
> *(Co-Ed Prospectus, 1986, p.13)*

Students interviewed were universally happy with teacher-student relationships. They praised the school for allowing them freedom and responsibility, and felt that being without uniform was a positive thing. In an interview with a group of senior students, a sixth former told the researcher:

> *I suppose the fact that we don't have a uniform is important...if you go to Antipodes High (an all-boys state school) they're always on at you about it...that something's wrong with your uniform...and the teachers are always after you...and you're always below them...down here sort of...while here we're at a more even level with the teachers...although it depends on the teachers...this school would be difficult for older teachers who are not used to having students talk back to them on an equal footing...they wouldn't be able to handle it...I know a few teachers at this school who wouldn't be able to handle it.*
>
> *(Fieldnotes, 12/11/86, p.1662)*

New teachers at the school, were taken through a year-long training programme by the associate principal. For one hour a week, topics such as aims and objectives of the school, class control, and coping with stress were discussed, and the *"novices"* were thus introduced to the school ethos. An instance of this process can be seen in the following account. The associate principal had to leave the room unexpectedly, and asked the new staff members to write down an evaluation of the meetings. One of the five first year teachers said: *"Let"s write something about Maoris to please her!" (Fieldnotes, 26/5/86, p.726).*

In informal conversations overheard by the observer in the staffroom, Heads of Department and Deans frequently urged teachers to examine their own pedagogy as an explanation of student misbehaviour in class. [3] A teacher from All Boys' College complained to the researcher that when in previous years she taught

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3. Ramsay and his colleagues (1983) identified this same feature in what they termed "successful" schools in South Auckland.

at Co-Ed High, and had a class with twenty Maori students whom she found impossible to teach, the Maori teacher had told her *"...Perhaps you should look at your teaching style." (Fieldnotes, 2/7/86, p.901).*

In general students felt that teachers and the *"hierarchy"* were fair. One Maori student, a ward of the state who had been expelled from another school and who had taken time to settle at Co-Ed High, told the researcher:

> *When I first came, I got taken in to meet the principal...I took one look at him, but I didn't like him...But he helped me out of a few situations...had a few scrapes...you know, he was a really nice person...he'd take time...he'd sit down with you...if you and another person had a bit of a squabble which was getting out of hand...Like last year I was having a few squabbles with fellas, and he'd take you to the office...he'd ask you questions...and he'd come to the conclusion of what he thought was right...and you take it as it comes...he was fair...he's allright.*
>
> *(Fieldnotes, 12/2/86, p.147)*

Many lessons observed by the researcher at Co-Ed High in subject areas such as Transition Education, English, and Social Studies, were characterised by negotiation between teachers and students as to the pedagogy to be used, directions and goals of the lesson, and amount of work to be done in class and at home. The fact that students changed classrooms according to subjects meant they usually decided where they would sit, and group work was encouraged. A lot of class time was used in allowing students to express themselves, and often in bringing back the class to order. Some teachers tried new arrangements in the classroom to emphasise equality. One English teacher, concerned about the fact that the teacher often adopts the role of the *"expert"*, putting the students in subordinate position, told the researcher about her attempts at alternative arrangements.

> *I often sit with the students, and someone else, from the kids, will take the class...the time of "confusion" is often very valuable, because the kids have to start defining what they want...I had problems at the start, because I wanted too much, too quickly.*
>
> *(Fieldnotes, 3/12/86, p.1741)*

Fewer tests or exams were observed at Co-Ed High School in comparison to the other two schools sampled, and competition was discouraged in all areas of the curriculum. Teachers' comments

about behaviour, effort and progress rather than marks and grades featured on school reports. Said one sixth former, an ex-student of Antipodes Boy High School,

> *Even in sports it's different here...it's not so serious...in a boys' school you've got to win...if you don't, you get hassled...here there's less pressure...you do it for pleasure, not competition.*
> *(Fieldnotes, 4/11/86, p.1584)*

Some senior and academic students, however, pointed out that this policy occasionally had unintended results:

> *Fiona:* *There's quite a funny attitude towards achievement which I hadn't really noticed before...but when you do really well in something academic you just get absolutely embarassed, and you don't want to make a big thing about it...and that's funny when you think about it...*
>
> *Tania:* *Yeah!...You actually stop working!*
> *(Fieldnotes, 12/11/86, p.1663)*

Academically, students generally felt that Co-Ed High was *"too lax" (Fieldnotes, 8/10/86, p.1435)*. During three separate interviews with academically successful senior students, the opinion was expressed that while it was good to have an option as to whether to work hard or not, they realised that had they been pushed, they would have achieved more in the academic area.

As with other schools involved in this research, Co-Ed High did not officially stream its students, but had top stream classes called *"two option"* or *"six subject"* classes. Such classes were needed so that the school could achieve a good pass return in School Certificate, the criteria by which the New Zealand public often judges a school.

Discipline.

In line with this liberal ethos was a non-confrontational style of discipline. Various means had been generated to contain the misbehaving or disaffected students. Thus there was "D5", a withdrawal room for students proving disruptive or difficult in the class. The room was constantly supervised by different members of staff, and the students were required to explain in writing the reason for their referral. "D5" was often referred to by teachers as useful for cooling-off purposes, and was not meant as a form of punishment. Indeed, in various interviews, students made fun of

"D5" and described various ruses to get sent there to have time-out from *"boring"* class situations.

Another withdrawal room was "P6", which formed part of the guidance block and was generally supervised by guidance personnel. Students who were referred there had long-term difficulties with teachers, or alternatively had been ill for a long period of time and had fallen behind in their work. Others who for some reason or other could not participate fruitfully in classroom situations were referred to "P6" for a period of time. Students in "P6" were offered a personalised curriculum in the subject concerned for the duration of one or two weeks until they felt they could go back to their usual classes.

In addition to these procedures, a Daily News and Notices sheet was issued with a list of names of students who were to go to the "Deanery", usually on discipline-related problems. The researcher observed that one method which the Deans had developed to deal with disaffected students was to refer them to the school-to-work Transition programme operating at Co-Ed High, much to the displeasure of the co-ordinator who felt that her programme was occasionally being used as a *"dumping-ground."* This point will be developed in greater detail in Chapter 8.

A school the size of Co-Ed High attracted enough funds to be able to develop a sophisticated learning assistance programme with two specialised teachers. Though the school's official discourse highlighted the importance of these programmes, the director told the researcher: *"I am marginal...the school doesn't say that to me officially of course...but you know it...you pick it up." (Fieldnotes, 30/4/86, p.675).* Finally, the school had the administrative responsiblity of the only Youth Home in the region, *"Ashmead House"*, and on rare occasions referred students there. The researcher visited the facility with the new teachers, and an interesting comment made by the Director there to the researcher was that Co-Ed High, like other schools, was ready to refer working-class Maori students, but much less ready to refer Pakeha students with the same or similar problems.

The tension between a liberal ethos and a wider structure of schooling which is necessarily hierarchical and imposing often led to an Orwellian *"double speak"*, as illustrated in the following address to senior students by a sixth form dean.

> *The school thinks of you as adults, and gives you a lot of independence. For instance, we do not expect notes from you to cover absences...However, I must remind you that you are obliged to attend general studies, and the "values" module is compulsory for all. As to the sport events we have in school, you are expected to be there too...I would like to see those who did not come to the Stadium last Thursday.*
>
> *(Fieldnotes, 3/3/86, p.299)*

One progressive teacher, interviewed while supervising "D5", told the researcher:

> *I've got no option but to impose authority...it's almost impossible to teach without being authoritarian...I don't think anyone can do it...if they do, they do it in ways where the authority is subtle, and in the long run, the children are co-opted...so you enter the structure...and bang go your values...because how are you going to run a programme with twenty five different people?...So, the structure does violence to me as much as to the kids.*
>
> *(Fieldnotes, 7/11/86, p.1633)*

Another progressive teacher spoke of the *"silencing that operates on us all...the structures are too big...the powers are too strong." (Fieldnotes, 3/12/86, p.1738).* Students recognised that in the final analysis, even if Co-Ed High was trying hard, *"It's never really true...we're not equals...they're teaching us...it's them giving us something we don't have...you feel it as if they're teaching down at us." (Fieldnotes, 28/2/86, p.269).*

A Dialectic over the Ethos.

As has already been suggested above, not all the staff were happy with the liberal ethos as practised at Co-Ed High. An identifiable group of teachers, generally middle-aged but also containing some of the younger members of staff, and referred to by a person in the school administration as the *"official opposition"*, lobbied constantly for more discipline and tighter control at the school, and for a greater emphasis on academic attainment. This group generally sat together in the staffroom, and spoke out loudly during staff meetings. From time to time, they challenged the ethos directly. For example, on one occasion they distributed a

questionnaire among staff in an attempt to prove to the school administrators that there was general concern among staff about the liberal ethos, particularly as expressed in the school's policy with regard to discipline and in its attitude towards Maori students. The group was especially active in 1986. Since the pricipal had been seconded for two consecutive years to the Department of Education, and an acting principal, Mr Lewis, appointed in his stead, the group felt that they could be more influential. Perhaps even more importantly, the Curriculum Review exercise of 1986 provided opportunities for the group to air its views about the various issues which concerned them.

Generally, however, Mr Lewis, eventually appointed principal after his predecessor resigned to take another appointment, maintained Co-Ed High's liberal tradition. It became obvious that many of the policy decisions continued to be progressive. A group of like-minded teachers who generally had been at Co-Ed High for ten years or more, gave the administration the support it required, and it was generally this group which headed the various committees active throughout the year, including, for instance, those on curriculum review, on assessment, on multicultural issues and on the aims and objectives of the school. The majority of them were either Deans or had Positions of Responsibility, so that the general ethos filtered through them to new teachers. For example, the associate principal, whose opinion was often asked for by the school's Board of Governors in the selection of new staff, stated on one occasion that the principal ought to have more power to hire and fire staff, so that the liberal ethos of the school would be safeguarded. She was in favour of the school's staff representing different perspectives and approaches because that would be an educational experience for the students. This variety could include people with different religious, political, and sexual orientations *"...it's good to offer alternative lifestyles as models for our students..." (Fieldnotes, 12/3/86, p.381).* She expressed a concern, however, that a growing number of fundamentalists were opting for a teaching career, and because of their rigid and doctrinaire approach to "truth" could never truly "educate" in the way Co-Ed High interpreted the word.

With such strong support for the school ethos, teachers at odds with what has been referred to as "liberal" policies felt that their own opinions were not being taken into account. One of these teachers, who half way through the year applied for a position at another, more conservative school, complained to the researcher that many decisions were taken by the liberal elements of the staff without consultation with the more conservative elements. He complained that *"at this school, the right hand does not know what the left hand is doing."* The only outright confrontation the researcher witnessed in any of the three schools took place between the principal and a teacher at Co-Ed High, with the latter accusing the former that views of the conservative group were never recognised, and that he *"...should not try to smooth over something over which disagreement had been expressed." (Fieldnotes, 5/6/86, p.790).*

In this context, it is important to point out that one of the major conclusions that the Co-Ed High Counsellor came up with, following a quantitative-style survey of the effectiveness of the school's guidance network, was that if the prinicipal wanted the staff to follow him in his progressive efforts to make the school a multicultural one, he and the Administration had to provide the necessary education for the staff to be able to share the same vision. In a formal interview towards the end of the year, the principal told the researcher:

> *I'm keen on using the word honesty...what I'm pleased about is that people with feelings and thoughts are pleased to express them. [...] I don't see the "opposition" as well-organised, so I don't feel threatened...it's a point of view, and it should be aired...you can become doctrinaire, and the image becomes more important than what we try to do for the kids...that's why I tend to resist labels. I think Co-Ed High is a good, honest school trying to do its best for every student that comes here, and is trying to understand more of its community and serve it better...my problem is that I don't want to go too far ahead, leaving some of the staff way behind me...the elastic band attaching us can only be stretched so far.*
>
> *(Fieldnotes, 6/11/86, p.1628)*

While the "official opposition" succeeded to engage the principal in an increasingly consensus approach to leadership, some liberal teachers who had been at Co-Ed High for a long time felt that the radical spirit that had been fostered there by previous principals was being diluted. (Feedback Fieldnotes, 3/2/87).

A Community School.

As some of the details given above suggest, Co-Ed High also defined itself strongly as a community school. The principal identified several areas through which the school was trying to foster this concept. In an issue of the school community newspaper, he mentioned the extensive use of school facilities by community groups, the community service programme as part of the Social Studies syllabus, the widespread and growing involvement of parents and other helpers in aspects of school life, evening class programmes, transition education, and the building of a Community Centre on school grounds with a full-time Community Advisor. A new official summary of the school's philosophy, produced by a committee of staff members after discussions with the full staff, the Board of Governors, the Parents' and Teachers' Association, and the School Council, was published in leaflets advertising the school's resources for the community. Significantly this statement appeared in both Maori and English:

> *Co-Ed High School aims to be a school in which students, staff and the local community share and enjoy the learning and teaching processes, and in which the school family grows in understanding, respect and genuine care for others.*
>
> *(Co-Ed High, 1986, p.1)*

On various occasions, and with the backing of the staff, the principal spoke of the school's vision:

> *I would like the school to become more and more the community's focal point, a "turangawaewae"...a place where all the people can stand...it's theirs...they can stand tall, and have some sense of community...it means more than that...we will continue to examine the nature of our community, look at its composition, the needs of the students who come...it's a pretty complex community by New Zealand standards, because there's quite a variety of backgrounds, not only ethnically, but also socio-economic backgrounds, and we must continue to examine that composition to make sure that our classroom programmes, our ways of going about things, of relating to people, are suitable, and that we're meeting the needs of all these people as best as we can.*
>
> *(Fieldnotes, 6/11/86, p.162)*

Ethnicity.

Undoubtedly, the best developed expression of the school's concern as articulated above is the way in which it tried to cater for the needs of Maori students. Co-Ed High is known locally and nationally for its attempts to develop a truly multicultural education. Maori inspectors praised it at the Teachers' Only Day on *taha Maori* organised at All Girls' High School and suggested that it should adopt the same policies Co-Ed had developed. The school's *marae* was a focal point for the school's multicultural intentions. A workskills development team were employed to carve the wooden panels and posts in the traditional Maori way. The work received widespread media exposure and a short documentary was filmed and shown on the television network. The school received moral and financial support from local Maori communities, the Maori Queen, and the Minister of Maori Affairs who visited it during 1986. Staff, students and parents used the *marae* frequently and were taught the significance of the carvings and panels by the Master Carver and his team. Thus, the building itself was used to give powerful exposure to Maori values, beliefs and customs. While the conservative elements among the staff expressed a fear to the researcher that the *marae* was creating *"a school within a school," (Fieldnotes, 10/10/86, p.1497).* Pakeha students as well as Maori students were found to use the space. Said Scott, a Pakeha fouth former from a low socio-economic background:

> *Down on the marae it's good...because you're treated equal...it's all one big family down on the marae...we go down there for New Zealand studies, and we watch the carvers at work.*
>
> *(Fieldnotes, 17/7/86, p.953)*

Monthly gatherings for large sections of the school population were organised and Maori students were seen to take leadership roles in singing Maori songs, the school hymn in Maori, and expressing their culture through ritual speeches and dance. It was planned that the *marae* would accomodate three or four classes at a time, and would be used constantly with students and members of the wider community.

The principal invariably spoke and wrote Maori at the start and finish of every address and message to students and parents.

Pakeha students on the whole recognised the principal's attempts, and one Maori student said:

> *It gives us a warm feeling...when you see a Pakeha talk Maori...it's just like a new-born baby...you know...sort of giving a new life to the language...giving it life.*
>
> *(Fieldnotes, 2/10/86, p.1368)*

On major occasions, Maori elders from the community were invited to speak to students, and this was always accompanied by Maori traditional dancing and song. Both Head Boy and Head Girl elected by students were Maori, and identified themselves as such. The Head Girl told the researcher that after years of confusion about her own cultural identity, the school had helped her to *"come out"* as a Maori (Fieldnotes, 16/6/86, p.855).

There was a recognition by the principal that staff needed to be educated to understand the multicultural drive of Co-Ed High. Books on the subject were suggested during staff meetings; a booklet on *taha Maori* in the Curriculum which the principal wrote in collaboration with other principals from around the country was distributed among all the staff; a committee working on the theme *"A Culturally Sensitive School"* and headed by two Maori teachers produced literature which dealt with the common areas of dissension between Pakeha teachers and Maori students which they felt were culturally based. This included notes on the use and interpretation of body language, reluctance to wear suitable clothing for Physical Education, and why Maori students were "loud". Most of the notes were produced by the committee in collaboration with Maori students who were given an opportunity to describe their experience of schooling. The Staff were also educated about Maori *marae* etiquette and protocol. Culture was however generally divorced from its broader political implications, except when on one occasion the principal suggested teachers read an article on the Treaty of Waitangi, itself a key document supporting the Maori people's land rights.

Taha Maori infiltrated the curriculum practically in every subject. Obvious examples were Maori literature in translation in English classes, and a consideration of New Zealand history from a Maori point of view in social studies. A six month unit, compulsory for all but the two academic, "six subject" classes, and called "New

Zealand Studies" introduced aspects of Maori culture and myths students, and those who wanted could opt for a more intensive course in Maori language and culture. Opposition by Pakeha students to "New Zealand Studies", referred to sarcastically as "Ponga Studies", was widespread. However, equally widespread were responses couched in culturally-sensitive language and attitudes. When the researcher asked about such attitudes, students invariably answered: *"That's what the Social Studies teacher told us" (Fieldnotes, 17/7/86, p.953)* or, *"That's what Mr Lewis said." (Fieldnotes, 17/7/86, p.964).* The Maori component in various subjects in the curriculum was meant to help Maori students "stand tall" in the community. One student said:

> *Our English teacher...she made us do all this formal writing and all that kind of thing...she gave us flash language to do and all that kind of thing...but she made us do Maori things too, which made the Pakehas come and ask me for help for this work that we were doing...and they came to me and asked me what that means...or what this word means.*
> *(Fieldnotes, 10/11/86, p.1640)*

Senior students, both Maori and Pakeha, were taken together to a local *marae* for three days for a multicultural experience. The researcher was present on the last day, and during an evaluation session students expressed their appreciation to the staff for giving them the opportunity to experience something of what being Maori really meant. Genuine feelings about how each ethnic group felt about the other were expressed, and in some cases, conflicts and prejudices discussed. More radical experiments with the curriculum were being planned for Maths and Science by the Maori teachers who, along with all the staff, were aware of the minority of Polynesian students taking the subjects. Many of the ideas the Maori teachers discussed with the researcher reflect some of the concerns of sociologists of education in developing a curriculum and pedagogy for working class students (see among others: Wilson, 1982, and Richer, 1986).

Ms Hine: *It's time the science teacher restructured their teaching to attract the Maori...Science deals with so many things that are close to our hearts...the style of teaching has to change, both for Maori pupils...and for Europeans too...Teachers need to restructure their subjects to get Maori students...Take Max...he spent nearly all day on the Marae working on the Tukutuku panels, so he can change it into Maths and Science for his pupils...He said: "O.K....if you can't beat them, then I'm going to join them!"...He stayed there with his papers,*

books and pens and pestered the living daylights out of the carvers and the weavers.

(Fieldnotes, 10/11/86, p.1648)

Both Ms Hine and Mr Ratu, the Maori teachers, had a high status among staff, and a high profile in the school. Said a Maori fifth Former: *"It makes you feel proud that you see two Maori teachers on the staff...I notice that Ratu and Hine are respected by the other staff." (Fieldnotes, 2/10/86, p.1369).* Both Maori teachers wielded most of their influence through the culture group, which they saw as an important space to encourage Maori students and help them in any problems they had, and to win them over to the school. With the national drop-out rate for Maori students being so high, [4] this was no mean feat, and both made an appeal to the staff for greater help in *"carrying the burden." (Fieldnotes, 6/11/86, p.1630).* Though Co-Ed High claimed a higher than average rate for Maori academic success, and local Maori elders praised the school for producing Maoris who were proud of their ethnicity, Ms Hine felt that the attempt to overcome Maori youth's cynicism, born of an awareness of the inequalities in New Zealand society, was an uphill struggle:

Ms Hine: *They say to me: "You're like that because you've got a European husband!"...And they say: "Oh, you and Ratu, you're just different...you've got those flash cars and two-storied houses...we'll never be like that...whatever we do!"*

(Fieldnotes, 10/11/86, p.1649)

So, as suggested in a previous chapter, the wider economic and social relationships of dominance have to be kept in mind in considering schools' efforts at transformation. Maori students still found schooling generally irrelevant and hard, though much less frustration and cynicism was expressed at Co-Ed High than at All Girls' High, for instance. Pakeha and Maori students still sat separately on the field. Maori parents attended Parents' Evenings, less frequently than Pakehas, and difficulties in coping with uninterested Maori students in classrooms often created unhappy teachers. The transformational efforts of biculturalism, even when, as here, they are integrationist in intent, cannot be measured. They can only be identified in the often frustratingly slow process of societal and attitudinal change.

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4. 65% left school in 1982 without any qualifications, compared to 27% of Pakeha students (Education Statistics, 1983).

Gender.

Two Heads of Departments informed the researcher that the dynamics of gender and schooling at Co-Ed High had been given a lot of attention in 1983, as a result of which a number of female teachers assumed various leadership roles. The school also claimed that there was a higher percentage of girls taking science at Co-Ed High than in any other co-educational school in New Zealand. However, the researcher's observations bore out Friedan's (1963) and Chandler's (1980) findings that girls choose subjects non-traditional to their sex less readily in co-educational settings. Few girls opted for motor engineering or woodwork. Moreover this tendency would have been emphasised by the fact that technical teachers generally expressed strong stereotyped opinions, including a belief that a woman's place is in the house. Both the school's attempt to educate students about sexism, as well as the fact that some teachers were not altogether beyond sexism themselves, are evident in the following excerpt from an interview with a group of seventh formers, one of whom said:

> *You get pretty well indoctrinated against sexism here...You pretty much have to accept that because it's part of everyday life...My sister tells me that she has this metal work teacher in third form, and if any sexist remarks come up she would tell him so, and now he's very careful not to...but that's another thing...I think it's only at a school like this can you say things like that to your teacher.*
>
> *(Fieldnotes, 10/10/86, p.1470)*

More teachers were found to have sexist attitudes at Co-Ed High than at All Girls' High, where the pro-feminist ethos was much stronger and overt. A fourth form girl commented about a male teacher at the former school:

> *He's always going on about how everybody's equal, but he doesn't treat us like that...he's up there and we girls are way down here...he only asks guys...and we'll try ages to answer, but he always choses the guys.*
>
> *(Fieldnotes, 17/7/86, p.979)*

More generally in the classrooms observed, an *"action zone"* (Good and Brophy, 1984) was identified which centred around boys, who enjoyed more of the teacher's attention, were asked to read more frequently (often as a control technique), and hassled girls constantly. Topics dealing with female issues, such as sexual

harassment, were glossed over or missed out because, as the girls told the researcher, *"the teacher knew the boys would cause an uproar." (Fieldnotes, 23/9/86, p.1258).* In general policy and structures, however, females were given status and power, as indicated earlier on.

Liberalism and Radicalism at Co-Ed High.

This presentation of Co-Ed High has highlighted its progressive, even "socially-critical" (Kemmis *et al.*, 1983), "transformative" (Codd, 1985) efforts. For these and other reasons, a number of progressive teachers were attracted to Co-Ed High. The Careers teacher, chairman of the local teachers' union, had encyclopedic knowledge of the "new" sociology of education, and even though he often felt powerless to effect radical change, discussed with the researcher his attempts to find *"interstices for transformation" (Fieldnotes, 18/3/86, p.455)* in relation to class, gender and ethnicity in his careers education programmes and interviews. Another, politically active in the peace movement, described his attempt to help geography students to perceive North American interests in Latin America, and presented an alternative interpretation of why that continent was poor.

A lesbian teacher, politically active in women's rights, felt the school gave her enough freedom to choose radical literature to explore class, gender and ethnic issues with students. A progressive teacher from All Girls' High told the researcher that of all the schools in the city it was probably Co-Ed High which would give her the freedom to teach progressive ideas.

Interestingly enough, three progressive teachers from Co-Ed High pointed out individually that the dominant ethos of the school was liberal rather than radical, and by generally turning a blind eye to asymmetric power relations in New Zealand society, it might make Co-Ed High students tolerant without encouraging them to face issues squarely. One teacher expressed this opinion in the following way:

> *I think liberalism is very dangerous...it's a glossing over...to me, to be radical is to be different at the root...is to see things quite differently...and what happens a lot here is we see*

> *things nicely, rather than seeing things as conflict or confrontationally...because we want to be "nice" and "mature" and "adult"...so we tend to gloss over...it's really important to air prejudices, to be sexist, racist...so that you can actually identify what it is...because we are all those...so it is important to hear myself say those things.*
> *(Fieldnotes, 3/12/86, p.1738)*

Throughout 1986 therefore, Co-Ed High manifested a tension between at least three images of schooling - the liberal, the radical and the conservative.

4.5. "ALL BOYS' COLLEGE."

Environment.

All Boys' College is the smallest school in the sample, having a total population of 400 students and 21 teachers. In 1986, four of these full-time members of staff were female, as were the two secretaries and librarian. All Boys' College differs from the other two schools described above in many ways. One was its integrated status as a Roman Catholic school. It is the only one catering for Catholic males in the region, and therefore attracts students from the various outlying country towns. The Private Schools Conditional Integration Act of 1975 authorised the absorption of private schools into the state system, which meant that they would receive funding completely from the state. Integrated schools followed state school prescriptions and were subject to state school inspectors. Those "integrated" were however allowed to keep their "special character", which signifies an education within the framework of a particular or general religious or philosophical belief, and associated with observances or traditions appropriate to that belief.

At All Boys', three of the staff were religious brothers. Of these, one was the principal, and one other taught only on a part-time basis. Another priest came to the school on irregular visits and acted as a spiritual advisor to the students. All four belonged to the Marist Religious Order. [5]

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5. In 1986, the Order celebrated its hundred and fiftieth year in New Zealand, a period which started when French Marist missionaries came to work in many of the islands in the South Pacific.

Of the staff, a few professed the Catholic faith and spoke about their beliefs openly on various occasions in the staffroom with the researcher and others. A larger number were either sympathetic to catholicism, or were indifferent. Despite this range of positions vis-a-vis faith, staff generally participated in religious activities and rituals organised at the school, and also took part in Thursday staff prayer/reflection services which replaced the usual morning teachers' meeting. One teacher told the researcher that it was occasionally a problem to be at All Boys' College and not be a Catholic (Fieldnotes, 23/6/86, p.864). In recruiting new teachers, the principal and Board of Governors looked for a marked sympathy, if not adherence, to the Catholic faith. There was little turnover of staff at the College, and in contrast with the other schools observed, only one member of staff could be described as young, being about thirty years old.

The College celebrated its Silver Jubilee in 1986, marking the 25th Anniversary of its opening on its new site on the "Hill", next to the University campus. Due to limited land space and an increasing number of students, All Boys' College had left its old grounds in the eastern part of the city, and apparently after countless fund raising ventures, involving primarily the Catholic community of the region, opened its doors to students in 1961. The second half of 1986 also saw the start of long-planned structural changes to the College buildings. Discussions about, and references to this were made throughout the year and during many staff and Board of Governor's meetings. On various occasions the principal expressed his frustration to the researcher at having so much of his time taken up by the extension of the College buildings.

The College's teaching blocks, administration centre, library and workshops formed the boundaries of a small quadrangle where students generally gathered for recreation purposes. A large hall served many purposes, and it was there that assemblies, religious meetings, parents' interviews and dances were held. A Chapel, which had been built recently using funds donated by the city's catholic community, lay fifty metres behind the blocks. In various informal interviews, senior students complained that they hardly ever used the Chapel, and that the money would have been better spent on improving the sports facilities of the College. The

school's north and south sides were bounded by a rugby pitch and tennis courts. In the latter part of the year, the various prefabricated structures serving as classrooms and workshops/technical drawing rooms were shifted to allow the planned building development programme to start.

Most of the College's classrooms, except the science laboratories, were, compared to the two other schools, rather bare and only basically equipped. The desks, often deeply layered with graffiti of an explicit sexual nature, were a subject of embarassment to the principal, who prior to the visit of an Old Boys' group to mark the College's Silver Jubilee celebrations, exclaimed at a staff meeting: *"We have to do something to remove all the obscene remarks that have accumulated suddenly over the last Term...I don't know what's happened!" (Fieldnotes, 7/3/86, p.365).* The desks were generally arranged in single rows, so that contact between one student and another was kept to a minimum. Posters and charts on the classroom walls were often frayed and faded, leading the principal to comment to staff in preparation for a series of visits by inspectors from the Department of Education: *"Window dressing is not on...I noticed that some of you have put up posters and children's drawings from previous years...they are faded, and window dressing is simply not on!" (Fieldnotes, 7/3/86, p.367).*

Religious symbols were displayed throughout the school, especially in the administrative block. There was a large photograph of the Pope, another one of the Founder of the Marist Order, a large statue of the Virgin Mary, various crests, insignias, and marble plaques referring to God, Christ, the Virgin Mary, the Saints, or to the cross. Crucifixes, pictures of the Sacred Heart, and small plaster statues of the Virgin were to be found in every classroom, in the Hall, Staffroom, and Library. The school crest, an integral part of the students' school uniform which was worn by all students, contained the following words in Latin: *Caritas Christi Urget Nos* ("The Love of Christ Urges Us On"). While an Anglo-Saxon version of Catholicism is very different from the more intense feelings generated by Mediterranean and South American believers, as described for instance by McLaren (1986) in his research of a Canadian Catholic school catering mainly for Portugese migrants, the authors's perceptive analysis of the role of ritual and symbol

in Catholic schools remains valid in the context of All Boys' College. This aspect will be developed in greater detail in a discussion of the covert messages given out by the school. It is enough here to quote McLaren briefly, to show that

> *These symbols and icons wrap the students in an ideological miasma heavily laden with Catholic significance and meaning...[they] are a form of concretising the transcendent qualities of God; they provoke students to "take notice" - to apprehend reality in a special way...Symbols are able to point to a reality beyond that which they signify, and thus they enable students to participate in that reality.*
>
> *(McLaren, 1986, p.66)*

Thus, while the icons for the two other schools in this study, namely casual clothing in one instance and feminists stickers and posters in the other, were secular, the ones for All Boys' were religious.

Six major points will be made about All Boys' College. First, the declared ethos of the school is described, and second, this is contrasted with the actual ethos as observed throughout 1986. The actual ethos applies to a number of points, namely the way the factors of ethnicity, discipline, excellence and gender were played out at the College. Finally, the power of the New Right in influencing the school is described.

Declared Ethos.

An important document reflecting the vision for All Boys' College as a Catholic school with a "special character", and thus referring to its overt ethos, was brought to the notice of the staff by the principal during the year. The document, *"Special Character for the Marist School"* (n.d.) refers to the Order's constitution, and singles out three basic agendas. The first refers to *"a sense of Church, living and expressing Jesus in the Community"*; another refers to the Virgin Mary *"as a model of sound family relationships."* The third agenda materialises the spiritiual devotion into a *"love for the deprived in society"* which includes (a) helping others to experience their dignity as human beings (b) helping others to find a fulfilling role in society, (c) being constructively critical of society, and (d) taking action on behalf of society. This third agenda is expressed in terms of an

inspiration from the charisma and action of Jesus and Mary, as well as the Founder of the Marist Order.

In later chapters of the document, the agendas are developed further in the context of the structure of a Catholic school. With reference to the third agenda for example, a Marist school should strive to *"challenge society in the light of the gospels"*; it *"creates a community in which the pupil experiences his dignity as a person"*, where there is a *"systematic formation of the pupils' critical faculties,"* a person who *"avoids the obstacles of narrow individualism and the exaltation of possessions."* The College is moreover striving to be

> *Sensitive to the call from every part of the world for a more just society and it tries to make its own contribution towards it. It does not stop at the courageous teaching of the demands of justice even in the face of local opposition but tries to put these demands into practice in its own community in the daily life of the school...[It] acts on the behalf of justice and participates in the transformation of the world...It is a practical education: it comes through action, participation and vital contact with the reality of injustice.*
> *(Special Character, n.d., p.13)*

Furthermore, in a section entitled *"Suggested means for implementing our Vision"*, the following guidelines are presented: defuse competition; respect differences; foster cultural groups within school; find work for unemployed; provide experiences of success for each; educate to change society, not merely fit into it; social/structural analysis to be taught; denounce, resist, and so on where necessary and not seem to tolerate everything; highlight social injustices such as racism; provide media education; teach change agent skills.

Of the three schools researched, such an agenda stood out as being the most overtly political in its consideration of the power relations in society, and in its unconditional declaration of support for the deprived. All the three Brothers individually and on different occasions told the researcher that their Order had chosen the theme of Social Justice, with special reference to racism as a focal point for its activities. All three had undergone courses in "structural analysis", which one of them described in the following way:

> *We basically take statistics, and see what is my past history, my story, and what's the story of the country I'm in at the moment...and once you sit down and look at the income tax and salaries...you soon find out who has the power...and who are the powerless...and it's the powerless who we should be working with...and in the future, all of the areas where the Brothers are involved will be subject to a process of structural analysis, and where the structures will not be changed by our presence, we'll move off to an area where we can change.*
>
> *(Fieldnotes, 20/11/86, p.1705)*

How such ideals are expressed in real terms at All Boys' College is a fascinating modern account of what the Brothers themselves would call *"metanoia"*, a missing of the target because of sin, and contributes in no small way to a clarification of what in our other typology is referred to as the reproduction and transformation debate in the sociology of education. Later in this thesis we will examine to what extent these declared goals were met. At present it is necessary to describe some characteristics which run contrary to the declared ethos.

Actual Ethos.

First, the College attracts a very specific group of students. They are all male, mainly white and middle class. The fact that they all have to pay a fee, even though it was a nominal one of $90 a term, ensures that very few working class (and Maori) students do actually make it "up the Hill". Some of the staff saw an advantage in this, saying:

> *The fact they're all aiming at the same thing, sharing the same values...since generally the cross-section of people from society we have here is smaller, it's easier to point the school in a direction...though that might be like a horse with blinkers on...because you're not likely to get such a diversity of opinions and ideas.*
>
> *(Fieldnotes, 20/10/86, p.1510)*

The Brothers, closer to the spirit of the school ethos as expressed in the document cited above, recognised the contradiction between what they professed, and what was actually taking place at All Boys'. In a formal interview with the researcher the principal said:

> *We're trying to change the structure of things, especially since I've been here...we have a larger proportion of kids who cannot afford us...we're still nowhere near the statistics given in the paper...11% of all kids in New Zealand have parents*

on the Domestic Purposes Benefit...we're certainly close to 5%, and we should be getting towards that 11%...But it's also changing the way a lot of people look at this school...and some staff who have been here a long while feel that standards are going down...But so is the socio-economic status of our kids going down...and that's a deliberate policy.

(Fieldnotes, 20/11/86, p.1706)

Parents sent their sons to All Boys' for other reasons besides the more overt one of giving them a "Catholic education." The following conversation between seventh formers unpacks some possible meanings and motivations:

Roy: *...But you take all the guys that are really at the top of things in New Zealand...a lot of them would never have gone to a state school...And it's going to get worse...because state schools are going down.*

R.S. *Why?*

Roy: *Government's not giving them any money...you get the middle class sending their kids to the state school, and they see it going down, down, down...and then they see All Boys' on the hill...*

James: *On the Hilltop!*

Roy: *...And they think that All Boys' ..."It's a Private School...and it's a better school"...and they're prepared to spend money...Like my parents...they whipped me out of a state school to give me a better education.*

(Fieldnotes, 29/4/86, p.670)

Ethnicity.

There were only about fifteen Maori students at All Boys' during 1986, and the percentage was always low partly due to the small number of Maori Catholics in the region. Few activities, in comparison with the other two schools sampled, were organised to recognise the cultural differences of this small minority, and the Maori boys tried to deny their ethnicity on various occasions and in various ways. Few identified themselves as Maori when asked by the principal. Most of them were subject to moral and physical aggression from Pakeha students. One fifth form Maori boy asked the researcher for an interview and expressed his unhappiness at being forced by his mother to leave Co-Ed High where all his Maori friends were, and being placed at All Boys' for a "better education". He spoke about his loneliness and frustration. Further interviews with other Maori students revealed similar feelings.

Tui: *Sometimes it hurts...but you hear so many racist comments that you get used to it...sometimes, the only way to survive is to scrap it out on the field...*

R.S. *Have you talked to the Brother about it?*

Tui: *It's no use...he can't do anything...They have a rhyme going about at the moment: "Don't snigger nigger, the KKK [6] is getting bigger!"*
(Fieldnotes,1/8/86, p.1076)

Indeed, the most racist and emotive language which came up in informal interviews with students came from All Boys' College, who referred to Maoris as *"bludgers"*, *"dirty sods"*, *"niggers"*, *"criminals"*, *"rapists"*, *"lazy"*, *"scabby"*, and *"thick"*. They were described as *"poor"*, and *"dirty"*, and *"even if they washed they still stank."* The fact that such racist attitudes came from junior and senior students alike suggests that the College was not effectively addressing prejudices in this area. While similar language was used in the two other schools, it was never so extreme or so emotive and was very often tempered by counter-arguments of a culturally sensitive nature.

Occasionally concern was voiced by individual staff members at the amount of racism at All Boys. One teacher was concerned that the school would appear racist to outsiders. The principal asked a Brother, who knew Maori language and culture well, to take one period of Social Studies in each of the third and fourth form classes and try to explain *"the Maori side of things"*...But he told the researcher at the end of the year:

> *I see it as a failure...I was trying to explain things to kids who didn't want to hear...there is an increasing resentment against things Maori being brought into everyday life...and now that Maoris are becoming more assertive, they are getting sick of them stirring up trouble...Most have picked up attitudes from parents and general Pakeha society.*
> *(Fieldnotes, 29/10/86, p.1559)*

At the College's Silver Jubilee Mass, the Brothers, with the backing of some members of staff, invited a Maori Catholic woman to sing a *karanga*, a traditional spiritual hymn in Maori. A group of parents protested after the mass that there was no place for Maori

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6. A reference to the Klux Klux Klan, an anti-black organisation in the United States.

during Mass or at school. On three separate occasions, three members of staff individually identified the start of the deterioration of race relations in New Zealand to the Springbok Tour of 1981, and asserted that race relations had been "perfect" before then. It is significant that a senior teacher, a half-caste Maori, never identified himself as a Maori, and neither did he promote Maori culture or prestige in the school. Students identified him as being European.

Thus, in terms of ethnicity and education, All Boys' spoke only in intentional language. Although by the end of the year the principal was encouraging teachers to follow a Maori language course at University, ethnic issues did not feature in staff meetings and Teachers' Only Days, except on one occasion. This was on a day dedicated to workshops on the Curriculum Review Report (1986) as requested by the Minister of Education, and the topic surfaced in answer to the question: *"How should schools reflect the many cultures of New Zealand?"* Even then, nothing concrete emerged. One teacher told the researcher: *"We either have to stamp the buggers out, or to elevate them to the heavens...But we can't go on dilly dallying in the middle." (Fieldnotes, 24/11/86,* p.1719). The only two spaces where Maori was dealt with in a positive way were first in English through such literary works as *The Pohutukawa Tree* - which the teacher introduced with a "crash course" in Maori culture- and second in History, which looked at race relations in South Africa with, depending on the teacher, comments made to compare and contrast this situation with New Zealand. Generally however, the anti-Maori ethos evident in the school prevailed.

Discipline.

Discipline, academic performance and sports frequently featured as topics in the various interactions between staff, both formally during meetings, and informally in the staffroom during recreation time, and between lessons. Discipline at All Boys' was characterised by its very hierarchical and military nature, both inside and outside the classrooms and hall. Students were called by their surnames. Assemblies were marked by ritual in respect of authority, with the boys standing to attention while the principal

walked solemnly to the stage or lectern to address them. The deputy principal and other deans addressed the students sharply and loudly, affirming their own authority, pointing out the importance of All Boys' image with the public, and therefore not tolerating such diverse student behaviour as going about with shirts not tucked into trousers, or appearing drunk in public after a dance. Manners were given great importance, and students appeared to be over polite, opening doors and formally saluting the researcher at the start of the year.

Personal expressions of style in hairdo or in modifications to the uniform, or in wearing earrings were not tolerated. A boy who shaved his hair off as a dare was sent home till his hair grew again. Corporal punishment, a hotly debated subject in New Zealand, was still practised at All Boys' by the end of the year. While this sort of punishment was administered by the deputy principal, the researcher also noted that it was used by one teacher in class. This teacher was observed over a period of four weeks. During the lessons, he frequently struck misbehaving students with a wooden ruler. An interesting feature of many "disciplinary" episodes in the classrooms and during assemblies was the fact that they were often accompanied by jokes or laughter, reminiscent of the type of *"benevolent dictatorship"* referred to by Gordon (1986, p.51).

Power was wielded by principal and staff, with little or no input from students. The Student Council was considered to be impotent both by the students and by the teachers themselves, although some of the latter wondered why the Council *"first started with a lot of enthusiasm but as the year went on, they became disinterested."* One teacher remarked: *"What do you expect?! We stamp on everything they suggest!" (Fieldnotes, 24/11/86, p.1720).* Students told the researcher of the various ingenious techniques they had developed to cope with *"all the silly little rules" (Fieldnotes, 4/3/86, p.348)* at school, in order to make life at the College *"more bearable."* These included smoking, using drugs, and beating up rival groups.

Some of the teachers were concerned about undisciplined behaviour despite all the measures taken. A whole Teachers' Only Day ,

dedicated to the discussion of Pastoral Care at All Boys', produced among other things, a document on *"Crime and Punishment"* with the suggestion that *"a list of punishment to fit crimes should be drawn up."* On various specific occasions, this style of discipline was justified in terms of what parents were expecting of the school, and what employers wanted to see in their prospective employees. This will be a major theme to be explored in relation to the messages All Boys' gives its students about work.

Excellence.

Academic excellence was another major concern for All Boys' College, though the school's prospectus saw it in the context of *"being only one element of education with a special character. Self discipline, self respect, and respect for others, together with a positive approach to life, make up other attributes of All Boys' students." (All Boys Prospectus, 1986).* Streaming was not carried out officially, though as with the other two schools, various classes were referred to in informal staff conversation as being the "good ones", and the less able students were all identified in the third form and placed in a special class.

A vague myth of excellence was propagated among students, who often referred to education within the state rather than the integrated schools as inferior (Fieldnotes, 29/4/86, p.670). Academic achievement was tied to the obtaining of high status jobs, and as one teacher put it, *"Careers are an all-compelling interest here."* Thus, the academic and the vocational featured together at All Boys, and fit the neo-classical orientation to schooling as described by Kemmis and his colleagues (1984). Students believed that *" we've got one of the best School Certificate pass rates around" (Fieldnotes, 29/4/86, p.662).* In reality, it seems that All Boys' does only slightly better than the other state schools considered in this study on the traditional indices of School Certificate passes. The comparable rates are: All Boys 62.6% passes, Co-Ed High 60.4% and All Girls' High School 59.6%.[7]

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7. If we take into account the effect of socio-economic status and ethnicity, the College could be seen to perform worse if the factors were to be held constant - Its better pass rate is therefore an artifact of population rather than education.

Sporting activities, especially rugby and cricket, were valued highly at the College. Matches with other schools were presented to students as a form of moral victories (or failures) for the school, and staff and students took great pride in every win. When at one stage, the first XV rugby team lost heavily, some of the staff spoke angrily about the coach, a fellow member of staff. When the coach arrived later that day, he was quite contrite and asked a teacher if comments had been made about him. The degree of competition on the sports field was very high, and students commented that even Physical Education lessons were often organised in the form of competitive games.

Gender.

A brief comment needs to be made about gender and education at All Boys' College. Sexism was a great concern to the principal, both as expressed among staff and students. Staff at All Boys' often made sexist comments and jokes, frequently referring to women as "birds". The point was reached where one of the female teachers commented angrily about it to the staff during a meeting. Such attitudes spilled over in the male staff's dealings with students, such as when during an assembly, one senior teacher remarked:

> *Why don't your mothers wake up and do your lunch? Where are they? Let's strike a blow at the women's movement in New Zealand, and do our own lunches!*
> *(Fieldnotes, 17/10/86, p.1499)*

Sexist behaviour and attitudes also appeared amongst the students. One female teacher told the researcher of instances she encountered in the classroom, such as when she asked the boys to clean up the class, and was told: *"But miss, that's women's work!" (Fieldnotes, 24/11/86, p.1719).* All Boys had no female teachers in positions of responsibility, and women were not seen addressing the students at Assembly or at any other school function. When asked whether they would like girls to attend All Boys', a group of senior students replied that they would not be able to behave really like *"proper men"*, they couldn't *"be themselves"* and *"be rough on the field"* if girls were around. Interestingly enough, some members of staff told the researcher that the principal was considering getting girls into the seventh form *"to get the boys to shape up." (Fieldnotes, 20/10/86, p.1512).*

Pressure from the "New Right".

The picture which emerges of All Boys' College is that of a conservative school with a transformative agenda which has not been translated into action. Although that agenda never really surfaced in staffroom discussions, it was obvious that the Brothers still held on to that vision of schooling, though they acknowledged their scepticism about implementing it. It would appear that one of the obstacles confronting them was the resistance of parents. At one point, the principal declared to the researcher:

> *There is a feeling right through the religious teaching orders that if we tried to run a Catholic school as we believe it should be run, we would lose three quarters of our rolls within a year or two.*
> *(Fieldnotes, 20/11/86, p.1704)*

Moreover, with the New Right asserting itself through religious communities, hopes for the transformative agenda of All Boys' seems doomed. At the Prize Giving Ceremony, the principal told parents:

> *There is a small group of Catholics, a growing group, who at times seem to believe that they are more Catholic than the Pope or the Bishops. Catholic Principals throughout the country feel themselves increasingly threatened by this group. They have borrowed many of the methods and approaches of the American Moral Majority with its narrow fundamentalism, its rejection of the rights of the individual, a suspicion of the intellect and a most un-Christian belief that tolerance of diversity is a snare of the devil. To reason with them is impossible; to confront their un-Christian pessimism is to be labelled as humanist (the ultimate insult it would seem); to refute them is to be attacked by innuendo and gossip. Such people are a small minority, but like the undiluted "back to basics" minority they can have a wide influence on those who agree with some of their arguments. Presently I am not aware that any parents belong to such groups, but many of you would know that such groups do exist.*
> *(All Boys' Magazine, 1986, p.2)*

A long-serving teacher at All Boys' told the researcher the following day that

> *Brother knew perfectly well, although he denied it last night, that there were people sitting in front of him that write letters to him saying this book shouldn't be taught, this subject shouldn't be taught in R.E....he's getting all sorts of pressure from people about quite innocent English textbooks that they claim go against this or that commandment.*
> *(Fieldnotes, 12/11/86, p.1653)*

He also said that another teacher besides himself had experienced difficulties with parents for dealing with "controversial" subjects, such as Israeli politics.

The same teacher also felt that part of the problem was the Church hierarchy, and gave an example of Brothers and Sisters from the Order who had been transferred to rural regions as a "punishment" for being politically involved in controversial issues. More to the point was the description of the retiring Chairman of All Boys' Board of Governors as the most powerful "power-broker" in the city's Catholic community, and a stalwart leader of conservative elements in the church. Such a revelation possibly explains the principal's attempts at the end of 1986 to steer the school towards the declared ethos with the help of a new Chairman and a group of new members for the Board of Governors.

SUMMARY.

The description of the three schools in which the research was carried out has highlighted the materialisation of "ethos" through beliefs held, decisions taken and pressures exerted by principals, staff groups and other adult members in the community outside the school. The description has highlighted similarities and differences both within each school and between the three schools. This inter-/intra-school comparison and contrast will be maintained throughout the presentation of data in the following four chapters. An analysis of the process of constructing and articulating priorities and meanings in the formation of a "school ethos" has revealed various conflicting interests, dichotomies and dialectics which have to be confronted in the school arena. It is interesting to note, however, that despite the differences between the three schools, student input has been found to be minimal. This in itself is a powerful message which, together with many others, lies hidden in the structural organisation of the schools. In describing the sorts of relationships and the forms of life developed in the three schools, this chapter has therefore prepared a background from which various covert messages given to students about the world of work can be explicated and related to other, more overt messages.

The organising structure for the following chapters involves first a presentation of the school-to-work messages teachers and schools intended to give, secondly the messages they actually gave, and thirdly the messages the students received, accepted or resisted. Consideration is given to the variables which intervene in the transmission and the reception of the messages. Such a structure overcomes the tendency of most accounts of the relationship between schooling and work which, as Hogan (1982) notes, have as one overwhelming feature in common the tendency

> *...to treat the school as a black box, an institution devoid of an internal cultural politics of its own, an institution characterized by processes of conflict and contest, negotiation and exchange, resistance and accomodation, between different groups within the school.*
>
> *(Hogan, 1982, p.58)*

The schools are therefore viewed as an arena of tension between processes of cultural production and reproduction, as a locus of human activity, and as a locus of conflict between the official culture and ethos of the school and the informal cultural creations of various groups of students.

PART TWO

CHAPTER 5.

SOCIO-POLITICAL MESSAGES ABOUT WORK.

This is the first of four chapters in which the research findings are reported. The structure used for presenting propositions grounded in data is described. In this chapter attention is given to socio-political messages communicated at school about work. Messages about the nature and conditions of work as well as relations at work are considered. Each will be treated in turn, first in terms of teachers' intentions regarding these messages, then in terms of actual messages given as observed by the researcher, and finally in terms of what messages students actually receive, accept, modify or resist. The variables intervening between the communication of the messages and their reception by students will also be described.

INTRODUCTION.

As noted in the chapter describing methodology, the findings of this research are organised around four major categories. These are:

[1] Socio-political messages about work.

[2] Messages about the nature of the labour market.

[3] Messages about the process of occupational choice.

[4] Messages about work given in transition programmes.

The categories will be presented in turn, and a chapter is dedicated to a discussion of each. Propositions about properties of the categories will be advanced, and data presented to illustrate each proposition. As a rule, and unless otherwise stated, propositions have a high "saturation" in data, and therefore qualify for the generation of theory. This means that all propositions advanced are formulated from a pool of similar data relating to the schools in this study - excerpts quoted from fieldnotes are not "anecdotal" but typical of others. For this reason, only one example is used in the majority of cases to illustrate each proposition. While an average of six other

examples (and often many more) could have been quoted to demonstrate the data in which the proposition is grounded, the length of the study constrained the researcher from giving even greater detail about the processes and forms of life observed in the three schools. Often reference will be made to the percentage or number of teachers/students who made a particular statement. Ambiguous adjectives, like "most" or "the majority", which are often utilised in reports of qualitative research, are avoided. It will be remembered that fifty teachers were inteviewed, and of these twenty were also observed giving lessons about work.

In this chapter as well as the next three, propositions are related to specific data from the three school, and are therefore substantive in nature. The move from substantive to formal theorising is accomplished in the final chapter of this thesis. In it generalisations about schooling in general, rather than about All Girls' High, Co-Ed High and All Boys' College, are made. Because of the inter-related nature of the categories developed, some overlap between properties is unavoidable. Occasionally therefore, propositions apply to more than one particular element, and rather than quoting similar data twice, a page reference is provided to other parts of the thesis where relevant data is presented.

The first major category refers to the socio-political messages teachers and schools gave their students about work. It has been argued in earlier chapters that all schooling is a political process, propagating forms of thinking and behaviour which are related to a social order. It is important however to tease out the types of political messages being given to students. On the one hand these messages may relate to promoting the *status quo*, on the other they may encourage a critical examination of the established order. Examples of the latter as they relate to the world of work in New Zealand would include a critical appraisal of such issues as:

* the subordinate position of women, Maori and Polynesian groups in the workforce;
* the hierarchical structuring of a segmented labour market;
* the inter-dependent nature of work and the dignity of all kinds of work;
* the evolution of workers' rights, and the struggle throughout history for better conditions of work;
* the relationship between workers and their work;

* the relationships between employers and workers as they exist in New Zealand, and possible alternatives to them;
* a critical examination of the reasons for the rise of mass unemployment;
* alternative ways of organising and structuring work in society.

This chapter examines the degree to which teachers emphasise the two opposing goals of reproducing or critically examining *status quo* themes. Within this chapter therefore "socio-political messages" refer to an examination of reproductive or transformative messages about issues regarding three properties of this major category, namely:

[1] The nature of work [2] The conditions of work and
[3] The relations of work.

The consideration of these properties of categories in this chapter - and of other properties in the following chapters - will be organised around the major research questions as stated in the first chapter. They have been refined in this context to highlight similarities and differences between and within the three schools. The research questions are therefore concerned with the following:

1. What messages are conveyed by the teachers?
   [a] Which of these were intended?
   [b] Which were actually conveyed?

   These questions are reviewed in the light of:
   Inter-School Differences and Similarities.
   Intra-School Differences and Similarities.

2. Did the students receive the messages?
   [a] What messages did they receive?
   [b] What messages did they accept?
   [c] What messages did they contest (modify and resist)?

3. What acted as intervening variables in the reception of the messages?

When the inter/intra similarities and differences headings are not utilised to introduce data, the reader is to assume that there was an overwhelming similarity among and within the three schools with reference to the particular issue under discussion.

5.1. TEACHERS' INTENDED MESSAGES.

Teachers' intended messages about the topic "work" were accessed in two ways. First, information was gathered by interviewing teachers

before they delivered the relevant units. Second, it was also possible to access intended messages through an analysis of the goals for career education as expressed in the schools' overall programmes in Social Studies, Career Guidance, Transition Education, or any other area in the curriculum which specified the topic "Work" as a subject. Considerable emphasis was placed by the researcher on knowledge and information given to all students within the general curriculum and within non-optional subjects like Social Studies. Less attention was given to optional subjects like History and Economics because messages given in them reached only a small group of students. An exception to this policy was made with regard to Transition Education Programmes, which were closely observed throughout the year. As has been explained in the Literature Review chapter, such programmes are an interesting and important example of the "new vocationalism" becoming evident in education, and since their objective is specifically to prepare groups of students for "adult and working life", they were considered to be an important micro-structure within schools which deserved special attention.

Five propositions are advanced in this section. First, teachers accept the world of work as given and consider their role to be one of helping students enter and fit into the established order. The second proposition follows from this, namely that teachers do not normally identify political issues as legitimate areas for their consideration in class. Third, the crisis in employment creates a pressure on teachers to address questions of a political nature which challenge the *status quo*. Finally, the fourth and fifth propositions are formulated - both apply to this and most of the other properties of categories in this and the following chapters. The fourth proposition states that the nature of schools is characterised by complexity and dialectic. Various research studies (including Anyon, 1980, 1981 and more recently Gaskell, 1986) attribute a homogeneity to schools and teachers, and fail to identify competing voices. However, Willis (1977) and Ramsay *et al.* (1983) have challenged this homogeneity and have highlighted the dialectic as played out by students. This study also emphasises the competing voices of teachers in giving messages and forming attitudes. The fifth proposition is related to two such different voices - the feminist one and the ethnic (Maori) one - it

states that when in schools there is an ideology at work firmly grounded in social movements and working for democratic ends, a space for an ideological critique of other aspects of the *status quo* is created. The following are excerpts from data to illustrate these five propositions.

Inter-School Similarities.

All teachers in the sample argued that helping students make informed occupational choices was the major goal for their lessons about work. One of the focal groups in this research, Social Studies teachers, illustrates this point very well. In the three schools, the Social Studies programme for the fourth form was entitled "Social Change". One of the central units of the programme was about the world of work and was variously called "Work", "Careers", or "Beyond School". The schemes of work provided by the three schools' respective heads of department, as well as the statements made by the Social Studies teachers themselves, stated that the objective of the unit was to prepare the students to make good and informed decisions and choices for their future working life. The following excerpt from the scheme of work for the unit at All Girls' High is typical:

> *Careers: This is to be an in-depth study of career choices and alternatives. It should include instruction on the process of obtaining a job. Careers folders are to be prepared for later use in preparing a* Curriculum Vitae. *Students will use the course as a basis for making subject selections for form five. The use of visiting speakers either from within or outside the school is encouraged. Please make sure these are representative of all job levels.*
>
> *(All Girls' High Social Studies Syllabus, p.10)*

In other words, the focus was to help students make the right choices about which job/s they could aim for.

In many ways this emphasis reflects the main thrust of the comprehensive *"Guidelines for Careers Education in Secondary Schools"* which were introduced into all New Zealand schools in May 1979. A textual analysis of this document reveals that the formulation of the problem of unemployment for example was not that

jobs were unavailable, but that students were not adequately motivated or informed about employment prospects. The *status quo* is supported, as is revealed in the career education curriculum's aim to develop:

> *...self-knowledge and personal growth of students [so that they could] identify and clarify their own values in terms of...their work expectations, as well as [to develop] opportunity awareness and appropriate aspirations in terms of the range of opportunities open to them and appreciate the effects of technological change on the patterns of work, training and employment.*
>
> *(Department of Education, 1979, p.4)*

The teachers did not question these definitions, and accepted them as personal goals for their teaching about work. The focus on occupational "choice" - a factor examined in detail in Chapter 7 - meant that rarely did teachers intend to critically examine *status quo* themes. By focusing on choice, the whole world of work was accepted as natural and common sense reality. It was obvious that the common assumption held by teachers was that they should prepare students for entry to the work force. There were some important exceptions to this trend however. These exceptions are highlighted in the following section.

Inter-School Differences.

The feminist ideology at All Girls' High led all but two of the teachers to identify another goal for their lessons about work. This was to show students the discrimination and injustices women suffered in the work force. While teachers at Co-Ed High also identified this issue in their account of intended messages, they referred to it in passing and placed less emphasis on the problems of gender and work. All Girls' High intended to make a powerful and organised critical examination of the *status quo* , with Social Studies and English teachers challenging gender stereotypes in the choice of occupation as one of their main goals for the unit on "Work". Such an agenda has been described in detail in the previous chapter. The distinction between All Girls' and Co-Ed High is drawn because, as examples througout this study will show, students consistently recalled better - and accepted more readily - those messages given by groups of teachers, rather than those given by individuals. Messages given on the initiative of individual teachers will be referred to in this study under the heading "Personal Ideology". It is important to note that none of the

teachers at All Boys' College identified the issue of gender and work as a goal for discussion.

Intra-School Differences.

While the major goal for all the teachers observed was the giving of information and guidance regarding occupational choice, there were three other departures, besides that relating to gender, from *status quo* messages. These refer to messages about class, unemployment and trade unionism. At Co-Ed High for instance, one Social Studies teacher said he would discuss the way social class affected occupational choice in the past. In an interview before a unit on work, he expressed his intention of showing his fourth form students:

> Mr Roach: *...the fact that in the past, social class used to determine which jobs were appropriate for which people. I will also talk about how this was true for women, and how all that has changed...You see, that ties in nicely with the overall topic for this year, which is "Social Change."*
>
> *(Fieldnotes, 26/5/86, p.728)*

All the teachers interviewed at Co-Ed and All Girls' High expressed their intentions to address the issue of unemployment. The topic of unemployment was given much less importance at All Boys' College because staff there felt that their students were largely immune to the labour market contraction. Messages about unemployment examine, rather than merely reproduce, the social order and will be considered in greater detail in the following chapter. It deals specifically with messages given by teachers regarding the nature of the labour market.

Only two teachers - both Social Studies teachers from All Girls' High - mentioned other departures from what can be termed "reproductive education". Ms Hirst declared an intention to talk about trade unions with her students. She felt that many students did not have a sense of history, that to them things simply were, and had no understanding of why they came about to be (Fieldnotes, 3/10/86, p.1377). She therefore wanted to show how unions had evolved across the years in order to obtain and safeguard good conditions for workers. Ms Woods was the other teacher. She expressed her intention to present work as one of the areas where groups of people obtained better access to wealth and power than others. She also wanted to show that all work had value in society:

Ms Woods: *I think that it's important that kids have self-respect about the job they do...that every job that's done is a necessary job and has it's worth, and that people's time has worth. And if they're giving up time to do something boring, it is still a service to the community and it is entitled to equal respect for any other job that's done. I don't think our society reflects that at all.*
(Fieldnotes, 3/10/86, p.1392)

It will be noted that the examples of intentions to depart from *status quo* messages were observed at All Girls' and Co-Ed High. No teachers from All Boys' College expressed any intention to question the established order.

Summary.

The above sections have shown that teachers generally spoke of intended messages about work in terms of helping students to make informed and "correct" decisions about their future jobs and careers. Few declared any intention to educate their students about socio-political alternatives to issues relating to work. A significant exception to this were teachers from All Girls' High whose feminist ideology led them to identify one aspect of the *status quo* which needed to be challenged.

5.2. ACTUAL MESSAGES.

The teachers' intentions, concerned as they were in supporting the *status quo*, were carried through into action. The messages actually transmitted to students are now organised around three properties: messages first about the nature of work, second about the conditions of work, and third about the relations at work are described. Elements of each property will be discussed in turn.

5.2.1. THE NATURE OF WORK.

Messages related to the property nature of work are described with reference to the following elements:

[1] the nature of work as either self-fulfilling or self-destructive,
[2] the changing value of work because of unemployment and
[3] work arrangements in New Zealand society.

Inter-and intra-school differences will be highlighted to describe teachers who reproduced or critically examined the *status quo* in these particular areas.

[1] The Nature of Work.

Four propositions are advanced in this section. First, teachers have a crude knowledge of the nature of the world of work - they therefore concentrate on skills which lead to a job rather than on a critical examination of the world of work. Second, teachers' crude knowledge of the nature of work leads them to divide it into two classes: high status careers or work which you "chose" or "liked" to do and which led to self-fulfilment, and factory-type work which led to self-destruction and drudgery. Two further propositions are developed from this dualistic notion: third, teachers attribute higher status to professional careers, and fourth, they also make judgements about the appropriateness and acceptability of work characterised by drudgery for some students rather than others. Data to illustrate these four propositions are presented below.

[a] A crude knowledge of the world of work.

Four of the twenty teachers observed felt that because of their adult status they had better access to knowledge about work than their students. One said for instance *"Well...They have to accept that we know more about work than they do...We're older, and we've been there." (Fieldnotes, 22/2/86, p.185).* Seventy five percent of those observed and/or interviewed however expressed a concern that they were ill-equipped to teach about the subject of work. A typical example is provided by the following Social Studies teacher from All Girls' High, who said:

> *Ms Hirst: I think teachers are very isolated. I would say that most teachers secretly believe that theirs is the most difficult of all jobs, and the most stressful, and so they are unaware of the stress caused just by earning a very low income, and having to struggle. So, they have no real understanding of the different income levels and the conditions of employment for some people.*
>
> *(Fieldnotes, 3/10/86, p.1380)*

All seven technical teachers interviewed felt better equipped than other subject teachers to talk about the "world of work" because of

the fact that they had worked in other areas in the labour force before becoming teachers. This represents an important intra-school difference. One of these, from Co-Ed High School, said:

> Mr Snook: *You tend to get messages about work from all technical teachers, because our background is not heavily full-time education oriented. Ours tends to be the university of life outside, the world at large, because we've been in the industrial workplace, which is different from an office or a professional lay-out. So we're in a fairly rough environment in some respects...the manual, blue-collar area really, and the kids realise that...and parents too will know that, and will feel that technical teachers' opinions are a bit more worldly in that respect.*
>
> *(Fieldnotes, 17/11/86, p.1683)*

Partly because of their ignorance of the world of work, all twenty teachers actually observed delivering lessons about work placed an overwhelming emphasis on pre-employment aspects of work, such as the skills of writing letters of application and self-presentation at job interviews. This emphasis moreover translated into a specific practice on the part of teachers. In their lessons, the priority became the gaining of a position in the labour market rather than a critical examination of that same market. Any such examination was at best crude, and in seventy percent of the cases, missing. Only two of the teachers observed gave a detailed analysis of the nature of work in the established order, and how that affected the person who became a worker. The rest of the teachers accepted the world of work as it was, the implied message being that students had to develop skills to fit into it. Such implications were embedded, for instance, in a set of four resource booklets made available by the Department of Labour and used by all Social Studies teachers in the three schools in their delivery of a unit about "Work". The following is an example of a passage from these booklets which students were asked to read in class:

> *It is unlikely that you will find every aspect of any job totally satisfying. Often you will have to do things which do not fit in completely with your values...Many of your satisfactions must come from activities outside of work.*
>
> *(Looking Ahead: v.1: 1986, pp.13-14)*

The imperfections in the world of work as it presently exists are therefore presented as inherently natural, and students are enjoined to accept and adapt.

[b] Work as Self-Fulfilment.

In their presentations of the world of work, teachers stressed "self-fulfilment" and the matching of interests and strengths with jobs over the basic need for money and a livelihood. This view of work as a source of self-fulfilment (a particularly middle class concept: see Clarke, 1980) is evident in the following examples. One Co-Ed High Social Studies teacher for instance did her best to steer her fourth form students away from a consideration of jobs in terms of monetary reward. She praised professional people like doctors, nurses, ministers of the church, and teachers because *"For these people money comes second to helping people." (Fieldnotes, 28/7/86, p.1023).* Theirs were "vocations" rather than mere "work". Such distinctions reveal a common feature of teacher discourse about the nature of work, a discourse which has at least two implications. First, such discourse idealises "professional" work and ignores any possibility of examining problematics. Questions of, for instance, why professionals have more status and better access to wealth in society are therefore mystified. Second, by highlighting "self-fulfilment" as a goal, the discourse fails to recognise the status and importance of manual and more "menial" tasks which presumably offer less self-fulfilment. The emphasis on self-fulfilment is also apparent in the messages given by an All Boys' Social Studies teacher to his fourth form class. He dictated the following notes which reinforce the notion and expectation that a wise occupational choice is one that leads to self-fulfilment: the implication of course is that those who are in particularly oppressed conditions of work have only their unwise choice of occupation to blame.

Mr Tate: *The successful person is the one who enjoys doing the job he has. For such a person the day is short and it is not so tiring. For such a person there is a great satisfaction in doing the job well. Such a person is always trying to improve his skills at the job, and accept greater responsibility. Success is not tied to money and material things because they will not of their own accord assure you of happiness. Success is being happy in what you are doing.*

(Fieldnotes, 15/8/86, p.1141)

Teachers' assignment of low status to manual work was of the passive rather than the active kind. By describing the world as it

is, a world where differential rewards are given to different types of work, they passively accepted rather than actively exposed the processes inherent in the social order. The reproduction of hierarchical values took place through a process of unexamined attitudes and common-sense assumptions and practices. At All Boys' College for instance, the Careers Adviser complained to the researcher:

Mr Tate: *So many of our students' fathers are doctors and lawyers, yet the boys aim at "yuk" jobs...This school doesn't push them hard enough.*
(Fieldnotes, 22/9/86, p.1221)

Another instance which applies to all three schools can be found in the uncritical use of the *Looking Ahead* booklets. One of these had a whole section representing the different occupational groups in New Zealand. The occupations requiring the most extensive education and training, the "Professional" and "Technical" groups, are presented first, while "Operators" and "Labourers" are presented last. *(Looking Ahead, v.1:1986, pp.16-17).*

[c] Work as Self-Destructive: Factory Work.

Teacher attitudes towards work and messages about it are revealed in their consideration of blue-collar and manual work, and of factory work in particular. This sort of work was presented as being dreary and inferior, and teachers urged students to avoid it. Only low-achievers, in response to the imperative of realism, were encouraged to accept this sort of work. What follows are some examples of the ways teachers at All Girls' High dealt with the nature of factory work.

Images of factory work were provided by English teachers through poetry and lyrics. One fifth form teacher from All Girls' High gave her students a poem by Denis Glover entitled: "Girls in a Factory." These girls are described at work:

Their heads are bent, the tacking needle
Stitches along the hours, along the seams.

The only escape from this dull drudgery is romance:

Perhaps a scarlet thread of love
A daisy chain of dreams

suggesting perhaps that marriage allows them an "escape" not usually afforded to males. Another English teacher at the same school used lyrics by American singer Bruce Springsteen in a song called "Factory". Here the imagery is even more stark:

> *Through the mansions of fear*
> *Through the mansions of pain,*
> *See my daddy walkin'*
> *Through them factory gates in the rain.*
> *Factory takes his feeling,*
> *Factory gives him life,*
> *The work, the workin' just the workin' life.*
>
> *End of the day factory whistle cries*
> *Men walk through these gates*
> *With death in their eyes.*

The teacher led a discussion with her students about the depressing nature of repetitive and boring manual work, work which dehumanises persons (Fieldnotes, 13/8/86, p.1127). Despite the fact that such messages alert students to the bad conditions of work in some areas of the labour market, the messages are themselves problematic because there does not seem to be an understanding and appreciation of the value of manual and factory work which some students were willing, even eager to do.

This problematic became evident when Ms Woods, a Social Studies teacher at All Girls' High, invited a teacher to talk to her fourth form class about her experiences as a casual worker in a fish factory. Ms Woods' intention, as noted earlier, was to emphasise society's need for all types of work, and that all work had value because workers were giving up their time in service to society. The invited teacher gave a graphic description of the conditions of work there:

> *It was the pits, it was killing, not pleasant at all...My hands became a mess because I was always dipping them in cold water. Muscles were ripped and I got repeated strain injury. Seven hours a day, your feet end up so sore. Nobody is changed around. That was life on the line...none had School Certificate. On Monday and Tuesday they talked about what they did in the weekend, and Wednesday, Thursday and Friday what they wanted to do in the weekend. It was so monotonous and boring, but it was a job. A hard life, but the people are good.*
> *(Fieldnotes, 13/8/86, p.1116)*

In a formal interview after the lesson, Ms Woods recognised that the intended message had not been communicated. Instead, the

message had become a denunciation of manual work in general, and factory life in particular. She said:

> *There is a conflict of knowing that some girls have to work in that set-up than not work at all in our system...and so it's a tricky one because you can actually get a very negative view about factory work, and some factory work is interesting...though the sort that teacher was working in was pretty rugged, and that sort of job has problems attached to it, in that there were things happening which ought not to have been allowed to happen, even in terms of health considerations.*
>
> *(Fieldnotes, 3/10/86, p.1389)*

This same problem confronted the All Girls' High Careers Adviser. In her case, there was an acknowledgement that factory work was largely demeaning, but she felt obliged to urge non-achieving students to accept it because of the imperative of "realism". Details about available factory jobs were often phoned into school by the manager of a local textile factory, and the Careers Adviser told the researcher of her dilemma:

> *Ms Tyler: When low achievers come to me for careers advice, they're all interested in child care, nursing, working with animals. They're simply not interested in factory jobs because to them, they're low status jobs. They're so unrealistic! I tried to get one student to work at a clothing factory, but she didn't want to hear of it. Mind you, it's true enough that some of it is sweat labour.*
>
> *(Fieldnotes, 23/9/86, p.1244)*

The Careers Adviser was therefore caught in the dilemma of knowing that some jobs in factories were not offering much to the workers in terms of either conditions or rewards. At the same time however, she wanted to urge realism on students who, in her opinion and in that of teachers generally, could not really hope for anything better.

> *Ms Tyler: Some of these students have very, very high aspirations about their own abilities, and that is not borne out by their results or by their attitude...ehm...and I try to make them realise that they have to be realistic...They have to marry what they're offering with what's available out there.*
>
> *(Fieldnotes, 26/11/86, p.1727)*

Intra-School Differences.

Despite the overall similarity of messages in this section, some important differences appeared within the three schools and need to be highlighted. These differences mainly arose from personal ideologies of individual teachers, or of groups of teachers (in this case identified by their ethnicity).

The hierarchical conception of work described above was challenged by a few teachers; however these isolated attempts took the form of incidental references rather than a full-fledged critical inquiry. Ms Hirst at All Girls' High for instance told her fourth form social studies class during an eleven-lesson unit on "Work":

Ms Hirst: *All work that is to be done is work. It is ridiculous when we divide between one job and another. We need people who pick up the rubbish as much as we need doctors and lawyers. Unfortunately however, some jobs provide more money than others...but you have to decide which values you hold.*

(Fieldnotes, 19/8/86, p.1147)

An English teacher at the same school suggested the following topic for debate during a unit on "Work" she organised for her fifth form class: *"That the rubbish collector is more important to New Zealand society than the Prime Minister."* Nobody chose the topic, and therefore any challenge to hierarchical conceptions of work was not debated within this particular unit. Another incidental reference to hierarchical status of work came from a Co-Ed High Social Studies teacher. He had given his fourth form class an exercise to do regarding career choice as part of the unit on "Work". Giving the copybooks back to the students he said:

Mr Roach: *I didn't give any marks because I didn't want to suggest that what one chose was in any way better than the other.*

(Fieldnotes, 3/6/86, p.786)

All of the above could be seen to be very weak challenges to reified ideas held by students, challenges which, as will be seen in later sections, were lost among the more powerful covert messages about the differential status of jobs given by all three schools.

A rather more concerted challenge came from Maori teachers who wished to promote traditional Maori beliefs about the importance of all kinds of work for the better functioning of the tribal unit. One Maori teacher from Co-Ed High described the messages she gave her students in the Maori culture club regarding the interdependent nature of work:

Ms Hine: *I tell them we all need one another! In the Maori village, in the* marae *community, each job is important, everyone depends on everyone else. Everybody is inter-related, and they can't succeed without the rest, and if one falls down, well, the rest of them fall down...And so it's really a network, and each one is important. And it's like*

> *visitors to the* marae*...If the committee hasn't been there to prepare for those visitors, then the network isn't working. Everything is important, from the peeling of potatoes to the preparation of the* wharenui *right to the leaving of the visitors, and right to what we call the* patai.
>
> *(Fieldnotes, 10/11/86, pp.1646-7)*

Despite these traditional values, Maori teachers at both Co-Ed and All Girls' High felt that, because of the differential rewards paid in the labour market, and because Maori students generally went into those areas which were least paid, they had to give another message, one that was contradictory to their traditional beliefs. Another Co-Ed High Maori teacher therefore said:

Mr Ratu: *I have the feeling that our youngsters, because they don't appear to push themselves into seeking jobs that give them better status, they tend to plug for the work that doesn't require too much training, the kind of work perhaps where they can work together as a family...So we brought people from the outside world to speak to them and tell them not to be satisfied with any job that comes up, but rather to aim their sights a bit higher.*

(Fieldnotes, 18/11/86, p.1699)

Summary.

Teachers' knowledge of the world of work has been challenged in this section on the grounds that it is both crude and prejudiced. Their prejudices have been attributed to a passive acceptance rather than a critical appraisal of a segmented labour market, a hierarchical structure which in Chapter 1 has been shown to be a primary cause of many social injustices and inequalities. Members of groups who have suffered or are still suffering some of these injustices, identified by their gender (female teachers, especially those at All Girls' High) and ethnicity (Maori teachers) gave messages which departed from the values embedded in the established order. It will be noted that all the instances of departures from *status quo* themes come from All Girls' and Co-Ed High. As in other sections, All Boys' College proved to be the exception.

[2] The Changing Value of Work.

Two propositions will be presented in this section. The first is that because of their awareness of the increasing and permanent nature of unemployment, teachers adopt a role of socialising students into the acceptance of a new approach to the old work ethic. The distinction Dewey (1916) makes between "education as a function of society" and "society as a function of education" is useful here, and leads to a second proposition. This is that the discussion of the crisis in capital accumulation opens a space for a critical examination of the established order and for consideration of more equitable alternatives. The first proposition has medium saturation, in that only forty percent of teachers observed and/or interviewed gave messages relevant to the issues; the second has a low saturation. These propositions will be explored in detail in the next chapter. It suffices here to note two points. First, the general insistence on achievement at all three schools, and the relating of that achievement to future career goals, ensured that a top priority and value was given to work. Second, awareness of mass unemployment led to a contradiction between, on the one hand, urging on students, in overt and covert messages, the traditional work ethic and, on the other, telling them that this same ethic was no longer appropriate in a world with a crisis of employment.

Teachers who dealt most directly with this issue were Economics teachers. During a four-lesson unit on unemployment, one All Girls' High Economics teacher discussed "job-sharing" with her sixth form students and set them the following essay title: *"A shorter working week could create a need for additional workers and reduce the unemployment problem. Comment on this statement." (Fieldnotes, 17/6/86, p.843).* A Social Studies teacher at the same school showed her class that work was only one part of their life, and there could be and should be self-fulfilment in other areas too. She drew a "Life Career Rainbow" to show that the family, the school, personal relationships, leisure, and community involvement besides work were important and fulfilling aspects of life (Fieldnotes, 15/5/86, p.1146).

Other instances of addressing the issue were observed at Co-Ed High. While describing the relationship between inflation and unemployment in New Zealand, an Economics teacher said:

> *What I tell them is that we have to do away with the work ethic, that it has to change...that when we meet people, we just ask them their name and their job. We have to start accepting the idea of paying people for playing, that we cannot any longer consider those on the dole as the lowest of the low, that those who we term without employment can be quite happy drawing in the sand.*
>
> *(Fieldnotes, 5/6/86, p.792)*

The messages about the need to change the work ethic do not necessarily represent a critical examination of the social order. Rather, they can be considered as an attempt to socialise students into responding to new demands of a failing system. Some teachers however did not divorce the question of alternative work arrangements from the question of alternative political and economic set-ups. Opinions about the need for the redistribution of wealth made necessary by large numbers of people being cut off from the means to a livelihood were on four occasions expressed by teachers, and on two occasions messages about this given to students. One of these references was made by an All Boys' Physics and Computer Studies teacher. He described how he dealt with the topic in class:

> *With computer studies, we talk about technology, that it is creating unemployment and that it will create more recreation time. But I don't find them very receptive to these ideas. There's also something in the fourth form textbooks. I mention the "leisure society"...that is in a video I show them. But how real is that for New Zealand? It's a good video, with the idea of restructuring society to share out the cake, and work is one way of doing that.*
>
> *(Fieldnotes, 20/10/86, p.1513)*

While such messages were given by individual teachers, messages about the demise of the work ethic reached a larger number of students in the three schools because they were written on the *Looking Ahead* booklets. One section, entitled "Work in the 80s: What's changed?" makes the following suggestion to parents and students:

> *Make sure your son or daughter knows how to use their time. Not just to develop good habits, but to prepare for a world in which there'll be more time to spend on hobbies and interests.*
>
> *(Looking Ahead: Homeguide. 1986, p.7)*

Summary.

The awareness of a new situation in the established order, namely the lack of work for an increasingly large section of the population, leads teachers to encourage students to look to other sources of self-fulfilment. This message has been shown to reinforce the *status quo*: by pointing to the "inevitable", the state of non-work is not opened to critical debate where groups of people can make decisions (about the levels of technology adopted by a country, for instance). Rather, the message is that young people's attitudes need to be changed so that the established order can remain functioning. The only challenge to the order that is made by a few teachers refers to the need for a better distribution of wealth. Again, coping with change rather than managing change is the central message - a message which embodies determinism and fatalism where citizens are construed as powerless in the march of historical forces.

[3] Work Arrangements.

At no stage were any teachers observed critically analysing the organisation of work in New Zealand society. The modes and relations of production were referred to as a given reality, a reification whereby things were like stones - they had always been like that, it was natural for them to be like that, and there was not a hint of a suggestion that work arrangements could be structured differently in society. This relates to a proposition advanced in various other sections in this study which describes teachers as immersed in a conservative and reproductive ideology.

Intra-School Differences.

There were only two instances observed that suggested that contemporary New Zealand work relations and modes of production were not a-historical or universal. One Co-Ed High Social Studies teacher gave his fourth form class a text about work as organised on Pitcairn Island in the Pacific Ocean. Because of the island's isolation and small population, work arrangements were different there. The text read:

> *To me as a visitor, the constant variety of day-to-day jobs was a source of interest. No day's work was ever like the one before it. The Pitcairn man, however, looks forward to the day when he can work in New Zealand at an eight-to-five job; where he knows what time is his own and can do what he likes with it; where he knows how much he is going to earn and how much it will buy.*
>
> *(Fieldnotes, 3/6/86, p.788)*

A deeper insight into alternative organisations of work was given at All Girls' High by Ms Woods to her fourth form class in a unit on Trade Unions. She spoke of slavery and of feudalism as systems of organising work in the past, and described how traditional Maori society had a totally different conception of work:

> *Maori society had no concept of profit. Goods were made because they were needed or for their beauty. Work was therefore not the most important thing in life. Maori people did not need trade unions. Trade unions grew as people began to work for others. Two classes of people developed: the Boss class, who owned the factories and the land; the Working class, those who had to work to live.*
>
> *(Dictated notes: Fourth former's exercise book)*

Ms Woods also asked her economics students to analyse economic systems as descibed in various historical novels that were popular with some of her classes. At the end of the school year, she invited the researcher to talk to her fifth form economics class about his experience of living in a socialist country with a planned economy. She then asked her class to contrast that with New Zealand's free market economy.

Summary.

The above sections have shown that teachers generally gave messages which reinforced and reproduced rather than analysed, questioned or challenged notions of the nature of work in New Zealand society. They accepted and transmitted messages about the hierarchical status of jobs, failed to acknowledge the value and importance of certain types of work, and generally taught to a system that was. Messages which examined critically the nature of work were seen to arise either out of necessity, because of the anticipated demise of work and the widespread increase of unemployment, or out of a conviction based on individual or group ideology.

5.2.2. THE CONDITIONS OF WORK.

Messages related to the property conditions of work are described with reference to the following three elements:

[1] General rights of workers;

[2] Trade unions and

[3] Women and conditions of work.

Again, inter-and intra-school similarities and differences will be described to highlight teachers who reproduced or critically examined the *status quo* in these particular areas.

[1] General Rights of Workers.

Two propositions are advanced in this section. First, teachers emphasise employers' rights to the detriment of the rights of workers. This emphasis applied to all three schools in this study. Second, the crisis in employment encourages the emphasis of employers' criteria and interests rather than the interests of educating future workers/non-workers about their rights in a democratic society (see Carnoy and Levin, 1985). This was developed in various areas pertaining to these four sections. Teachers were seen to take pains to highlight the "legitimate" expectations of employers from workers, and to point out that, as the All Boys' Careers Adviser said to a fourth form class, *"There's no way you'll get away with things in the workforce that you get away with at school." (Fieldnotes, 18/9/86, p.1191).*

There were only a few instances recorded where the rights of workers were considered. In all three schools, Social Studies teachers made use of a typology, SPEEDCOP, to help students think about all that they should know and consider when looking at a job. The acronym stands for Surroundings, Prospects, Entry and Training, Effects, Description of Work, Conditions, Organisation, and People involved in a particular job or career. The Department of Labour booklets referred to earlier gave details about each factor in the typology, and under the topic "Conditions" suggested the following items for the students' consideration:

CONDITIONS:

What your employer provides for you and what you have to agree to:

What are the hours, breaks, holidays, etc.? What is the pay? How is sick pay arranged? What rules are there made by the Government, the firm, or the union? What facilities are provided (canteen, toilets, lockers, tools, sports clubs, etc.)? How would I travel to work?
(Looking Ahead, v.1:1986, p.22)

In this manner, it could be said that the students' attention had been drawn to the fact that they too had the right to expect certain conditions from the employer.

Many of the other messages about the topic took the form of incidental references rather than planned and informed discussions about conflicting interests in the workforce. An example of this is the Careers Adviser at Co-Ed High. He was running a four-lesson unit on "Employment Seeking Skills" with sixth formers. During one of the sessions, he showed the class a video about the first day at work. It attempted to promote a balanced view, where *"the worker must learn to know what the employer expects of you, as well as what the employer's obligations are towards you." (Fieldnotes, 18/3/86, p.447).* The video also gave specific messages about pay rates or awards which gave students a full description of the job, including conditions of work and rate of pay.

The three schools legitimated the primacy of employer over worker in various ways. One of these was the general lack of criticism of employers. Only two teachers of the twenty observed actually criticised employers in the classroom, and spoke of the "boss class" and their interests as against those of the "worker class" and their interests. Both teachers were from All Girls' High. Such references did not at any time take the form of explicit and detailed structural explanations of the functioning of capitalist relations, or how the "boss class" took surplus value from labour.

Ms Woods, for instance, insisted with her fourth form social studies class that in job interview situations, *"the boss has a limited right to know about your private life." (Fieldnotes, 25/9/86, p.1246).* Ms Hirst and Ms Woods were also the only two teachers to give specific attention to trade unions, and therefore

gave their students insights into the reasons employers had in oppressing workers. The messages they gave in their units on trade unions will be described later in this section.

More direct criticisms of employer practices came from speakers invited into school to address students on specific topics relating to work. This fact throws further light on a proposition advanced earlier that teachers have a naive and crude understanding of the world of work. The manager of an employment agency, for instance, told All Girls' High sixth form students during a talk on interview skills within a recreation programme called "Keeping down a Job":

> *A lot of employers will pay the minimum...that really gets me angry. They take young people because you're cheap! They'll give you the minimum wage. They'll not only pay little, but they'll make you redundant when they no longer need you. They make some excuse, a downturn in business, or put the girl in the wrong, such as "she can't spell" or "she's too quiet"...but it's really not your fault if you've been made redundant.*
>
> *(Fieldnotes, 31/7/86, p.1069)*

Trade union representatives speaking at a school leavers' seminar at Co-Ed High gave similar messages. They showed how employers exploited young workers and then made them redundant when they turned eighteen to avoid paying higher wages. (Fieldnotes, 20/11/86, p.1713).

Summary.

With very few exceptions, all three schools reinforced the notion that employers' rights are supreme. The rights of workers were not highlighted.

[2] Trade Unions.

Four propositions will be advanced in this section. First, teachers believe they are neutral when they avoid addressing political issues in class. Second, the so-called "null curriculum" is not a neutral void - rather, what is not taught has *"important effects on the kinds of options one is able to consider, the alternatives one can examine, and the perspectives from which one can view a situation or a problem" (Eisner, 1985, p.97).* Third,

when confronted with polemical issues, teachers engage in avoidance as a survival strategy to ensure their own comfort rather than educational ends. Fourth, such selective avoidance by teachers derives from their ideological positions and their particular relationship to capital and class interests. In other words, teachers have a vested interest in upholding the *status quo*.

There is no obligation to teach about unions within any of the subjects at the secondary school level. The topic is recommended as an option within the social studies syllabus. Only two of the twenty teachers observed chose to do this option during 1986. This, coupled with the fact that there is not a single reference to trade union movements in the *Looking Ahead* booklets, meant that by far the greatest majority of students in the present study received no trade union education at all.

The subject of trade union education, when broached with teachers, provoked a muted response. Comments such as the following, made to the researcher by the All Boys' Careers Adviser, were typical: *"Trade unions are a hot potato in New Zealand. Not many teachers talk about them in class." (Fieldnotes, 18/9/86, p.1192).* Various teachers explained why they avoided the topic. A Co-Ed Social Studies teacher, observed for the duration of a unit on "Work" with a fourth form class, told the researcher:

Mr Roach: *I sometimes do a short unit on unions, but it's another area where prejudices tend to come out. I don't know if I ever got anyone who expressed positive, definitely positive views about trade unions...They also haven't got any pictures of employers' exploitation of workers...A few of them who take history learn about the conditions of mines in England in the 1840s or about the clothing industry in England in the last century...but not really about the coalmines and towns in New Zealand in the early part of this century! So, they find it difficult to believe that employers can act badly...and of course the inconveniences that have come they see as created by the unionists because they're the ones who go about creating strife.*
(Fieldnotes, 24/7/86, pp.1004-5)

Another Social Studies teacher from All Girls' High said:

> *Unions can be a very controversial issue. You just have to mention trade unions in a class, and you get this stream of abuse and insults and very hostile feelings towards unions...prejudices like "They're running this country" and all that. So I think that teachers are often afraid of going into areas where*

> *it would cause tension and disruption in the class, just as teachers don't touch on the areas of race relations in New Zealand because they're afraid of what they might stir up.*
>
> *(Fieldnotes, 3/10/86, p.1372)*

Five teachers identified another reason for their own and their colleagues' avoidance of trade union education. This reason had to do with the class location of teachers and their identification with specific ideological positions and class interests. This ensured that messages about work were more firmly entrenched in favour of the *status quo*. A Social Studies teacher from All Girls' High who actually spent three lessons on trade unions in a unit on "Work" with her fourth form class said:

> *Ms Hirst: I think that a lot of teachers keep away from it because they are themselves personally ambivalent in their feelings towards trade unions. If you said to a teacher "You belong to a Trade Union", they would be very hostile. It's a class thing to some extent...that if you are waged, or not especially well qualified, you belong to a trade union, and if you are on a salary, and are reasonably well-paid, then you belong to an Association. So we have a Medical Association, and our union is called a Teachers' Association.*
>
> *(Fieldnotes, 3/10/86, p.1373)*

Twenty five percent of all teachers interviewed expressed a degree of reservation about trade unions. For instance, one teacher from All Boys' College felt that unions were *"too powerful...they keep pushing workers around." (Fieldnotes, 28/10/86, p.1555)*. Another from All Girls' felt that unions were almost a *"dirty word"* for many of her colleagues (Fieldnotes, 18/9/86, p.1200). On three separate occasions students reported teachers blaming unions for unemployment and for the closing down of businesses. Consequently, few teachers were found to have addressed union education, or to have done so positively in the schools studied. This was not through lack of resources. All three schools had trade union education kits published by the Department of Education (1983). All Boys' College particularly, as a Catholic school, could have made use of an influential encyclical by Pope John Paul II entitled *Laborem Exercens* ("On Human Work", 1981) as an excellent resource.[1]

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1. Baum (1982) considers many of the new ideas in the encyclical as *"derived from a critical and creative dialogue with Marxism" (p.3)*. Liberation theologians like Gutierrez in Lima (McGovern, 1984) used comic book versions of the encyclical to conscientise oppressed classes. In New Zealand, the Task Force on Trade Union Education (1987) notes that the most significant source for their deliberations about work came from the encycical.

The principal however admitted that many of the encyclical's progressive ideas could not filter through to the curriculum. He was aware that groups of Catholics had appropriated ideas from the Church's social teachings, but felt that generally such groups were *"speaking in a language where you've got to be among the powerless to know what they are talking about". (Fieldnotes, 18/11/86, p.1707).* For various reasons therefore, trade union education fell into the "null curriculum". The major underlying reason for this serious lacuna can only be ideological.

Intra-School Differences.

There were exceptions to this total avoidance of educating about trade unions. There were on the one hand individuals (guided by their personal ideology) and on the other groups of teachers (technical teachers guided by an ideology developed by their experience as workers in secondary segments of the labour market). These teachers dared to exercise their autonomy to pursue progressive ends rather than the reproduction of the social order. If this initiative appears to be weighted in favour of a particular ideology, it has to be rememebered that by not teaching about trade unions and its wider implications of working class histories in New Zealand, "impartial" teachers are at their most ideological and most political. "Neutral" teachers abet a social order by their silence, a silence which transmits the *status quo*. In this section we examine the messages given by these teachers and by trade union representatives invited to address students at All Girls and Co-Ed High schools.

Two Social Studies teachers, both from All Girls' High, addressed the topic in class. Another, the Careers Adviser from All Boys' College, did a short unit on unions with his third form social studies class *"as a filler" (Fieldnotes, 18/9/86, p.1192).* Interview data reveal some of the reasons for which these three particular teachers decided to do any trade union education at all. The All Boys' Career Adviser explained:

Mr Tate: *I'm the secretary of the Teachers' Union at this branch, and...I'm not a great admirer of unions as such, because I think that the power that they wield, when it gets out of hand...as it does in New Zealand in many cases...it's not a very good thing...ehm...and the reason why I taught it was*

because for me it was a topic which was important in Social Studies at that time, because it was when the Kawerau Paper Mills were shut down...and obviously this union thing was going to be a hot topic at home. If the mill shut down, then the unions were going to be slammed.

(Fieldnotes, 4/11/86, pp.1595-6)

This teacher had ambivalent feelings towards unions: he expressed his concern to students that some unions and their leaders were inspired by communism and wanted the downfall of the capitalist system. However he was also concerned that parents and the media would present negative views of unions, and felt that it was necessary to counterbalance those views with others so that students could develop informed rather than prejudiced attitudes.

At All Girls' High, Ms Hirst devoted three lessons out of eleven to trade union education during a Social Studies unit on "Work". She justified this by saying:

Ms Hirst: *Well, I think there are some things that I think it is important that every student knows, and as far as I'm concerned, 99% of them are going to end up in Trade Unions, and they should know a little about trade unionism, what a Trade Union can do for them, and also the historical background. I think it's important they know why things have come about...I mean, they tend to think things are like stones, and have always been there. But there's always a reason why things have happened, an explanation why we have particular things...and I think they should be aware that there are very good reasons for having trade unions, and also that trade unions can be helpful things in their lives.*

(Fieldnotes, 3/10/86, p.1377)

Ms Hirst's lessons with fourth form students covered a definition of trade unionism as well as of various terms related to trade union activity, such as "closed shop", "delegate", "lockout", and "picket". She explained why people need unions in order to get "a fair deal":

Ms Hirst: *Say you're sacked without justification...you can go and say "I'm being victimised" or "I'm being unfairly picked on". That happens all the time...it happens at school. Some of the benefits unions get include money, of course.*

(Fieldnotes, 19/9/86, p.1216)

The teacher also talked about unions as a recent development in people's working life, dating from the nineteenth century and the terrible conditions in the workplace during the Industrial Revolution:

Sonia: *Miss, there was a T.V. programme...a lady who worked in a factory, and there was a lot of noise and she wanted to have earmuffs.*

Ms Hirst: *Yes...Unions go into things like that...For instance, there were no laws to protect workers in England. Some of you would have heard of the "Match Girls"...the substance these girls used to make matches made their teeth rot. The fumes affected them. Then, their teeth fell out, their jawbones rotted and they swallowed their infection. So, it was a really awful thing.*

Hazel: *That's gross, Miss!*

Katia: *There were also these children who worked in the coalmines.*

Ms Hirst: *Yes. It was cheaper to use little children and women...and they had a harness on like animals.*

(Fieldnotes, 19/9/86, p.1217)

Ms Hirst used her own resource material to talk about workers' conditions in nineteenth century Britain, paying specific attention to the plight of chimney sweeps, match girls, and the problems caused by the newly introduced wheat threshing machines and the reactions of the Luddites. The material she chose showed how the British government banned unions after the year 1800, how working class people were sentenced to transportation to Australia for starting "friendly societies" which functioned as an early form of union activity, and how, following the George Loveless incident, people were frightened to join the unions for many years after. A photocopied paper given to all the students in her class showed how unified worker action could bring about change for their benefit. It is interesting to note that the case chosen by the teacher to illustrate this involved a woman as an active trade unionist:

> *The Match Girls were poor and uneducated, yet when they went on strike, they won. It was mainly because a determined socialist named Annie Besant helped them. She got them publicity, she found them support and money.*
>
> *In less than a fortnight, the girls were promised better conditions. The fines were ended and box-fillers were given a nine percent pay rise. It was a milestone in union history and other victories soon followed. In 1889, the gas workers demanded - and got - an eight-hour day.*
>
> *Later that year, the London dockers went on strike. Their main demand was for a minimum wage of two and a half pence an hour. They called it the "dockers' tanner"...It was a long and bitter strike, but in the end, they also won.*
>
> *(Fieldnotes, 29/9/86, p.1219)*

These examples belonged to a far-away past and a far-away country, and therefore had little sense of immediacy for the students.

Indeed, one of them said: *"We talk about other countries' problems, but not our own!" (Fieldnotes, 29/9/86, p.1241).* It is however important to note that Ms Hirst's three lessons represent a rare occasion where conditions of work and rights of workers were addressed in any detail, and where workers were shown to be more than passive and obedient beings at the whim of employers' bidding.

Ms Woods was the only teacher to recognise trade unionism as a unit in itself, spending much of the first term on the subject. She covered various issues relating to different methods of production through the ages, showing the conditions of work bred during the Industrial Revolution. Unlike Ms Hirst, she concentrated on New Zealand examples of trade union activity and workers' efforts to obtain rights and good conditions of work. She used a resource kit published by the Department of Education (1983) to present her students with various case studies taken from New Zealand courts where unions helped workers who were unjustly treated by their employers. Students were given handouts regarding laws dealing with workers' jobs, pay, conditions, rights at work and negotiations between unions and employees. She had the class discuss arguments for and against compulsory trade unionism, a hotly debated subject in New Zealand during 1986.

Ms Woods gave special consideration to analysing why women have not generally featured highly in trade union affairs, but argued that it was in their interest to do so given the discrimination against women in the labour force. She presented statistical proof showing that women who were as well qualified as males got less pay. Ms Woods also set an essay exercise entitled *"Why do some countries have fewer strikes than New Zealand?"* She gave definitions of various concepts used with reference to unions, and pointed out that a woman, Sonya Davies, had been elected as the President for the Federation of Labour in 1983. [2]

Reference to unions by other teachers were isolated, incidental comments, and not at all as well developed as in the two instances

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2. It is interesting to point out that in 1987, Ms Woods was asked by her head of department to dedicate more time to other topics in the fourth form social studies syllabus at the expense of the trade union unit. (Feedback Fieldnotes, 21/3/87).

described above. At Co-Ed High, the Careers Adviser expressed well the dilemma faced by teachers, a dilemma which is accentuated during an employment crisis. He felt that in stressing workers' rights in his career education programmes, he would be jeopardising students' chances of getting jobs. As he put it: *"This is the bind. Do you go for the marketplace or do you change the marketplace?" (Fieldnotes, 17/11/86, p.1692)* He, like many teachers observed, limited himself to incidental references to trade unions, such as to suggest that students check with their future trade union representative if they were getting the right pay. Interviews with students revealed that such incidental messages were lost, and generally were not recalled. As we will see in later sections of this chapter, messages about unions were generally either missing or too brief to inform student thinking about the world of work.

A more effective challenge to *status quo* themes in the form of trade union education came from technical teachers. It was found that this group, by virtue of their having been in the workforce outside the education system, were more ready than other teachers to talk about unions in class, and to do so in a positive way. Students alerted the researcher to this fact by mentioning that technical teachers often knew more about work than other teachers did.

All but one of the technical teachers interviewed said they gave messages about trade unions to their students. One from All Boys' College explained:

> *Mr Cox:* *Well, I'm a carpenter...I've been involved in some monumental strikes, and the papers said that the workers were the bad guys, and that the wives went hungry, and why should food be kept from the children's mouth! I tell the kids in the classroom that if it wasn't for the unions, we'd still be back in our grandparents' time where you were sitting under a hedge waiting for the sun to come up to start work...and at half past ten in the morning the person employing you might say: "Well hurry...Get lost!" And that would be your luck for that day. It's really the unions who have brought about a lot of social change, and they are quite reasonable in the main...So I promote them.*
>
> *(Fieldnotes, 29/10/86, p.1565)*

A Co-Ed technical teacher felt very strongly about union education in schools and also said he spoke in favour of union activity with his students. As future workers, students needed to know where to

get protection *"because there are some very unscrupulous employers around. We should tell them that. I think that trade unionism should be in the curriculum. I'm sure it should." (Fieldnotes, 14/11/86, p.1678).* Only one technical teacher of those interviewed felt he should not address the issue of trade unionism with students. Although causal explanations are difficult to justify, it is interesting to note that this All Girls' High technical teacher, had, unlike the others, been an employer, not an employee, before he became a teacher. The reasons he gave indicate similar justifications for avoiding the topic given by other teachers involved in this study. Of great importance is his reluctance to "teach politically". He said:

> *I would be very wary not to get into the political area. You're very much bordering on that sort of thing, and often students get ear-bashed in one direction more so than perhaps in another. And I'd say "Leave it to the experts"...which are, supposedly, the social studies teachers.*
>
> *I'm very cagey...perhaps I'm very wary of sticking my neck out and have people saying I'm pushing the barrel of the trade union, or the employer. I...ehm...might get a little flak back from...say...via parents. I prefer, as a teacher, to keep myself aloof of the specific moral questions. If we go into things like the trade unions, we are laying ourselves open to flak, and* (laughs) *I think we've got enough problems in life without getting any more!*
>
> *(Fieldnotes, 18/11/86, pp.1697-8)*

Messages were also given by trade union representatives. While employers were often invited to put forward their views to students in all three schools, trade union representatives were invited only once to Co-Ed and All Girls' High to address students at a school-leavers' seminar at the very end of the year. They were not invited at all to All Boys' College during the course of this study. At the former two schools, the representatives were extended an invitation after initiatives taken on the one hand by Mr Haigh and on the other by Ms Woods. Both were active members of the teachers' association.

At Co-Ed High, the two union representatives, one from the Public Service Association and the other from the Butchers' and Grocers' Union, described their roles. It is interesting that both felt the need to defend their activities against general prejudice. One said:

> *I'm a trade unionist. Some people see us as ogres, strikers...I've been in this work for seventeen years, and all I've done is work for better conditions of employment, against sexual harassment, for better salaries, for equal work for equal pay, for equal opportunties...which is important in relation to women and ethnic groups.*
>
> *(Fieldnotes, 20/11/86, p.1712)*

He also spoke about government policies which were putting money before people, and to the fact that streamlining, privatisation, multinational enterprises and mergers of companies were making a lot of workers redundant:

> *This gives employers the possibility to employ people at the lowest possible rates. The school leavers' rate of pay has been reduced because of unemployment...Employers can always find a person who will accept lower than award rate, and if you go to a union, the employer will find a way of getting rid of you. You're left on your own without union support.*
>
> *(Fieldnotes, 20/11/86, p.1713)*

The union representatives suggested that the employer class was getting wealthier in New Zealand, and the workers were getting poorer, and that poverty was also induced by right wing governments and politicians around the world convincing people that the way out of the crisis was to cut back on public services. They showed a video prepared by the International Union of Public Services to show how such trends were taking place all over the world, and urged viewers to stand up against economic policies which were leading to *"private wealth and public squalour"*. They also spoke about union action to counter sexual harassment in the work force, health and safety issues, and how females were in a disadvantaged position when compared to males - especially so in the private sector. One urged students to join a union:

> *Some employers tell their employees they can't belong to a union if they are under eighteen years of age. That's rubbish. You need to be in a union, especially because employers are often firing young workers before they turn eighteen so they don't have to pay a senior wage.*
>
> *(Fieldnotes, 20/11/86, p.1716)*

While student reactions to these messages are addressed in later sections of this chapter, it suffices here to note that students did not understand what the unionists were referring to when they spoke of "multinationals", "privatisation", "right wing politicians" or "streamlining the industry". The vocabulary was new to them since such issues had not been addressed in class. Students also revealed their ignorance of conflicting interests at work by asking such questions as:

Jane: *Will employers tell us about unions?...How and where to join?*

Unionist: *That's the last thing they'll do!...It's probably not even safe to ask!*

(Fieldnotes, 20/11/86, p.1716)

Summary.

The overwhelming evidence suggests that most teachers do not utilise a solitary space in the secondary school curriculum where workers' histories are valued and their rights affirmed at a time when workers are having to surrender hard-won ground in the face of threats of unemployment and redundancy. The potential of trade union education as a site for creating solidarity between different groups (identified by their class, gender and ethnic membership) for a unified voice claiming equity and justice, is unrealised. In short, the *status quo* is once more upheld.

[3] Women and Conditions of Work.

Two propositions are advanced in this element of the property "Conditions of Work". First, conservative schooling is at its most transformative when rallied strongly behind an ideological critique of the established order. In this way, it will be seen that All Girls' rather than Co-Ed High mounted a strong challenge to injustices involving gender and conditions of work in the established order. Second, the gains women make in this sort of ideological (as against liberal) schooling by maintaining single-sex educational communities is to some extent counteracted by all male schools. Here, gender issues are not highlighted, and in the case of All Boys' College, they fall in the "null curriculum". These two propositions are explored below in a number of themes, namely as they apply to [a] general conditions, [b] equal access, [c] equal pay, and [d] sexual harassment.

Inter-School Differences.

At All Girls' High there was a great deal of emphasis placed on conditions of work as they applied to women. There was less emphasis on the issue at Co-Ed High, and no references at all were observed or reported at All Boys' College.

[a] General Conditions.

The greater degree of emphasis placed by All Girls' High teachers on criticising unjust aspects of the world of work was consistent both in general and in specific instances. As a general rule, more teachers at this school spent more time on the subject than at Co-Ed High. The issue did not feature at All Boys' College. At All Girls' High, Ms Berne, an English teacher, argued against women being turned into a reserve army of labour. She told her fifth form English class:

Ms Berne: *When there is a need for workers, women are employed. When there is a recession, they are the first to be let go...Employers say: "They have a husband to support them, so we'd better make females redundant." They don't realise that the woman might be the main wage-earner.*

(Fieldnotes, 11/8/86, p.1109)

She, like Ms Hirst, gave messages to her class about the need for better conditions of work for women through the provision of adequate child care facilities. She asked her class: *"Why do you think four-fifths of New Zealand working women work part-time?" (Fieldnotes, 11/8/86, p.1109).*

[b] Equal Access.

Both All Girls' and Co-Ed High stressed that there should be no sexual discrimination in the hiring of employees. Seven of the ten teachers observed at the former school, and three of the eight in the latter, gave messages in this regard, and therefore challenged aspects of hiring procedures in the established order. This point was also made by a Department of Labour booklet given to all fourth formers at all three schools:

> *The Human Rights Commission Act gives legal support to the idea that jobs should be open to both men and women. It means that people should be able to get into jobs that suit their abilities, regardless of their sex, race or religion.*
>
> *(Looking Ahead, v.1:1986, p.19)*

Though its appearance in the booklet would mean that even All Boys' students had the opportunity to discuss the topic, the Social Studies teachers observed there did not read these particular pages in class or set them as homework reading. In contrast, these pages were stencilled at All Girls' High and given to students to be taken to parents and read together. Moreover, this message was

highlighted and developed more fully at All Girls' than at Co-Ed High, where references to the topic tended to be brief. In the former school, teachers devoted whole lessons to a discussion of the problem. Ms Berne for instance showed her fifth form English class a forty minute video entitled *Free to be You* which argued a case against various myths about women at work, namely that they were unreliable, that their biology makes them more apt to be ill, that they can't cope with heavy or dirty jobs, that they have better manual dexterity, and that they do not get bored doing repetitive jobs. (Fieldnotes, 11/8/86, p.1108). The same teacher promoted equal access to jobs, and encouraged girls to enter apprenticeships.

Ms Berne: *All apprenticeships are open to boys and girls except for some in the armed forces...which for your informtion, goes outside the human rights thing in the equality between men and women. That's under attack because the United Nations Women's Rights Movement has just got equal access ratified, and New Zealand hasn't ratified it!*
(Fieldnotes, 20/8/86, p.1159)

[c] Equal Pay.

Related to equal access was equal pay. Again, the few messages about this topic came mainly from- All Girls' High. Those teachers who tackled the issue at Co-Ed High did so from the standpoint of their personal ideology. In fact, one teacher in the latter school was identified as an exception by various students because she gave challenging and provocative messages on this topic. (Fieldnotes, 12/11/86, p.1665). Earlier in the previous chapter this person was identified as as one of the progressive teachers at the school.

At All Girls' High the messages about equality for women came through more powerfully, embedded as they were in the structure and ethos of the school. More teachers spoke more forcibly about the issue than at Co-Ed High. Ms Woods for instance argued for equal pay with her fourth form social studies students, saying: *"Being women you are actually working in a situation where your rate of pay is going to be lower than men's, despite the fact that we're supposed to have equal pay." (Fieldnotes, 3/10/86, p.1383).* In her trade union unit with fourth formers, she utilised graphs to show that New Zealand women earned only seventy five percent of what the

men did, when employed in the same sorts of jobs. She also gave statistics to show the number of women earning high pay was much smaller than that of New Zealand men. Such issues were not addressed at All Boys' College during the course of this study.

[d] Sexual Harassment.

Teachers at both All Girls' and Co-Ed High spoke about sexual harassment in the workforce, and students were told they could assert their rights and resist such practices because the law was on their side. This could be ascertained more from feedback from students rather than from actual classroom observation, for reasons given below. Sexual harassment at work was a distinct theme addressed by union representatives at school-leavers' seminars which both High schools organised separately at the end of the school year. They described procedures unions took to counter harassment, and gave examples of cases where the offender was charged with misconduct. Three teachers from both schools expressed surprise to the researcher that sexual harassment was so common.

Messages about sexual harassment were more common at All Girls' than at Co-Ed High. All but one of the teachers observed and/or interviewed in the former school identified it as a specific theme they occasionally mentioned with their students. The Careers Adviser, who in general emphasised *status quo* themes, claimed she prepared students who were heading for work in an overwhelmingly male environment:

> *I tell them: "You're going to be the only girl with six men...You could be teased a lot and that could amount to sexual harassment. Are you prepared and know what to do if that occurs?"*
> *(Fieldnotes, 26/11/86, pp.1726-7)*

Similar messages were given, though less frequently, at Co-Ed High. There, the Careers Adviser showed a video regarding the first day at work to a group of sixth formers following a general studies programme on "Employment Seeking Skills". In one particular sequence in the video, a young man touches a young female's arms, and she shouts: *"If you touch me again, I'll scream."* The narrator says: *"You don't have to put up with any form of sexual harassment...either jokes, words, touch." (Fieldnotes, 18/3/86, p.449).*

An important factor which explains the lesser emphasis at Co-Ed High and which emerged as significant in stopping messages about sexual harassment from being given, was the presence of a male. This was effective partly because the researcher never heard teachers address the issue in class, even though students told him in feedback sessions that their teacher had actually talked about it at one point or another. Male presence was effective in stopping the messages being given both when the males were teachers and when they were students. At All Girls' High for instance, a group of fifth formers were describing how their different social studies teachers had talked at length about sexual harassment. One of them said: *"I had a male teacher, and he didn't talk about it really. He didn't seem to be aware."(Fieldnotes, 25/9/86, p.1286).*

The following account by a group of Co-Ed fourth formers shows how male students can create a situation whereby certain messages are stopped from being given:

R.S.: *What about sexual harassment...did Ms Dewe speak about that?*

(The boys in the group snigger).

Beth: *I know what I'd do!*

Diane: *I think the boys will probably crack up and start talking about that...the only way to do it would be to send the boys somewhere else, or else the class would be in an uproar.*

(Fieldnotes, 23/9/86, p.1258)

There are no references in the data which show that the topic of sexual harassment was addressed at All Boys' College - a lacuna which seems to suggest that harassment is a female problem, rather than a male problem experienced and suffered by females!

Summary.

Once again it has been seen that few socio-political messages were given to students which questioned or challenged the *status quo* , even in the area of conditions of work. Most of the references to the topic were incidental, and not presented in a context of the historical conflict of interests between workers and employers. The lack of messages becomes even more evident when they are compared to the number of messages given to students by teachers urging them to consider the rights and expectations of employers.

Areas like trade union education were generally avoided for fear of conflict of opinions in class, and students were therefore not challenged to confront and examine the prejudices they absorbed from the community. Exceptions to this came mainly from All Girls' High, where a heightening of political consciousness seemed to be encouraged not only as a result of the personal ideology of individual teachers, but also through a school ethos which encouraged the critical appraisal of issues dealing with the disadavantaged position of women in New Zealand society.

5.2.3. RELATIONS AT WORK.

The property relations at work will be considered in terms of messages given:

[1] overtly about relations between workers,

[2] overtly about relations between workers and employers,

[3] covertly and overtly about ethnic relations in the workforce and

[4] covertly about work relations generally.

Inter-and intra-school differences and similarities will again be described to highlight teachers who reproduced or critically examined the established order.

[1] Overt Messages about Relations between Workers.

One major proposition is advanced in this section. It will be argued that workers are presented by teachers as having conflicting interests rather than similar concerns. Such messages are given both overtly, during lessons, and covertly, in the organisational structures of the schools. Data about overt messages to illustrate this proposition is presented below.

Inter-School Similarities.

Data reveals that the subject of the relations between workers within and between workplaces was not highlighted for critical examination. On the contrary, practically all the fifty teachers observed and/or interviewed emphasised the kinds of relationships that workers should develop with their employers. This emphasis will be discussed in detail below. As to the former point, there were only two instances of teachers who highlighted relations

between workers, and both of these came from All Girls' High. On the one hand two teachers (Ms Woods and Ms Hirst) showed examples of workers united by the same concerns and on the other those teachers who opposed sexual harassment implicity addressed one aspect (a negative one) of relations at work. Other aspects of relations between workers were generally ignored.

All but two of the teachers observed either ignored the topic of relations between workers or gave messages which emphasised the *status quo* - they presented good worker relations as a factor appreciated and rewarded by employers. Eight of the teachers observed also made assumptions as to why worker relations broke down, considering and presenting workers as having conflicting interests rather than as sharing similar concerns and experiences in waged labour. The Co-Ed High Careers Adviser showed a video entitled *The First Day At Work* to sixth form students doing a course on "Employment Seeking Skills". The whole presentation was made from the point of view of the employer, with viewers encouraged to meet as many as possible of the criteria the employer valued. Moreover, viewers were advised: *"Be friendly to other staff, without overdoing it."(Fieldnotes, 18/3/86, p.448).* Worker relations were not only given second place - in this instance they were discouraged.

Similar examples cropped up in other situations. At All Girls' High, the Careers Adviser told the researcher:

Ms Tyler: *I also give students who come to see me the message that in the final analysis, whether they're going to succeed or not [at their work] depends on how they get on with other people, and how they can cope in a situation where people of a different persuasion can gang up against them. They must at all cost try to avoid politicking, because it can be either the downfall of them or of their colleagues...that it's personal relationships which determines whether they're going to advance up the ladder, finally...*
(Fieldnotes, 26/11/86, p.1730)

At the same school, sixth form students who had been on work exploration commented about bad relations with staff. Their teacher later talked about this with the researcher:

Ms Kirk: *They also talked about staff relations. It was most interesting to hear the comments about the way they talked about each other and other people gossiping...and I said "It's life! And you don't have to be part of it. But you shouldn't be angry*

about it either! You've just got to learn to accept those things."

(Fieldnotes, 21/10/86, p.1523)

Summary.

Some of the incidents described above presented an opportunity to teachers to help students critically analyse why workers become so alienated from each other, and of which structural elements in the organisation of work could conceivably be changed to avoid this. The oportunity - which arose especially with students on work exploration projects was not only missed but also the message was given that such a state of affairs is somehow "natural": it has always been like that, and it will always inevitably be like that. For many teachers, worker co-operation was not only ignored as a subject, but when it took the form of union action it was considered to be negative. In brief, teachers fail to share the concerns of fellow workers in other areas of the labour market, and in the end reinforce the established order once again.

[2] Overt Messages about Relations between Workers and Employers.

Two major propositions will be advanced, namely that teachers emphasise a relationship with employers which is characterised by obedience, respect and a sense of "fair play". First, as prospective workers, students are imbued with a picture of employers who are at one and the same time benevolent (they offer them livelihood at a time of high unemployment) and powerful (they can fire them at will). They owe employers allegiance, obedience and respect. This proposition ties up with the one advanced in the previous section, in that teachers are seen to foster "ideal" relations between workers and their employers, to the advantage of the latter, rather than relations between workers themselves in a way which serves their interests. Second, in times of economic crisis, the covert curriculum which emphasises business rather than democratic interests becomes overt. This proposition has a low saturation, and to be tested, a comparative history of messages about work in times of economic prosperity needs to be drawn. No such account exists in New Zealand. However, the proposition is stated in this context for speculative purposes.

Inter-School Similarities.

Messages about the subordinate relations of workers to their employers were as plentiful as those concerning relations between workers were few. Messages were communicated informally in a variety of ways during lessons and other teacher-student interactions. There were some fifteen examples of teachers in all three schools who compared the classroom situation directly to the workplace, and claimed that the particular behaviour students were displaying would not be acceptable to employers. An All Boys' College Social Studies teacher started a lesson with a fourth form class in the following way:

Mr Tate: *Settle down! Be aware that you'll soon be going out to a job, and if you carry on with this sort of stupidity, you won't last long...your employer won't put up with it.*

(Fieldnotes, 21/8/86, p.1151)

At Co-Ed High, the Careers Adviser was trying to explain subject choice to three fifth form classes. They were misbehaving and unruly, and he said:

> *Could you settle down?! It's good training for a job...following your boss's orders even if you don't like him. Consider this as job training.*
>
> *(Fieldnotes, 4/7/86, p.917)*

A Science teacher at Co-Ed High referred to a "handy technique" he had with any *"kid who is getting quite slothful, it's very easy to say: 'You will have to be quicker when you go out to work!'"* *(Fieldnotes, 10/10/86, p.1497).*

Technical teachers gave the most details about employers' expectations and the sorts of relationships employers appreciated at work, presumably because they had already experienced them themselves. One such teacher from Co-Ed High recounted how when students came late to his class, he would remind them that employers would not put up with such behaviour, because it represented loss of possible income:

> *I tell them that the bottom line is that at work there are no free lunches...it comes back to work. For the student in the workshop who just scratches around with a piece of sandpaper and isn't achieving very much, he's going to continue like that in the workplace if they don't change it here...So, good work habits and discipline are important.*
>
> *(Fieldnotes, 29/10/86, p.1562)*

The preparation for relations with employers is given in all its details in the following excerpt:

> *I tell them it's a hard life outside, that the employers are going to demand a lot from them, and that is going to be reflected in the demands of loyalty, of punctuality to the job, getting there on time in the morning, to do the best they can, using initiative, to thinking for themselves and not having to be directed for every little minor step that they're going to have to do in their job...to use that initiative even if it is to ask questions on how the job should be done if they're not sure...ehm...and that having been told once, not to have to be told time and time again...that it is a fairly blunt place out there, and if they don't get it right, in today's employment, they're probably not going to have a job.*
>
> *(Fieldnotes, 17/11/86, p.1682)*

Summary.

By emphasising the needs of employers over the rights of workers, teachers are seen to be teaching for an established order. They have also become representatives of industry in the school rather than of democratic interests.

[3] Overt and Covert Messages about Ethnic Relations on the Work Force.

Teachers, who have been shown to avoid polemical issues such as trade union education, also avoided talking about race relations in general, and about how these relations existed in the workforce.

It is significant to note that the Second Report of the Task Force on Trade Union Education (1987) identified racism as a major problem in New Zealand's workforce. Not a single Pakeha teacher at any school was observed addressing, or was reported by students to have addressed, the issue of race relations in the workforce, and how these affected human rights and conditions of work for Maori and Pacific Island people. That they did not is attributed not to ignorance of the issues - for interview data in the following chapter show that Pakeha teachers know that Maori students will be discriminated against as they try to enter the workforce - but rather to a decision to avoid the issue. Maori teachers in the schools were an exception in that they encouraged Maori students not to be discouraged by any racial discrimination and oppression they suffered at the hands of Pakeha employers and co-workers

(Fieldnotes, 29/9/86, p.1324). The *status quo* in this area was therefore upheld in two ways - by the silence of Pakeha teachers, and by the messages of forbearance given by Maori teachers.

The only other exception came from a speaker from the Department of Labour who was invited to Co-Ed High to address transition students. Their teacher commented:

> Ms Jones: *I was really impressed with him. He didn't pull any punches at all...He said it straight out, that some Maori children will find that people won't want you because you are Maoris...And he said that you can't let that put you off. He was talking about going for job interviews, you know, you might end up going to twenty interviews before you get a job, and especially I was interested, because I thought "Well, that's true!...That does happen!" And I thought "Well, I should be able to say that to them too!"*
>
> *(Fieldnotes, 21/10/86, p.1519)*

The message the speaker from the Labour Department gave - and which Ms Jones felt encouraged to give - was not that Maori students should somehow protest against such discrimination and challenge such prejudice - rather, the message was once again the appeal to forbearance, and not to let that discourage them. In this sort of discourse, the problem is located not in the established order, but in the oppressed people being "put off".

The schools' structure and ethos in themselves gave covert messages in preparing students to relate cross-culturally. All Boys' College students, for instance, expressed an anxiety about having Maori co-workers in the workplace (Fieldnotes, 29/4/86, p.669). Predominantly Pakeha and single-sex schools like All Boys' College presented problems of isolation in terms of both ethnicity and gender, but the former is more significant as the students's social lives led them to mix with females, but not with Maoris. Students thus mentioned the fact that in their normal every-day life, they did not meet Maoris. Their middle-class background practically ensured that they did not live in neighbourhoods with a large number of Maori residents, and they actually mentioned pubs which they would not go to because they were frequented by Maoris. In the previous chapter it was also shown that despite the presence of both Maori and Pakeha students at Co-Ed and All Girls' High, there was not much mixing between the two ethnic groups. The former school made attempts to encourage this mixing, the latter did not.

Summary.

Through silence and organisational structures, the schools avoid addressing race relations issues in the established order, whether this order refers to the institution of school or of the workplace.

[4] Covert Messages about Relations at Work.

Two propositions are advanced in this section. The first is that covert messages given by the organisational structure of the school emphasise the needs of industry rather than the needs of democracy. Covert and overt messages are therefore seen to be mutually reinforcing regarding this particular issue. A second proposition is that while there are differences between liberal and conservative forms of schooling, these differences are not sufficient to transcend the instrumental imperative suggested in the first proposition above.

Inter-School Similarities.

Through various practices, schools covertly prepare students for participation in the corporate state, and the values learned are those of an industrial, capitalist society (see Chapter 2). These values are embodied in the type of relations encouraged in institutions like the family, the school and the workplace.

In-as-much as schooling is carried out in the context of a capitalist system like New Zealand, the three schools studied give similar covert messages, even though the ethos of each highlights different values and attitudes. Thus, Co-Ed High, All Girls' High and All Boys' College all reveal in their structures an unofficial curriculum which gives specific messages. The three schools, in different ways, give four main messages relating to authoritarianism, fragmentation, competition, and the reinforcement of traditional sex differences (see Richer, 1981). All these elements covertly communicate messages to students, fostering views which are functional to adult life, and in various ways preparing them to participate differentially in a segmented labour market. They also inform student attitudes towards relations at work. The process of schooling itself is the most powerful message of all,

since by participating in its structures and processes, values and modes of thinking, feeling and acting are formed. The medium is the message.

Within the context of the description provided in Chapter 4, all three schools are viewed as infusing a sense of fragmentation in their students, especially in the conception of knowledge as having an ontological status external to the individual. Especially so at All Girls' High and All Boys' College, students participated in tasks which fragmented relations with the self, with the immediate community (the class) and with the wider community (social reality). Competition rather than co-operation between students was shown to be an important characteristic for these two schools, as manifested in the kinds of games played, the awarding of grades and other symbols of individual success, and at All Girls' specifically, the show-and-tell syndrome. Sex-differences were seen to be reinforced, especially at All Boys' College, but also at Co-Ed High.

Inter-School Differences.

While the three schools in question could be said to share similar structures, the dynamics of value-transmissions are mediated through the particular ethos of each school. This gives rise to some inter-school differences which, while not radical enough to transcend the instrumental imperative of forming workers to fit a given economic system, are nevertheless marked enough to produce a different kind of student, and presumably a different kind of worker. The three schools' ethos is described in turn as it applies to covert messages about relations at work. Attention is finally drawn to another inter/intra-school difference. Different kinds of relations were observed being encouraged in technical classes, with technical teachers relating their pedagogical relationship as closely as possible to elements of shop floor culture.

All Boys' College.

All Boys' College has been shown to emphasise discipline and punctuality. Hierarchical relationships between staff and students

were clearly defined and encouraged. Teachers observed initiated most of the classroom activity, and there was always a heavy element of discipline in the interaction. Punishment was extensively used within and outside the classroom as a control device. One Marist brother, a teacher at the school, said:

> *We have tried to have in this school a relationship that would be comparable, very similar even to what one would have at work. So the relationship between teacher and pupil is similar to that between boss and employee.*
>
> *(Fieldnotes, 29/10/86, p.1559)*

Another teacher referred to religious texts as giving messages to students about the hierarchical nature of authority:

> *At this school we sometimes have a Mass, and there are readings from the Bible - like the one with the man in the vineyard springs to mind. At first it might not seem fair that he employed people at various times of the day, and at the end of the day he paid them the same amount of money...And the priest may give the message that the employer has got the right to pay people what he wants, or that he has the right to hire and fire...so, things like that come through in a subtle way.*
>
> *(Fieldnotes, 29/10/86, p.1564)*

The All Boys' Careers Adviser attributed the success of the college's students in the workforce to the style of discipline encouraged at school (Fieldnotes, 4/11/86, p.1597). The principal agreed with this view, and told the researcher that students from his College were not facing unemployment problems because: *"employers know that our students do not want to re-write their jobs from the very first day that they enter it." (Fieldnotes, 3/2/86, p.2)*

The school has been shown to encourage deference to authority, as well as notions of manliness and competition through rugby and cricket, the field where "character" is forged, punctuality, and loyalty to the system. It upheld notions that corporal punishment is a legitimate means of controlling behaviour, that the teacher and the authority figures are the initiators, mediators and controllers of action. It also reinforced sex-differences by encouraging "masculine" behaviour in males, and by almost totally ignoring the issue of gender. All these factors, together with the practically total, "incidental" exclusion of Maoris, and the planned exclusion of girls from the school reinforced a particular set of messages among students at All Boys' College, some of which

were directly related to the encouragement of specific ways of relating at work.

Co-Ed High School.

In contrast to All Boys' College, relations between students and teachers at Co-Ed High were less structured by a monolithic sort of discipline, and at least some groups of students felt that their opinions carried weight and the student council had some power. The very nature of the school population, in that it was co-educational and drew from various socio-economic and ethnic groups, was meant to encourage an understanding between students of the different groupings of New Zealand society. The liberal ethos therefore produced a different kind of worker, less acquiescent, more creative, and attractive to a different kind of employer. The principal there said:

> *Various employers have told me quite directly...of all the groups of students who have been interviewed from particular schools, the students of Co-Ed High stood out very clearly as being superior in their independence, in their capacity to converse and in their self-management.*
>
> *(Fieldnotes, 6/11/86, p.1629)*

The Careers Adviser too spoke of the liberal ethos at his school and the effect this had on the performance of students on the workplace:

> *Mr Haigh: I know there are employers who won't take Co-Ed High kids because they're liberal. Equally, there are other employers who would say they come back to us because we've provided good kids, because they have self-confidence and can articulate their thoughts and opinions.*
>
> *(Fieldnotes, 17/11/86, p.1692)*

The Co-Ed ethos permeated the technical workshops were it would have been reasonable to expect a more direct correspondence between the hierarchical relations at work and the very similar ones in this area of the school.

All Girls' High.

All Girls' High, keenly aware of the subordinate position of women in the labour force, encouraged discipline and academia, as if to foster an awareness, as one senior student put it, that:

> *You've got to work harder to be accepted at the same level as a guy on a guy's job.*
>
> *(Fieldnotes, 15/4/86, p.613)*

This ethic of hard work was lived by students in the form of competition where marks and grades had priority. It has also been shown that such an ethos disadvantaged less-academic and Maori students, who could find little to attract them to what they experienced as an alienating, divisive system. Relations between students were therefore often on a competitive basis, and relations between ethnic groups were generally either non-existent or openly antagonistic. Students related to teachers as masters, the providers of knowledge and certification. As with All Boys', there was an emphasis on students' caring for the image of the school in the community, an image which had to communicate seriousness of mind, and disciplined behaviour.

The top-down management of All Girls' High was less monolithic but no less felt than at All Boys' College. One Social Studies teacher felt uncomfortable about the covert preparation students were receiving at school for the workplace. She said:

Ms Hirst: *We tell our students "You must turn up on time...If you don't turn up on time, you get into trouble...It's easier to turn up on time." Then, when they are actually in the workplace, we teach them to sit down, shut up, don't complain. If you complain, you'll get into trouble...And I know that there are people who have perfectly legitimate complaints about the way things are going on in school and end up in trouble because they express their complaints. So I think that in lots of ways school has a negative experience, that we're actually conditioning them to go along with the situation, to conform, to obey, to not complain when things go wrong.*

(Fieldnotes, 3/10/86, p.1381)

Since the great majority of positions of responsibility and leadership were filled by women, All Girls' High could be construed as giving structural messages to the effect that females qualify for positions of power in society. Classroom encounters however gave a different slant to overt messages offered by some teachers in class. One example was a Social Studies teacher who, in discussing job interview skills with her fourth form class, said:

Ms Hirst: *The interviewers are intent to make you feel uncomfortabe...the idea is to put you on the spot, to see how you react. You might be asked "Do you sleep with your boyfriend?" or "When are you going to have children?" You'll be asked a lot of awkward and uncomfortable questions. Employers feel they have the right."* (The students protest). *You have to wake up to the fact that you're at a real disadvantage in a lot of areas when you're a woman.*

> *If you want to change the situation, you'll have to get a sex-change operation.*
> *(Fieldnotes, 4/8/86, p.1079)*

Inter-and Intra-School Differences.

While it has been shown that school structures communicate messages, it is also true that school micro-structures, such as specific subjects, may give differing ones. With reference to relations at work, technical teachers were seen to give different messages. Various technical teachers at Co-Ed High and All Boys' College mentioned that relations in the workshop were different from those normally found in the classroom. It is interesting to note that there is no similar data emerging from the All Girls' High workshop situation, as if the sort of relationships described below were appropriate only to boys and formed part of a male, shop-floor culture. At Co-Ed High for instance, Mr Wright, a technical teacher, described a workshop class where most of the students were male:

> *We have a fairly blunt way of relating...the shop-floor culture is a fairly blunt one, and in many ways, a very coarse one. The employer too will have come through the shop-floor culture himself.*
> *(Fieldnotes, 17/11/86, p.1683)*

Another technical teacher from the same school described how he prepared his students for the kind of relationships to be found in their future workplaces:

> *Mr Snook: Occasionally I call them names of course, and this they resent. But I point out to them they're going to get called a lot worse when they are out in the workforce, and for me to stand up and call you a name, I mean...is not really intentional...you know, harmful...It's just in the heat of the moment. But you will be called names with malicious intent too, so when I call you that...you know, some kids get uptight...and I think that's part of the message too...They have to be able to take it. There's nothing they will be able to do about it.*
> *(Fieldnotes, 14/11/86, p.1679)*

It may be conjectured that other "vocational" classes, such as Secretarial Studies, might show similar correspondence between the workplace and the class situation. Only five such Secretarial Studies lessons were observed, and all were at All Girls' High. What was seen suggests that the teacher attempted to re-create an atmosphere similar to professional offices in her class. The

teacher showed the researcher some material - such as cheque accounts, debtors' ledge books, and official forms - which she obtained from "real offices" to make the exercises more attractive to her students. In this way too, the latter could prove to prospective employers that they had experieced the realities of work (Fieldnotes, 10/4/86, p. 565). Similar observations have been made in greater detail by Gaskell (1986).

Summary.

The above sections have presented the overt and covert messages teachers and schools give students about the nature and conditions of work, as well as relations at work. It has been seen that often a large number of possible messages in this area were omitted, and that this omission in itself constitutes a powerful set of messages in the preparation of students for particular realities and relations in the workforce. The messages which were given generally emphasised employer rights rather than those of the employee, with the exception of a few teachers whose ideological position and personal understanding of the labour market allowed them to give contrasting messages. It has also been seen that when schools teach about work, they teach for a system and a structure which is, thereby offering no alternative arrangements of work. In short, we have seen teachers teaching for work rather than critically about work.

The following sections present data referring to messages received by students in the three schools regarding the nature, conditions and relations of work. Variables which intervene between the communication and the reception of messages are highlighted since they help in the understanding of how students, as distinct from teachers, construct their interpretations of reality.

5.3. STUDENTS AND SOCIO-POLITICAL MESSAGES ABOUT WORK.

INTRODUCTION.

This third major section presents data which shows the sort of reception students gave their schools' and their teachers' messages about work. Data show that students are active participants in the negotiation of meanings. They therefore accept and contest messages they receive at school. Different variables are shown to be operating behind this process of negotiation. The section follows the same structure as set out above with three aspects of the world of work being explored, namely the reception students give to messages about the nature of work, then about the conditions of work, and finally about the relations at work.

5.3.1. THE NATURE OF WORK.

Reception of messages related to the property nature of work is described in terms of the following elements:

[1] Students' reception of messages about work generally;
[2] Students' reception of messages about the hierarchical nature of work;
[3] Students' reception of messages about the priority of work.

In the presentation, the variables of class, gender and ethnicity (and a confluence of these) will be highlighted.

[1] Students' Reception of Messages about Work Generally.

Three propositions will be advanced in this section. First, students do not value teachers as givers of messages about the nature of the world of work. This applied to over ninety percent of the students interviewed. Technical teachers are however considered by students to have a good and reliable knowledge of the world of work. Second, as a corollary to the first, students turn to sources of information other than teachers for valuable insights into the world of work. They are active seekers and negotiators of meaning. Third, students have a more lively grasp of the realities of the world of work than teachers. Contrary to teachers'

assumptions explored earlier, students are not *tabula rasa* - rather, their experience of work in what is known as the grey economy[3] has given them information which teachers seem to be unaware of. These propositions are explored in the data presented below.

[a] Contestation of Teachers as Givers of Messages.

Students generally agreed with the teachers' view of themselves as being ill-equipped to teach about the world of work. Data support this view even when the variables of gender, class and ethnicity were taken into consideration. Students found teachers lacking in various ways. They first of all lacked basic information about jobs. One Co-Ed High fourth former said:

> *Teachers can only talk about their own jobs...They can't give you any first hand information. They can't tell you about every one because they haven't done every one...So, they just talk about jobs in a general way.*
>
> *(Fieldnotes, 4/11/86, p.1588)*

Similar comments were made by students from all the three schools. An All Boys' fourth former said: *"Teachers just talk about...oh...getting your qualifications...They don't talk about work. They talk about getting the job, not what happens on the job." (Fieldnotes, 29/9/86, p.1320).*

Students also felt that teachers knew only a very limited and restricted area of work, and could not understand, let alone address important issues relating to the world of work. An All Girls' High sixth former commented:

Val: *A lot of teachers are pretty ignorant in a way because they're all from the same sort of class...They're all sort of upper middle class and they're all sort of on the same level. They all mix with all the other teachers and that's it. They don't go down and talk to people who are unemployed, for instance...They don't mix with that sort of people, so they don't sort of have an understanding...But they look up to the very very rich people in New Zealand...So, it's sort of the same class line. A lot of them are pretty naive*

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3. Work in the grey economy ranges from holiday work to after school and weekend jobs. Students are exempt from paying taxes on the income they earn in these circumstances.

about things. They don't have an awareness about some things.

(Fieldnotes, 6/10/86, p.1413)

Working class students were especially indifferent to teachers' messages about work. They felt that teachers "just teach", and as one Co-Ed fifth former said:

A lot of us relate to teachers as not human beings...you see, my father relates to teachers, you know, most of them, as not human. They've got minds of their own, they all stick together and all that. But I don't know...some of them go straight out of school and into university, and then they come back straight into the school again. They probably wouldn't know what it's like to go out and do a real hard day's work...It's just like going to school all your life.

(Fieldnotes, 9/10/86, p.1448)

[b] Students' Acceptance of Messages given by Technical Teachers.

Students consistently identified technical teachers as more knowledgeable about what they called "the real world of work". The opinion expressed by a Maori Co-Ed High fifth former is typical of that expressed by many students:

Most teachers just go on with their subjects. But in our motor-mechanics class it's different. We can swear and tell dirty jokes and all this kind of thing...and he talks about his experiences and going from one job to another. Technical teachers have gone out into the world of trade, while Maths and Science teachers, they're just teaching a subject. They've gone to University and it's just numbers and figures and fancy words, you know. I'd trust the motor mechanics teacher for information about work, because he's had other jobs before he became a teacher...So he has been out in the world of work.

(Fieldnotes, 10/11/86, p.1642)

[c] Students and their sources of Information.

Students consistently declared that they trusted their parents and working brothers and sisters, friends and relatives as sources of information about work rather than teachers. This was true for both working class and middle class students. Examples of the former are the statements by Co-Ed High fifth formers:

Greg: *Parents start talking to you more about work once you hit the fifth form...and you're in the mood for work, because you're already doing part-time jobs.*

Peter: *Big brothers and things like that. They're a good help...Like they encourage you if you muck around with a motor at home, and they say, you know..."You should carry on with that. If you really get on with it you could end up being good."*

Andrew: *Yeah...It's mostly your family. You get like...a lot of relations will come along and, you know, you'll be leaving school in six months...and they'll ask: "Oh..what are you going to do when you leave school?" And you can't just say "I don't know."*

Greg: *Yeah...You discuss what you want to do.*

(Fieldnotes, 9/10/86, p.1449)

A group of academic, middle class fifth formers from All Girls' High referred to the Social Studies unit on "Work" they had done a year earlier, comparing it to the sort of information they received from outside school:

Judy: *I want to go to Medical School, and I only found out the other day that out of every intake, during a six year course, one person will either commit suicide or end up in a mental asylum...You don't hear about those kinds of things at school! You only find out how much is left out when you're outside school.*

Tania: *You kind of have to look for it yourself, talk to other people, or listen to the news and things like that. Occasionally you see all these things that are going on in the world, and you realise how sheltered we actually are at school.*

(Fieldnotes, 24/9/86, p.1268)

Over eighty five percent of all the students interviewed had experienced work on a part-time, casual basis - either after school and on weekends and/or during the school holidays. Their comparison of their own experiences with the messages teachers gave made them sceptical of the value of anything the school had to say about the "real world of work". The following is an excerpt from an interview with four All Boys' College fifth form students; in many respects they summarise the views of most students - that teachers talk idealistically about work:

Simon: *It's more like the teachers tell all the good things...so they don't tell you the hassles of the job...like when I was working at the mines, I had to get up at half past six. It's dirty down there, and you had to look out for these conveyer belts because a piece of coal might fall off. I was building a roof-over, and we were using something pretty poisonous, and there was coal dust everywhere, and after a while you'd start to smell.*

Kingi: *Yeah...We never talk about things like that.*

Grant: *They might as well tell us now.*

Bob: *Yeah...They're giving us a false outlook on work life. They only talk about the good things like pay, and days off. They never really talk about the dangers of work.*

(Fieldnotes, 22/9/86, p.1238)

Similarly at Co-Ed High, a fifth former said:

Maryanne: *I reckon...We do the careers unit and find out what we want to be, but we don't talk about the guts of work...Just getting a job and you'll be happy for the rest of your life. They never say that work isn't that marvellous sometimes. Normally they try to paint this picture that work is marvellous.*

(Fieldnotes, 24/7/86, p.1010)

Summary.

The data in this section has shown students believe teachers to have, at best, a crude understanding of the nature of work. Students do not accept the picture of work given by teachers, and construct their own understanding from information from other sources. These sources have been shown to be primarily their own experience in casual labour, and the experiences of those who they see as real workers - parents, friends, and technical teachers who had been in the workforce before becoming teachers.

[2] The Hierarchy of Work.

Two propositions will be explored in this section. First, students are aware of both the overt and covert messages schools and teachers give about the nature of work - they are capable of, for instance, penetrating, and in some cases contesting and rejecting common sense assumptions embedded in the hidden curriculum. The latter term is therefore, in some ways, a misnomer - students are aware of at least aspects or elements of what is "hidden". The second proposition states that socialisation into societal norms does not go unchallenged, but is contested in a number of ways. If teachers do not question the *status quo*, students do as a result of their own experiences of suffering which stems from their membership of subordinate groups identified by class, gender, ethnicity and age (i.e. youth) as they exist in the established order.

[a] Reception of messages about the hierarchy of work.

Students from all three schools clearly received the message given by teachers that the latter group favoured some jobs (performed by doctors, lawyers, teachers among others) and considered other jobs (performed by supermarket attendants, garbage collectors, factory workers among others) lower down in an hierarchy. Students were able to identify the jobs teachers "pushed" - these were *"well-paid jobs"*, ones with *"status"*, *"academic jobs"*, *"professional careers" (Fieldnotes, 20/11/86, p.1182; 29/9/86, p.1326)*. Students received this message in various ways. They observed that schools ascribed a different status to "academic" and "non-academic" subjects - this they considered to be a reflection of teachers' assumptions about the hierarchical nature of jobs. Examples to illustrate this awareness on the part of students occurred frequently. All Girls sixth formers said:

Val: *Teachers make you feel typing is not for the intellectual people...if you ask somebody what they're going to take this year, and they say "Typing, Secretarial Studies..." and you expect to hear "Cooking and Home Economics." I think it is important, but that's the vibes you get from people.*

Haupiri: *Yeah, you do...you go: "Oh! She's going to be a receptionist when she grows up!" (laughs)...You can't really not be aware of what they're doing to you.*

Angela: *Yeah...and its the same with jobs...like a doctor and a lawyer are way up here, and street cleaners are way down here.*

Val: *Yeah...and they say quite prejudicial sorts of statements about jobs...and they say that this is for this sort of people...and "You're a no-hoper...I bet you'll be working in a supermarket!" I mean, what's so bad about working in a supermarket?*
(Fieldnotes, 6/10/86, p.1407)

Senior students noted that these covert messages about the higher status of academic students and academic work were given through the cultures developed in the school. A group of seventh formers described this culture at Co-Ed High.

Brian: *I remember when we were in the third and fourth form, to be a seventh former was to achieve at school...People didn't necessarily respect them as people, but they looked up to their position. They were seventh formers, the top of the school. They had a room to themselves, there was a great deal of prestige attached to being a seventh former.*

David: *Yeah...although at the same time they were thought of as slightly strange...geeks...like every now and then the seventh formers had a day, like the awful tie day, when you tie a seventh former as a group...You do something silly just to encourage group spirit, and mark us out.*

Brian: *And the common room...the "common room circle" we call it...It's like a sanctuary from the rest of the school. You come in here and you can just relax. You can be yourself without being watched.*

(Fieldnotes, 10/10/86, p.1472)

Messages about status were also received by the very fact that "low" jobs never received much attention at all in the three schools. At All Girls' for instance, eighty representatives of careers were invited to the school to talk about their jobs to different groups of students. In an evaluative interview with three Maori students, the following comments were made:

Matire: *There's a big range, but there could be a lot more, because there's a lot more jobs available than just the professional ones.*

R.S.: *What do you mean by "professional"?*

Matire: *Well, like you've got doctors, accountants, lawyers here today...while all we want to do is just probably be behind the dairy...(laughs).*

Rosy: *They're the sort of jobs you have to go to university for and you have to study for years...and not everyone wants to gō to university.*

(Fieldnotes, 8/5/86, p.720)

Teachers communicated messages about the hierarchy of work both actively and passively - and students picked up both sorts of messages. As one fifth former noted, *"It's not just teachers...All society is like that...They just sort of repeat what you find outside school." (Fieldnotes, 6/10/86, p.1407).* A group of sixth form girls from Co-Ed High analysed this passive and uncritical acceptance of *status quo* messages by teachers:

Carol: *The idea is sort of presented: "Doctors are better, aren't they? So do your best...don't settle for less."...Which is not necessarily true, but that's what we're presented with.*

Jodie: *We did something like that in history, about Russia. But they don't actually challenge you with it...they told you about it.*

Carol: *It just makes you think: "It's interesting how many people can be wrong, and they don't do things like we do."...You think: "Oh, they're communists! How interesting! I'm glad we're not!"*

(Fieldnotes, 12/11/86, p.1664)

[b] Acceptance of messages about the hierarchy of work.

Some of the students did not contest these messages. Their acceptance is illustrated well by two fifth form working class students from a workshop technology and motor engineering class at Co-Ed High:

R.S.: *And in New Zealand society, would lawyers and doctors be more highly regarded than mechanics, for example?*

Greg: *Yeah..."grease monkeys" they call them...Mechanics get called all sorts of things.*

Andrew: *Lawyers, doctors...everybody treats them more respectably. They're more highly trained, and you'd find that most of the mechanics are school drop-outs. Not many lawyers are drop-outs. They all get these great big high bursaries.*

R.S.: *But they can't fix a car!...Why do they get paid more?*

Andrew: *Because they've worked for it...They have to go to University, and do five, six, seven years and more!*

Greg: *People think they're more important because doctors save lives and we don't.*

Andrew: *They never get dirty...You take a mechanic, and he's got grease all over him, while if you go to a doctor, he smells like Dettol...and lawyers have got suits and ties, you know.*

(Fieldnotes, 9/10/86, p.1447)

Some students initially spoke about differential status and pay in jobs as "obvious", but when challenged agreed that such a scheme of things need not be so obvious after all. A case in point is the following excerpt from an interview with academic fifth form students from All Girls' High:

Nathalie: *Teachers talk about pay, because you know, obviously some jobs are more highly paid than others and therefore are considered of a higher status than others...But the emphasis is not so much on what the job is but whether you enjoy doing it.*

R.S.: *You said "obviously" some jobs are paid more. Do you discuss alternatives to that?*

Renee: *You mean like communism?*

Raylene: *I wouldn't like it...No! Because some jobs are more stressful than others. There's different responsibilities of a lawyer and a salesperson.*

Renee: *And some work really harder than others who just cruise along...Though if we lived in a place where we were brought up like that, we'd accept it, though we might question it...And then you come to New Zealand and you say: "Oh my goodness!*

(Fieldnotes, 25/9/86, p.1288)

Generally students accepted the idea of hierarchical tiering of jobs, and justified it pointing to the meritocracy in New Zealand where, as some teachers observed said, one could climb higher. One Co-Ed High fourth former for example referred to a Social Studies lesson in which the teacher had shown them that while in Japan people are born into positions of status in society, in New Zealand anybody who tried could "make it". (Fieldnotes, 17/7/86, p.971).

Language as reflecting attribution of differential status.

The very vocabulary students utilised reflects clearly that they had generally absorbed and accepted the differential status New Zealand society and teachers attribute to jobs. They made a basic distinction between "careers" and "jobs", where the former needed qualifications and *"carried you through life" (Fieldnotes, 25/3/86, p.503)*. Students also distinguished between on the one hand "flash" or "decent" jobs, and on the other "rubbish", "bum", "shit" jobs. During a Social Studies unit on work at Co-Ed High for instance, fourth form students were asked by their teachers to look at pamphlets describing different kinds of jobs. One girl picked up a pamphlet from a pile and told her friend: *"Here's one for you!"* The other student reacted swiftly: *"What's that? A shitty bus driver!"*...and threw the pamphlet back on the teacher's desk. (Fieldnotes, 1/8/86, p.1074).

Another basic distinction made by students related to a tiered labour force and was referred to by a fifth form All Boys' College student:

Jason: *You've got three different types of jobs. You've got the labourers, who don't really need School Cert. but it sort of helps...ehm...You've got sort of another step up...tradesmen, and then you've got the executives. So, if you want to be an executive, you've got to get S.C., U.E. and University and all that...and a tradesman only needs S.C. or some sort of an apprenticeship like that...to get a certificate.*

(Fieldnotes, 4/3/86, p.340)

Labouring jobs were to be avoided because of the characteristics

associated with jobs in the secondary sector of a segmented labour market. As a sixth former who had been on a summer job at a freezing works plant said, *"If you're a labourer, you get treated as dirt...you don't get the best jobs. The tradesmen are the ones that get...they can choose and pick what they do. You're told what to do if you're a labourer."(Fieldnotes, 4/4/86, p.550)*

[c] Contestation of Messages about the Hierarchy of Work.

Ethnic and on occasion class variables intervened to interfere with the reception of messages being given formally and informally by teachers. Maori students consistently showed their contestation of hierarchical tiering of the workforce. One Maori sixth form Co-Ed student said:

Hohepa: *I think all jobs are important. I mean, you're earning money, and some might earn more than others, but it doesn't make their job more important. I mean, a garbage collector is just as important as a lawyer...and I don't think any job is more important than another, except perhaps if you're a Prime Minister or something. That's the way I think about it. It's not because they get paid more that they are more important than, say, the less glamorous jobs...a job is a job.*

R.S.: *Does school say the same things as you are saying about jobs?*

Hohepa: *Ehm...They talk about some jobs as being higher than others...but I don't really accept that.*
(Fieldnotes, 10/10/86, p.1466)

While such attitudes were shown consistently by Maori students, the data reveal some evidence that working class Pakeha students, or those who were involved in low-status work, like their Maori counterparts, challenged the differential status of jobs in New Zealand society. It is probable that the variable which triggered such contestation in both Maori and Pakeha is their membership of working class groups. However, two Maori teachers suggested that such contestation accrued from traditional ethnocultural beliefs about the interdependence of work (see page 189). Examples of working class contestation of messages about the hierarchical tiering can be found in the following excerpts. Both involve working class, fifth form Co-Ed students, and both show disagreement with commonly held notions about low-status jobs in freezing works and in supermarkets:

Paula: *I don't know why so many people put the job [working in a supermarket] down...It's good fun!...You get to meet a lot of new people and you make heaps of friends...and it's really good working with customers and all that...A lot of them like to have a chat, especially old people. I don't know why so many people put it down. My mother's been working at Food Town for years.*

(Fieldnotes, 2/10/86, p.1362)

Others resisted definitions and common-sense assumptions made by teachers.

Kylie: *I reckon teachers make it sound that if you go to school, you're going to go far...that's kind of putting down people that maybe have tried at school, but they'd rather be working...they make it sound as if you're brighter if you stay at school. If one of your friends said: "I'm working in a Bank", and the other said: "I'm working at the freezing works", you're going to think automatically that the first person must have done something better than the second person...sort of.*

Shona: *The freezing worker though would be better than the bank teller...he earns more.*

Kylie: *But freezing workers do the same thing all the time...They don't change, and that makes them feel they're stupid...and they're not necessarily. My father's a freezing worker. I remember I was talking to this teacher once, and he asked what my parents do: "Is your father a lawyer?" he asked. And I said: "No, he's a freezing worker." And he looked at me and...I don't know...I felt really stupid.*

(Fieldnotes, 4/11/86, p.1585)

Most of this contestation came from two sources. On the one hand it arose from values students held because of their class or/and ethnic location; on the other, but more rarely, students contested school definitions of status because of value positions which they had arrived at after a critical appraisal of messages schools and teachers were communicating. The following group of middle class sixth formers from All Girls' High was interviewed after a unit of four lessons on unemployment. At one point the researcher introduced the notion of equal salaries as a contrast to a tiered market presentation in the Economics lessons observed.

Lee: *In a way I guess it's fair to pay some people more than others, because doctors and lawyers have worked very hard to get where they are now...and some people like receptionists and secretaries, they haven't worked, so in a way they don't deserve status.*

Val: *But it depends, because we don't all have the same, abilities...it's not your fault if you're not a doctor.*

Lee: *Yeah...But you can't change society...You can't change the way people think, because it's been built up over hundreds of years...You can't change it overnight.*

Val: *I think you can change society...and we should! You get some teachers who...There's one of them in particular who is really bad about saying things like: "You'll be a garbage collector if you don't work harder!"*

(Fieldnotes, 6/10/86, p.1408)

[3] Students and the Priority of Work.

The proposition that ethnicity gives rise to contestation of particular messages given and assumptions made within monocultural schooling has been demonstrated above. Another example is the contestation of Maori students to the Pakeha notion of the priority of work. This is an important intra-school difference and it surfaces in the discussion of other properties in other categories. In this particular case, the proposition has medium saturation in data - only four examples were found to illustrate the argument. However, the proposition is presented because it is supported by additional sources, namely accounts of Maori culture (see *inter alia* Frith, 1973).

The following is an excerpt from an interview with four Maori sixth formers from All Girls' High. Rose was brought up by her grandparents in one of the regional strongholds of Maoridom, while Alana had been adopted by Pakeha foster parents. Therese has a Maori father (social worker) and a Pakeha mother, while Melanie's parents (who run a burger bar) are both Maori.

Rose: *To me, it's family...That comes first of all...even above education for me. My granny and my grand-dad...if I had to go home and help out, I would quit school, and I wouldn't worry about what I wanted to be.*

R.S.: *You would give up becoming an Accountant?*

Rose: *Yeah...*

R.S.: *For a Pakeha, that would sound different!*

Melanie: *Yeah...It would be unheard of. To most Pakehas it is job before family, or school before family I reckon. I've got friends who say: "My mum wants me to be this, and she doesn't care what I do"...you know.*

Rose: *I would give up what I wanted to be. Even if it was just to stay home and look after them, I'd still give it up.*

Melanie: *And to myself, a Pakeha thought like that...I'd think they're being selfish if they put education before family, because their family could die the next day.*

R.S.: *You have different priorities...*

Therese: *Because Pakehas are brought up in a different way.*

Rose: *Yeah...if...I'll go and get to my job...But even as I'm sitting for my exam to get that job...if something happened to my family, I'd just walk out and go and look after them...Even if I'd never have another chance to get that job.*

Alana: *It really depends how you were brought up, because for me, I'd rather have my job rather than my family.*

(Fieldnotes, 10/4/86, pp.589-590)

Summary.

Students have been shown to reject teachers as appropriate givers of messages about the world of work and to turn to people outside school for reliable information. They generally accept a concept of work arranged hierarchically, with different status attributed to different jobs. This acceptance is marked by a distinct awareness by students not only of overt messages given by teachers, but also of covert messages in the "hidden" curriculum and in the very structural organisation of the school. Students were shown to penetrate the assumptions teachers made about the priority of work, and the "common sense" nature of a tiered labour market. It has been shown that those who engaged in contestation of *status quo* messages were groups identified by their ethnic and/or class location. Other students were occasionally able to formulate alternative visions of work arrangements after a critical examination of the established order. Such a contestation did not, however, affect either the teachers' messages or the reception of these messages by other groups of students.

5.3.2. THE CONDITIONS OF WORK.

Students' reception of messages about the property conditions of work is organised around the following two elements:

[1] Reception of messages about workers' rights generally and about trade unions.

[2] Reception of messages about gender and conditions of work.

As in the section above, acts of acceptance and contestation of messages will be highlighted.

[1] Workers' Rights generally and Trade Unions.

Three propositions will be advanced in this section. First, students actively relate the school curriculum to a wider body of knowledge, and resist biases which they discern. Second, students, especially those who come from the working classes, are often involved in a process of rejection of knowledge given within the school because the pedagogy fails to acknowledge and affirm their experience of life. Third, in the absence of messages from teachers, students actively construct their understanding of issues from other sources. In the case of trade union education, students integrate prejudices and biases embedded in the sources they turn to. These propositions are explored in the light of data presented below.

[a] Students' contestation of a biased curriculum.

Over ninety percent of students from the three schools observed felt that their teachers did not adequately address the issue of conditions at work. They felt that the only references to this were to be found in the *Looking Ahead* booklets. One fourth form student from All Girls' High gave feedback about a Social Studies unit on work and said:

Hazel: *In the workbook there are some pretty good questions like: "Can you stand repetitive work?"...and they make you think of the conditions of work, such as whether you're going to be outside all the time.*
(Fieldnotes, 20/8/86, p.1182)

Similarly, a fourth former from All Boys' College said:

Simon: *We did something about workers' rights, about what you'd like in a job...in one of these booklets there were questions about what kind of holidays you want, and your sick leave and your pay and your hours and all that sort of thing. You don't want to be pushed around.*
(Fieldnotes, 1/10/86, p.1354)

Apart from these instances, most of the feedback revealed that

students felt that messages about unions and conditions of work were generally sparse. One fifth form student from All Girls' High expressed her perception of these gaps powerfully:

> *Trade unions, the people that help you if you get stuck in your job...That's like a secret...you only learn about it when you leave school. It's a non-talked about thing. We all know it's there, you know...but you don't get to know the secret until you leave school.*
>
> *(Fieldnotes, 20/8/86, p.1167)*

[b] Students' reception of messages about trade unions.

While students generally said that teachers did not address the question of trade unionism, some identified specific teachers as exceptions to the rule. These exceptions were two teachers from All Girls, one teacher from All Boys and technical teachers from the three schools. Students were able to recall and contrast these teachers' messages to the otherwise consistent bias in favour of employers' rights and criteria to define the world of work. Many examples could be quoted, but the following has been chosen because it serves to highlight the difference students perceived between Ms Woods and other teachers. A group of sixth formers from All Girls' High recalled her lessons from two years earlier:

Janice: *We only talked about trade unions in social studies, with Ms Woods. My friends in other classes, who had other teachers, didn't. I suppose it's because she's with the Labour government!*

Angel: *Lots of teachers talk about what employers want.*

Val: *Ms Woods was exactly the opposite. She talked more about what people want...and she was really anti-employer. She stands out, that teacher.*

(Fieldnotes, 6/10/86, p.1413)

Schooling as an intervening variable.

The fact that some students could recall the exceptional cases where teachers addressed trade union issues does not mean that such messages were necessarily transformational in the real lives of these particular students. An intervening variable which structured much of what was accepted in the way of messages given by teachers was the process of schooling itself. On eight different occasions students mentioned that although they remembered messages teachers gave, they felt that they could not

apply them to their real life situations - for them, school, and what happened within it, were divorced from real life. It is significant that in all eight cases there was a high proportion of students from working class groups. In the following discussion, a group of mainly working class fifth and sixth form students from All Girls' High are talking about their experience as check-out operators at Woolworth's supermarkets. They talk about bad conditions of work, and the researcher asks them if school had prepared them in any way to safeguard their rights as workers. One recalls that a teacher had often talked to them about such issues,

Ruth: *...but you don't pay much attention. In the social studies class we used to talk about it with Ms Woods...heaps...we were always going on about unions and things like that, and what they do for you and all that sort of stuff. But, I don't know...you don't really take much notice, because it's just school work...it's not real...you sort of just learn your stuff...you learn what you have to know for a test and that...and it sort of goes in one ear and out the other...I don't know if that applies to everybody else.*

Sandra: *I don't think you take anything in until you leave school and actually experience everything. I've learned more in a few months at Woolworths than the three years I've learned at school.*

(Fieldnotes, 31/10/86, p.1576)

A Maori senior student from Co-Ed High made similar comments and critiques of schooling. He had a part-time job at a supermarket, and he felt that what counted in the eyes of management was *"how the business was faring"* rather than the worker. When asked if teachers ever addressed such issues, he said:

Niha: *Schools revolve around teaching kids from books...it doesn't teach you anything about what's happening outside...not at all...you might have the brief...ehm...personal talk from a teacher...it might come out then...but not in a class...in Social Studies perhaps, but they still take it out of a book. You don't get to see a real personal view, and actually talk without a book. You're still reading and writing and stuff like that...it's still a set-down plan for the teacher for the year...you might stumble on the world of work while you're doing Japan, or something like that...but once you get out of the classroom, it's just gone...that was book work, you know...if it was more practical, and you actually sat down and talked about it, and everyone had an input, it would be much better...but everyone reads and writes, and you leave class and everything is forgotten.*

(Fieldnotes, 10/10/86, pp.1483-4)

The context of schooling in which the messages are given therefore

can constitute in itself a variable which intervenes in the reception of the message or messages. Words divorced from action, the abstract divorced from application, in other words what was observed to pass as everyday pedagogy is in itself an obstacle to real learning. When confronted with such information, teachers could only hope that at a later stage students would be able to transfer what they had learned at school and apply it to a real situation. Ms Woods said for instance:

> *A lot of what will happen is that they will think back and they'd think: "That cow Ms Woods said such and such..." And they will think back in three or four years' time when they've actually got more experience, and they'll say: "Yeah...that's what she was talking about."*
>
> *(Fieldnotes, 3/10/86, p.1384)*

[c] Students' contestation of messages about trade unions.

Students here contradicted themselves in that at one and the same time they felt that teachers should address the issue of trade unionism, but they strongly resisted any teacher who spoke in favour of unions. There was no difference observed in such contradictory reactions when the factors of class and ethnicty were taken into account. Ms Woods was identified as a Labour Party supporter, and judged by the students to be political and partisan in the classroom. Since teachers had themselves been out on pay-claim stop-work meetings that year, students generally assumed that teachers were pro-union. One said for instance *"My social studies teacher said something about trade unions...He put the good side about them. They were on strike themselves, and we're losing our education!" (Fieldnotes, 3/10/86, p.1455)*. Students also absorbed a lot of the criticism made of the teachers' strike by parents generally, and the negative media coverage the strike had received. One of a group of seventh formers from Co-Ed High said:

> *Yeah...I would say that the average Kiwi would not even think highly of teachers because of their union. I've heard people complaining of whinging teachers...you know..."They get twelve weeks of holidays a year and they only have to work six hours a day...What are they complaining about?!" And there was not much support for their strike.*
>
> *(Fieldnotes, 10/10/86, p.1472)*

As stated earlier in this chapter, one Social Studies teacher gave up doing a short unit on trade unions because of the strong

prejudice and contestation of the messages displayed by students (Fieldnotes, 24/7/86, p.1004). On the single occasion when a group of students were given exposure to trade union education, the general reaction was characterised by contestation and outright hostility. This happened when during a week-long seminar organised for school-leavers at All Girls' and Co-Ed High respectively, two union representatives were asked to address students in the morning. Two employers spoke on the afternoon of the same day. The students were generally sympathetic to the employers' point of view, and at one point, a student stood up during the Public Service Association representative's talk and said: *"If you keep pushing wages up, businesses will fold!" (Fieldnotes, 20/11/86, p.1716).*

After the talks by the trade union representatives, the researcher interviewed fifeen students in groups of five. The interviews revealed that most had not understood the unionists' references to "multinationals", "privatisation", "right wing politicians", or "streamlining the industry". They also felt that the unionists were "too pushy with their views." (Fieldnotes, 20/11/86, p.1719).

Students were unsympathetic towards the unions for various reasons. Some even said they would find out about the union activity of a job they were interested in in order to check whether it was too active and militant. If that was the case, then they lost interest in the job. As one seventh form student put it, *"Any job category that is governed by a militant union is not really looked upon as being a good job." (Fieldnotes, 10/10/86, p.1472).* An explanation for these attitudes is provided by the following fifth form boys from Co-Ed High who said:

Pete: *I wouldn't join a union...not when you hear about things like Kawerau and Glenbrook Steel.*[4]

Andrew: *If I went out to a job, and I'd have a choice of joining a union, I'd try to find out more about the union, because you find that most unions, you never hear of them...They never go on strike. But you get ones like the Pulp and Paper Union, and engineering*

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4. The timber and steel industries were the sites for extensive strike action, as a direct result of which hundreds of workers were made redundant during 1986. Both the strikes and the shedding of labour received wide media coverage.

unions, and they're all striking. So you really just find out if your union strikes a lot. You find out what reputation they've got.

Pete: *Because you see, things like at Kawerau...it only takes ten people out of two thousand to say: "Oh...We're not getting enough money!" And the union says: "Oh! Strike!"...and there's all these other guys who want to work, and who have families to feed, and then they're out for two months, with no money. They just strike for more money! It's greed!*

(Fieldnotes, 3/10/86, p.1454)

Students felt that unions endangered rather than protected the livelihood of workers. The following excerpt from an interview with a group of four seventh formers from All Boys' College is typical:

R.S.: *How do you feel about Trade Unions?*

Dean: *They're communists, and they suck!*

Cliff: *And all their leaders are Poms...That's what hacks me off the most...They come here because they've stuffed up their own country, and they're now trying to re-arrange ours for us!*

Dean: *I'm a New Zealander, and if a Pom was running my union, I'd say "Bugger you!"...Look at the pulp and paper workers at Kawerau...crikey! They had about twelve strikes in a year, and they were losing a couple of millions in a week at one stage...So they just closed it down, and now the unions are all going "ai...ai...ai..." They're really pleading to get back.*

Martin: *There seems to be a lot of stirrers...The union leaders are sort of rebellers. There was one of them who accused the management they were treating their workers like animals, and all this sort of stuff, and that could be nothing further from the truth...They just stir...So he got promoted into a managerial position, so now he can't stir.*

Wong: *I think unions used to have a purpose, but I think they're just out-dated now. They're just stirrers. They were good when work conditions were bad, when it was like a sweat house.*

Dean: *I don't think Unions pay much attention to health at all really. They're after money really...not if there's First Aid or toilets.*

(Fieldnotes, 1/10/86, pp.1350-1)

Such an excerpt illustrates how students construct their own understanding of phenomena, basing that construction on what they hear at home and in the common-sense assumptions and prejudices

current in their immediate environment. Once again, non-messages from the school are effective, in their very absence, in maintaining such attitudes and beliefs because they are not opened to critical examination.

[2] Gender and the Conditions of Work.

Two propositions are advanced in this section. First, part-time work has the function of preparing students for conditions of work in the secondary sector of a segmented labour market. This proposition is related here to the experiences of young women who labour after school in workplaces characterised by patriarchy, harassment, and injustice. It is further proposed that such experiences lower students' expectations of satisfaction and good conditions of work, and therefore they accept more readily the slightly improved conditions to be found in full-time work in the same secondary sectors. Both propositions are explored below.

[a] Reception of messages about women and conditions of work.

It was generally students from All Girls' High who mentioned the fact that teachers had given them messages about conditions of work for women and discrimination in the workforce. For instance, one of a group of fifth formers from this school recalled such messages and said:

Renee: *We were told a lot about sexual harassment in social studies, though we didn't all have the same teacher. My teacher was quite a feminist, and so she made us aware of all those things, like prejudice and stereotype and harassment. She told us if we were harassed, not to keep it inside us because you're afraid you could lose your job...because you're more important than your job, and what you think of yourself. So, it's good to tell someone else.*
(Fieldnotes, 25/9/86, p.1286)

Various interviews revealed how girls were experiencing first hand what it meant to be a woman in an often oppressive, patriarchal workplace during their part-time and casual work. The following excerpt highlights the extent of knowledge gained by students through their paticipation in the grey economy. The interview presented below was with six fifth and sixth form students, all of whom worked at a supermarket. All but one (Sandra) are from working class backgrounds. The researcher had asked one of them to

contact co-workers who were also students at All Girls' High, and therefore these "supermarket girls" represent a snowball sample. Four of the six were working because their families needed the extra income. Four lived with solo parents, and one was Maori. A long excerpt is quoted from the two hour interview because it communicates a feeling of the working conditions under which various young women interviewed in this study labour.

R.S.: *If things don't go right, who do you talk to?*

Ruth: *Mavis, or each other...I'd go to talk to Mavis...because she's the type of person that if you tell her something, she won't go and tell everybody else. If a superior hassles another person, we talk between ourselves and give one another moral support and stuff like that.*

R.S.: *You sound as if you feel powerless...*

Ruth: *Yeah...there's not much you can do about it because you're sort of more subject to criticism and that because you don't work there all the time.*

Janice: *You sort of say "Yes sir" "No sir" all the time...*

R.S.: *I've heard of sexual harassment too...*

Ruth: *Yeah...that happens...there was this supervisor and whenever I was at the checkout, he used to come up behind me and rub himself against me and stuff like that...and a couple of times he said to me...things like..."What are we doing after work?" and stuff like that...and once we were doing night duty, and he came up to me and said: "I'll meet you at such and such a place in five minutes"...and things like that...and you just had to laugh and take it as a joke, because if you spoke up to him, he'd give you...what are those things called?...a written warning...if you didn't do what he wanted. It sort of gave him a feeling of power, and if you didn't sort of laugh along with him and that, he'd...he just made your life really hard for you. And he's married with a wife and a kid...I used to laugh and sort of go along with him so that...not actually going on with him, sort of encouraging him...but just sort of laugh along with him so that he just sort of wouldn't think I was scared and that...and sort of hassle me, or look vulnerable.*

Rudy: *That's abusing his authority!...I had a job at a rugby club before I worked at the supermarket, and in a way I was harassed...there were all these guys and they would go: "Hey...your pie is hot!"...and you just go red in the face, and you don't know what to do!...It's not really serious or anything, but it makes you think: "What a creep!"*

Meg: *And you find you're more subject to harasssment because you can't fight back...you're a part-timer, you don't have authority or anything like that...you just get fired or they'll laugh at you, and tell you that you're imagining it or dreaming it up.*

Ruth: *The other night...we wear badges with our names on it...and the other night somebody rang up my place and said to my mum: "Oh, is Ruth there?" And she said "No, she's gone to a party..." And she said "Who's speaking?"...And the person said "Oh...she doesn't know me...I just know her from the supermarket."...And about three days later I was at work, and a guy came up to me at the checkout and he goes: "How was the party last Saturday?"...And I said "What do you mean?" And he said: "You went to a party last Saturday night...Your mother said you did." And I said "What were you doing ringing my place?" And he just laughed and walked off.*

Janice: *Oh yuk!*

Ruth: *They can ring you up and anything...they look up your name in the book, and there's your address and phone number...But we have to wear that badge so that people can identify you.*

Janice: *I know some guys who are really bad...there was this girl on the checkout, and they were calling out her measurements and everything...and she was really embarassed!*

Sandra: *And you've got to rely on your own abilities to deal with that situation...but if it's a customer, you can call Mavis, because she knows how to deal with that kind of situation.*

Rudy: *And some customers keep looking at you...you know...not in your face...and it really unnerves you...*

Ruth: *It's just a fact of life...you've got to learn to fend for yourself...everybody's got a hard life anyway...it's just one more thing added to you.*

(Fieldnotes, 31/10/86, pp.1572-8)

These students have not only experienced harassment constantly to the extent that they have to construe it as a "fact of life"; they have also experienced the subordinate and oppressed position of being female, with lives defined by males where wile and guile are the only means to a degree of freedom. To avoid acknowledging such experiences and equipping the students with ways to exert power over them can only increase students' perception of education as irrelevant. It is significant that even at All Girls' High, where the feminist ethos was highlighted in various different ways, few of the female teachers offered strategies to resist such

oppression. In an interview with fourth formers, students remembered that Ms Hirst had given them a message about discrimination against women in the workforce. She had in fact suggested that the only way to avoid that was to "get a sex change operation" . One student said:

Sylvia: *I suppose everybody's taking it for granted that these things happen...and everybody accepts it...if more people did something about things like that, and racialism, then maybe it would help!*
(Fieldnotes, 20/8/86, p.1181)

Summary.

Students have been shown to have an appreciation of the real conditions of work as they experienced them in their participation in the grey economy. They therefore criticised teachers for being too idealistic when talking about work, and for presenting them with a picture of workers as generally passive recipients of realities as defined by employers' interests. Students have also been shown to have a negative attitude towards trade unions, and these attitudes were not challenged by any messages teachers gave. Even where teachers spoke positively about trade unions, it has been shown that the very medium of schooling generally served as an obstacle in the reception and acceptance of intended messages. Contrary to teachers' opinion that students did not have valuable information to offer the pedagogical encounter when this dealt with the topic of work, students have been shown to experience many of the realities of the world of work in their participation in the grey economy. For young women, this participation is characterised by a submission to oppressive patriarchal structures.

5.3.3. RELATIONS AT WORK.

Messages related to the property relations at work are described with reference to the following two elements:
[1] Relations among workers and
[2] Relations between employers and workers.

In this section the discussion of the reception, acceptance and contestation of messages by students is organised around inter-school similarities and differences.

[1] Relations among Workers.

Two propositions will be explored in this section. First, it is proposed that the structural organisation of schools encourages students to relate to each other in definite ways which are functional to the kinds of relationships prevalent in the established order. Students are shown to be schooled into accepting a division between those who are academic and those who are not. The school is also seen to be largely ineffective in bridging the ethnic and gender gaps which students absorb from the wider society - indeed, in some cases, schooling exacerbates such gaps. Schooling therefore reproduces and reinforces elements of the *status quo*. Second, it is suggested that this sort of divisiveness is also functional to the needs of industry. The more disunited a workforce is, the less chance there is of unified action against employers. This proposition explores the possibility that relations among students parallel those among workers. In so doing, it does not suggest that there is some conspiracy between the employing classes in New Zealand to influence schools in this particular area (*a' la* Bowles and Gintis). Rather, such trends flow from the structure of the economic and related systems (see Apple, 1978). This proposition has a low saturation in data and has only a speculative value.

Reception of covert messages about relations among workers.

Inter-School Similarities.

Students were able to penetrate covert messages given by the structural organisation of the school which encouraged a particular form of relating among students. The major penetration was the condemnation of schooling - by students in all three educational communities in this study -for encouraging divisiveness and competition rather than co-operation and friendship. The criterion for this division was, according to the students, the arbitrary one of "being academic" - a criterion which alienated the academic from the non-academic, and the non-academic from themselves. The following excerpt from an interview with senior students from All Girls' High is typical of others in all three schools, and gives substance to these assertions.

Sarah: *If you're not academic, I reckon the whole school system gives you a negative view of yourself. You end up saying: "I can't do anything...I can't do anything!...I can't read, I can't write!" And so they go out of school thinking they can't do anything.*

Janice: *Yeah! Right from the word go...with all those tests of spelling...and you get one person at Level 1, and everyone else is at Level 3...and it's always like that...if somebody's going to be at the top, somebody else has got to be at the bottom.*

Frieda: *Yeah...the system just writes off those who are not academic...it makes them feel they're totally useless...My friend Tracey...she has trouble with exams...it separates people a lot, school does.*

Sarah: *Yeah...People who would normally get on...they're separated.*

Frieda: *I almost feel guilty for Tracey, who's left behind. She didn't get School C., and she feels she isn't as good. And she is, because she's good at the farming side of things...she could beat me any day.*

(Fieldnotes, 18/3/86, pp.441-2)

While All Girls' High was especially competitive in the academic field, this sort of division between academic and non-academic students was observed in all three schools, including at Co-Ed High where the competitive ethos was least encouraged. Here, as in the other two schools, students distinguished between the high achievers as *"geeks"*, *"spoons"*, *"ponsys"*, and the non-achievers as *"rugged"* (Fieldnotes, 4/4/86, p.554). Students who belonged to the prestigious six-subject classes were made to feel special, and other students looked up at them and felt that they could never really mix with them (Fieldnotes, 10/10/86, p.1472). Moreover, the prevalent notion of meritocracy gave rise to further divisions within the school. Pakeha students for instance often considered their Maori classmates as wilfully failing to achieve at school. The concept of meritocracy fostered in schools (where anybody could achieve if only he/she tried hard enough) led to condemnation of whole groups identified by their ethnicity, rather than a recognition that monocultural schooling failed such groups. This argument is developed in the following excerpt from an interview with fourth form students from Co-Ed High.

Odette: *They've got to pull themselves together...*

Toni: *We start off all equal...unless you're a freak...and then some fall away.*

Odette: *But these people we're talking about, there's nothing wrong with them...they're not mental. They're just too lazy to think! They're no hopers!*
(Fieldnotes, 30/7/86, p.1055)

These attitudes reinforced ethnic divisiveness - a divisiveness which has been shown to be deeply entrenched in all three schools (see Chapter 4). With a few exceptions, there were few instances observed in the three schools which effectively encouraged a better understanding between ethnic groups. Moreover, even at Co-Ed High, teachers were observed avoiding addressing racial prejudices in the classroom. The established order of separation between ethnic groups is passively and in some ways, actively reinforced by the school.

As in other cases, the teachers' general reluctance to address issues was not shared by students. The latter knew from first hand experience in part-time work or during work exploration projects that there were serious racial problems when it came to Pakeha workers and employers relating with Maori workers. As will be shown in greater detail in Chapter 8, transition students were unhappy when their work exploration took them to situations where the workers were predominantly of another race. One All Girls' High Pacific Islander working in a hospital office with an all-Pakeha staff stopped going to work and asked to be transferred to the Department of Maori Affairs (Fieldnotes, 17/4/86, p.642). A Pakeha student on the same transition course who was placed in a textile factory with an overwhelmingly Pacific Island and Maori staff was so unhappy that she gave up the course. Her transition teacher felt that she had felt isolated and lonely at that particular placement (Fieldnotes, 17/4/86, p.643). These sorts of racial problems were experiencd both between workers (Fieldnotes, 3/3/86, p.285) and between workers and their employers (Fieldnotes, 2/10/86, p.1371).

While teachers cannot be expected to solve problems deeply embedded in society, they can be expected to address them and motivate students to think critically about race relations as played out in the established order. By not doing so, the established order merely asserts itself in the educational community. This assertion was observed to be even more pronounced at All Boys' College. Pakeha students there expressed an anxiety that since they hardly

ever met Maori people within or outside school, they would not be able to get along with them as co-workers. A seventh former said for instance:

> *It would probably be a shock if I had to find myself working with a Maori...because you wouldn't be able to hassle a Maori, because you'd be likely to be struck in the face or something like that. Here there's hardly any Maoris...at this school...and everybody's shooting off at the few Maoris there are. Before I was at another school, and we would have been something like fifty-fifty Pakeha and Maoris, and you really had to watch out what you said. And here, you think about it and you realise: "God! At the other school I'd never think of saying anything like that!"*
>
> *(Fieldnotes, 29/4/86, p.669)*

Through active and passive ways, therefore, the three schools reproduced and on occasions reinforced the type of ethnic relations found in the established order. The ethnic mixture in schools therefore opens spaces for the challenging of racial prejudice and for an increased cross-cultural understanding. This space is less available in monoethnic schools which reinforce racial prejudice and decrease the chances of cross-cultural understanding.

Data also suggest that the nature of the school population in terms of gender also affects the types of relationships developed in schools. Co-Ed High was observed reinforcing the gender divisiveness found in the established order. Thus, while teachers and structures gave messages which challenged sexism and gender stereotyping, the relationships observed in the classroom manifested other dynamics. Excerpts from classroom observation sequences cited in this and other chapters consistently show male students hassling and harassing girls, often determining the direction and tempo of the lesson. A difference was observed in the effects single-sex schooling had on the view of themselves developed by boys and by girls. At All Girls' High, students felt that the absence of boys meant that they could allow themselves be rough and "unfeminine". In other words, single-sex schooling meant that there was less pressure on them to fulfil gender stereotypes. At All Boys' College, the absence of girls meant that the boys could reinforce their gender stereotypes by being rough and tough. If girls were in school, the boys would feel pressurised into acting "sensitive and mature".

Summary.

It has been shown that despite mainstreaming, the three schools in this study encourage the sorting of students on academic and non-academic lines. This results in divisive rather than co-operative relations. The exclusivity or mixture of gender and ethnicity also has an important influence on perceptions and attitudes towards relations between Maori and Pakeha, male and female. This influences the possibilities of the development of a cohesive consciousness between workers.

[2] Relations between Workers and Employers.

Two propositions will be advanced in this section. First, by their very structures, schools prepare students for the type of hierarchical relationships found in the workplace between employers and employees (see Bowles and Gintis, 1976). A second proposition suggests that schools do not mirror the world of work closely "enough", but instead encourage patterns of dependency and immaturity which inhibit the process of transition to adulthood and to employment (see Scharff, 1976 and Bazalgette, 1978). While at first glance the two propositions appear to be contradictory, a deeper analysis shows that they are not necessarily mutually exclusive. The correspondence theory is first of all seen to apply to any school as an institution where control is exercised in a hierarchical fashion, and where students feel obliged to obey and follow orders in carrying out tasks. However, the socialisation of students into these sorts of social relations with authority is seen to be a gradual and contested process. Moreover, depending on the ethos of the different schools, this contestation is encouraged or suppressed, resulting in students exercising their free agency to different extents. The propositions are explored below.

[a] Reception of covert messages regarding correpondence between school and the workplace.

Inter-School Similarities.

Students were able to penetrate the covert parallel existing between on the one hand the sorts of relationships encouraged in

school between teachers and students and on the other those normally found between employers and workers. This penetration took place in all three schools, including at Co-Ed High where hierarchical relationships were less monolithic than either All Girls' or at All Boys'. The following Co-Ed High seventh former illustrates well this decoding by students of the "hidden" agenda of schooling:

Dee: *School prepares you in a way that...you sort of learn how to deal with authority figures and things like that...how to learn, how to deal with people, how to accept. Like, some people won't handle bosses because they can't handle authority figures sort of thing, whereas teachers are authority figures at school. So, if you're with them all the time, sort of, you do get to relate to them a bit better, because you're with them five days a week. It really becomes a subconscious sort of thing. They're there. They're the authority, and you do what they say, basically...Though to a certain extent things like the student council give the students a chance to voice their opinion...but not really in the everyday classroom situation.*

(Fieldnotes, 6/10/86, p.1395)

A fifth former from the same school extends this penetration to other areas of her life where hierarchical relations were governed by the discipline of obedience and the imperative of time (see Thompson, 1967):

Kylie: *School teaches you the basics, like discipline...and your parents also teach you discipline. I mean, they say dinner now, and like breakfast is in the morning, or school starts at eight thirty...That's a sort of discipline. Life teaches you in general and prepares you for work...I mean, schooling is part of the real world...everybody's told they have to do it, so that's like being in the real world. Teachers try to make us realise that it's not all roses out there...But it's not all roses here anyway!*

(Fieldnotes, 4/11/86, p.1590)

The relations with teachers and other authority figures remind students of the relations they have with their employers and supervisors in their casual work. Sixth formers from All Girls' High note for instance that *"school prepares you for work because you learn how to take orders"*.

Maryanne: *You see, I go to work after school, and we've got this service supervisor...she's a real pain...And from having teachers like that at school you learn to take them as they come. I mean, she might be in a really bad mood one day, and sweet the next. But you've learned that at school...You've learned to accept it.*

(Fieldnotes, 25/3/86, p.513)

Schooling is moreover seen to prepare students for the kinds of realities and relationships they are likely to experience at work, and especially so in the secondary sectors of the labour market. A group of fifth formers note:

Sharon: *Teachers do kind of tame you...to put up with so much boredom!*

Luisa: *You're taught to be disciplined and listen to people...you've got to listen to your teachers, otherwise you get into serious trouble!...Or you've got to listen to a seventh former because she's your senior!*

Maryanne: *Like, if you take somebody who hasn't been to school all her life, and at eighteen she tries to enter a job, she'll be a rebel! She wouldn't really know how to take orders...But we have! You saw the teacher this morning?! She threw that assignment at us and said "Do it!"*

(Fieldnotes, 24/7/86, pp.1011-2)

Inter-School Differences.

This sort of penetration of the correspondence between schooling and the workplace took a different form at Co-Ed High, where less emphasis was put on hierarchical relationships. Students here felt that their school encouraged them to assert themselves and that their opinions counted. One fourth former said for instance *"At this school, students and teachers are like buddies, and at schools with uniforms, there's a great difference between teachers and students. My sister used to go out to nightclubs with her teachers here." (Fieldnotes, 17/7/86, p.960).*

A seventh former noted that at Co-Ed High, this sort of relationship was expressed in the pedagogy many teachers used in class:

> *Teaching here is more of a two-way thing...like ehm...the teacher is not there to teach you...to tell you what to do...He's there to help you learn rather than saying: "This is how you do it...Do it!"...He says: "O.K....what don't you understand?"...And then he tries to explain it. It's a very level sort of thing, where you're both working towards the same end, rather than telling you what you're supposed to be doing.*
>
> *(Fieldnotes, 10/10/86, p.1470)*

Students also noted that this kind of relationship might not be preparing them for the kinds of relationships they knew existed in the workforce between worker and employer. A sixth former from Co-Ed High noted for instance:

I think we might be a bit surprised when we go into the workforce, because the relationship we have with teachers might not be the same as we will have with bosses...and it might be hard for us to adjust to that situation. Though it depends on what jobs you do, because I suppose some would be looking for self-motivation and initiative. I mean, you have to respect and take discipline, but there's a point up to which you can take it, because you're your own person.

(Fieldnotes, 12/11/86, p.1665)

[b] Reception of **overt** messages regarding the correspondence between the school and the workplace.

Inter-School Similarities.

The observation made earlier that teachers emphasised employers' needs when considering the world of work is also made by students from all three schools studied. One example among many came from two Co-Ed Maori fourth formers who, following a social studies unit on "Work", were asked:

R.S.: *You've been telling me what Ms Dewe told you about what employers want. Did she talk about what workers want?*

Te Huia: *Yeah! That's true...No! Just mainly to please employers. In class they just tell you what the employers want...They don't talk about things like workers' unions and things like that...They could give us more information about things like that.*

Rangi: *Yeah...it's sort of employers are up top and workers way down bottom, as if employers are more important than workers.*

(Fieldnotes, 29/9/86, p.1324)

[c] Students and non-correspondence between school and work.

Inter-School Similarities.

Students also felt that in some ways, school and the relations and realities constructed within it were very different from those of the workforce. Students, especially those who were from the working class, pointed consistently to a distinction between education and "real" work. A Co-Ed fifth former said for *instance:"At school you just expect to learn, but at work you've got to work...actually work."(Fieldnotes, 29/9/86, p.1326).* School is also seen to be different from work because the hierarchical

structures are more flexible. Students consistently referred to their experience of work in the grey economy, and contrasted that with school. Fifth formers from Co-Ed High said:

Andrew: *You've got to realise how to be told what to do at work.*

Pete: *Yeah...It's not like school. You can't turn to the boss and tell him off. You'd get sacked. At school you'd only get sent out of class. You get into trouble for half an hour...but on the job you've got to learn to control your tongue really.*

(Fieldnotes, 9/10/86, p.1449)

The relations developed at work were also considered to be tougher and therefore more part of the "real world" by some students than the more sheltered relations developed at school. This was true both for male and female experiences of the workplace. A working class Co-Ed sixth former described his part-time job at a freezing works plant, and how he felt the macho shop-floor culture differed from some aspects of schooling:

Mike: *These guys I work with, they're all a pretty hard case...They just say what they want. They give people a hard time. They've all been pretty rough guys in their time I guess. If you do something wrong, they just swear at you and laugh and make a big joke out of it. But they're good guys though. I still see them sometimes. You're more free at school, but in some ways it's better at work.*

R.S.: *How do you mean?*

Mike: *You get the money, and you've got more freedom to say what you want...It's pretty good, and when they give you a hard time, you can give it back...They don't care.*

(Fieldnotes, 4/4/86, p.551)

A fifth form All Girls' High student described a female version of the same "rough" culture in the workplace which contrasted with the more secure life at school:

Michelle: *I work at hotels, and we often get rugby players and they're really stupid...like they give me their room keys and tell me to come back at night, and you just learn to ignore them. Like, when I first started working I used to think it was funny...but you know, after a while it just got that sickening, because it wasn't funny...At work you've got to be really mature, but at school you can fool around. You've still got time to fool around. You can act natural. You've got to act older when you go out to work.*

(Fieldnotes, 2/10/86, p.1359)

Students considered school as a less demanding place than the workplace, and provided them with security and freedom from the responsibilities which weighed down adults. As the following fifth and sixth formers from All Girls' High say:

Alana: *I feel more secure here...Like, you make a mistake at your job, and you're fired...you become unemployed. But you make a mistake here, and you find people to help you.*

Rose: *It's just the ups and downs of work...I know a lot of people at work, and they get really depressed...And I don't want to be depressed...And at school I'm never really depressed. It gives me security...like I don't have to pay next week's rent.*

(Fieldnotes, 10/4/86, p.584)

It is important to note however that all these distinctions between school and work are distinctions of degree. While the students' judgements about the more liberal and less heavy-handed relations between teachers and students as compared with those between employers and workers are true, the fact remains that they both manifest the same sort of assumptions - assumptions about the legitimacy of hierarchical relations rather than an alternative one of say, participation in decision-making. As one of the fifth formers from All Boys' College said, *"school is the work up to it...a preparation"* for the realities of work. (Fieldnotes, 4/3/86, p.330).

Summary.

This chapter has presented data regarding socio-political messages about work given within schools. It has been shown that both through overt and covert means, schooling in New Zealand generally teaches for work rather than about work. The distinction lies of course between teaching for a system that is, and a critical education which helps students interpret and decode structures around them, including those of work and non-work. Such an analysis would not assume that students have nothing to offer to the teaching encounter. Rather it would highlight and incorporate their experiences in part-time and casual labour in a thematic investigation of the realities of work. Such an investigation could lead to progressive ideas which would help in the reconstruction of the workplace as a site for equality, justice and dignity. It has been seen that students are aware of the overt and covert curriculum which reproduces the values of the labour market as they are, and in different ways have been able to articulate a contestation of such schooling.

The following is a list of the propositions explored in data in this chapter:

[1] Teachers accept the world of work as given and consider their role to be one of helping students enter and fit into the established order.

[2] Teachers do not normally identify political issues as legitimate areas for their consideration in class.

[3] The crisis in employment creates a pressure on teachers to address questions of a political nature which challenge the *status quo*.

[4] The nature of schools is characterised by complexity and dialectic, and there are competing voices both among teachers in giving messages and forming attitudes and students in receiving such messages.

[5] When in schools there is an an ideology at work firmly grounded in social movements and working for democratic ends, a space for an ideological critique of other aspects of the *status quo* is created.

[6] Teachers have a crude knowledge of the world of work - they therefore concentrate on skills which lead to a job rather than on a critical examination of the world of work.

[7] Teachers' crude knowledge of work leads them to divide labour into two classes: high status careers or work which you "chose" or "liked" to do and which led to self-fulfilment, and factory-type work which led to self-destruction and drudgery.

[8] Teachers attribute higher status to professional careers.

[9] Teachers make judgements about the appropriateness and acceptability of work characterised by drudgery for some students rather than others.

[10] Because of their awareness of the increasing and permanent nature of unemployment, teachers adopt a role of socialising students into the acceptance of a new approach to the old work ethic.

[11] The discussion of the crisis in capital accumulation opens a space for a critical examination of the established order and for consideration of more equitable alternatives.

[12] Teachers emphasise employers' rights to the detriment of the rights of workers.

[13] The crisis in employment encourages the emphasis of employers' criteria and interests rather than the interests of educating future workers/non-workers about their rights in a democratic society.

[14] Teachers believe they are neutral when they avoid addressing political issues in class.

[15] The "null curriculum" is not a neutral void - rather, what is not taught has *"important effects on the kinds of options one is able to consider, the alternatives one can examine, and the perspectives from which one can view a situation or a problem" (Eisner, 1985, p.97).*

[16] When confronted with polemical issues, teachers engage in avoidance as a survival strategy to ensure their own comfort rather than educational ends.

[17] Such selective avoidance by teachers derives from their ideological positions and their particular relationship to capital and class interests. In other words, teachers have a vested interest in upholding the *status quo*.

[18] Conservative schooling is at its most transformative when rallied strongly behind an ideological critique of the established order.

[19] The gains women make in this sort of ideological (as against liberal) schooling by maintaining single-sex educational communities is to some extent counteracted by all male schools.

[20] Workers are presented by teachers as having conflicting interests rather than similar concerns.

[21] Teachers emphasise a relationship with employers which is characterised by obedience, respect and a sense of "fair play".

[22] In times of economic crisis, the covert curriculum which emphasises business rather than democratic interests becomes overt.

[23] Covert messages given by the organisational structure of the school emphasise the needs of industry rather than the needs of democracy. Covert and overt messages are therefore seen to be mutually reinforcing regarding this particular issue.

[24] While there are differences between liberal and conservative forms of schooling, these differences are not sufficient to transcend the instrumental imperative suggested in the proposition above.

[25] Students do not value teachers as givers of messages about the nature of the world of work.

[26] Students turn to sources of information other than teachers for valuable insights into the world of work.

[27] Students have a more lively grasp of the realities of the world of work than teachers, steeped as they are in the culture of work in the grey economy.

[28] Students are aware of both the overt and covert messages schools and teachers give about the nature of work and are capable of penetrating, and in some cases contesting and rejecting common sense assumptions embedded in the hidden curriculum.

[29] Socialisation into societal norms does not go unchallenged, but is contested in a number of ways. If teachers do not question the *status quo*, students do as a result of their own experiences of suffering which stems from their membership of subordinate groups identified by class, gender, ethnicity and age (i.e. youth) as they exist in the established order.

[30] Ethnicity gives rise to contestation of particular messages given and assumptions made within monocultural schooling.

[31] Students actively relate the school curriculum to a wider body of knowledge, and resist biases which they discern.

[32] Students, especially those who come from the working classes, are often involved in a process of rejection of knowledge given within the school because the pedagogy fails to acknowledge and affirm their experience of life.

[33] In the absence of messages from teachers, students actively construct their understanding of issues from other sources.

[34] Part-time work has the function of preparing students for conditions of work in the secondary sector of a segmented labour market.

[35] Experiences in part-time work lower students' expectations of satisfaction and good conditions of work, and they therefore accept more readily the slightly improved conditions to be found in full-time work in the same secondary sectors.

[36] The structural organisation of schools encourages students to relate to each other in definite ways which are functional to the kinds of relationships prevalent in the established order.

[37] The sort of divisiveness among students encouraged by schooling is functional to the needs of industry. The more disunited a workforce is, the less chance there is of unified action against employers.

[38] By their very structures, schools prepare students for the type of hierarchical relationships found in the workplace between employers and employees.

[39] Schools do not mirror the world of work closely "enough", but instead encourage patterns of dependency and immaturity which inhibit the process of transition to adulthood and to employment.

CHAPTER 6.

MESSAGES REGARDING THE NATURE OF THE LABOUR MARKET.

In this chapter, messages about the nature of the labour market - as given by teachers and received by students - are described. A complex, often contradictory set of messages regarding the shrinking job opportunities in New Zealand society was given by different teachers. This chapter examines these various messages, analyses whether different messages were addressed to different groups of students, and draws conclusions as to which messages were actually accepted and contested by students.

INTRODUCTION.

The major category "messages about the nature of the labour market" is discussed in terms of the following properties:

[1] Messages about a contracting labour market and

[2] Messages about causes of unemployment and ways to secure one's own employment.

These two properties are explored in terms of teachers' intended and actual messages, and the students' reception, acceptance and contestation of these messages. Where significant inter- and intra-school differences appeared, they are described to highlight the contested terrain in which messages and meanings are forged.

6.1. TEACHERS' INTENDED MESSAGES.

Three major propositions are explored. First, unemployment has the potential for destabilising the established order in schools - teachers fear that loss of job opportunity for an increasing number of students will lead to loss of motivation for learning and achieving, and to the loss of the legitimacy of schooling. Second, teachers censor the kinds of knowledge they decide to transmit to students. This censorship is founded not on educational values, but on the need to ensure the smooth functioning of the system -

namely the established order of the school and the classroom. Students are therefore to be kept motivated, whatever the educational cost. Third, in times of a delegitimisation crisis, schools feel the pressure to accept their students' instrumental approach to education as a means to heighten motivation for learning and order in the classrooms - in the quest for work, the needs of industry become primary. The three propositions are grounded in the data presented below and organised around a discussion about teachers' knowledge and their decisions about making aspects of that knowledge public.

Private Knowledge and Public Messages.

Inter-School Similarities.

Over eighty-five percent of the teachers interviewed in this study were aware of the extent of unemployment in New Zealand, of the sections of the population it was affecting most, and of the fact that unemployment was unlikely to be a transient phenomenon. Co-Ed High staff were particularly well-informed about the issue since a Labour Department official was invited by the Careers Adviser to address them about the nature of the labour market (15/4/86). The same official had earlier in the year given the same information to Careers Advisers from all the schools in the region at a special in-service course. Teachers made frequent reference to unemployment in their interview sessions with the researcher. Indeed, some of them gave rather bleak and apocalyptic visions of the future employment scene. One Co-Ed High teacher told the researcher:

> *Oh...in ten to fifteen years' time, only fifty percent of students will be able to find permanent employment, and the rest of them will be employed on a job-sharing, part-time basis or some other system. [...] There will be massive unemployment, and it tends to be the darkies, the uneducated and the delinquent. It's potential civil war material...the world of the haves and have nots will become stark within a decade, and I estimate social and economic chaos unless the government does something about it.*
> *(Fieldnotes, 10/10/86, p.1496)*

Teachers were generally aware of unemployment as a major problem. The only exceptions came from All Boys' College, where on different occasions at the beginning of the school year, four teachers and

the school principal assured the researcher that unemployment was not an issue at their school - all their students got jobs. This is an important inter-school differece which will be explored in detail in this chapter. It is important to note that while teachers at Co-Ed and All Girls' High were aware of the extent of unemployment, the majority did not express any strong intention to address the issue at any depth in the classroom. They were aware of the potential destabilising nature of such information in the minds of pupils. Indeed, the urgency to maintain motivation in students towards learning and achievement at schools was so paramount that brief references to unemployment were frequently made as a convenient motivating tool to urge the students to work harder. A Co-Ed Social Studies teacher admitted frankly that:

> *We still use the threat of unemployment as a means of control within the system...within the school...how if you don't work you won't get this certificate or this qualification...or a good report, and therefore you go on the dole, the unemployment benefit, and that's bad. Sometimes we say it quite bluntly, in those terms, and other times more subtly.*
>
> *(Fieldnotes, 24/7/86, p.1000)*

Teachers found themselves on the horns of a very uncomfortable dilemma. On one hand they were aware that reference to unemployment was a useful control device in the classroom while on the other, they were also aware that too much emphasis on the problem could be self-defeating and lead to loss of motivation. One way out of this dilemma was offered by Ms Wyatt, the All Girls' High principal. She had been seconded for a whole term by the Department of Education to meet various employers from all around the country to discuss a new school leaving certificate with them. She developed views about the labour market which became particularly influential with teachers and principals in other schools because she delivered talks to various school communities. Three teachers and the Co-Ed High principal told the researcher that they had accepted Ms Wyatt's view that there was not a problem of unemployment for young people, but a problem of skills and "correct attitude". Her messages therefore were organised around a denial of the macro issues of unemployment. She told the researcher:

> *Ms Wyatt: I told the staff last time that the reality of what is happening outside is that there are jobs for people with skills, and particularly for people with well-developed personal skills...but not for*

> *fifteen year old school drop-outs. I'm going certainly to be getting the message to students that they don't read the front page of the paper any longer...because the front page message is that unemployment means that there are no jobs, and so what happens for some of them is: "What's the use anyway?! No matter what I do, I'm not going to get a job." I'm going to be telling them not to believe that message.*
>
> *(Fieldnotes, 13/10/86, p.1485)*

It is important to note that this concern with the potential loss of motivation by students led to the inculcation of the qualities appreciated by industry. Ms Wyatt therefore said that she would give messages to students and parents about the importance of *"personal skills like punctuality, co-operativeness, willingness to do boring parts of a job, willingness to take training and to re-train" (Fieldnotes, 20/10/86, p.1546)* to ensure success in obtaining work. The Careers Adviser at her school and the principal at Co-Ed High are two examples of people who expressed direct agreement with Ms Wyatt's views. The former told the researcher that various meetings with business managers in the city had reinforced Ms Wyatt's opinions - she asserted that if students worked hard enough: *"there are still plenty of openings for them in banking and other places. You know, I get so many jobs phoned in I can't fill them all!" (Fieldnotes, 24/6/86/ p.856)* The Co-Ed High principal specifically mentioned his agreement with Ms Wyatt's views and went on to say:

> *Mr Lewis: I want to be positive about unemployment. I want to say as an educator to young people: "The chances still seem to me to be fairly good for you to achieve the kinds of goals you want to achieve as workers in this country." So, from this point of view, I would go along with those who say: "Let's not be prophets of doom when we communicate with our communities...in particular with our young people, about what their opportunities are and what they're likely to be."*
>
> *(Fieldnotes, 6/11/86/ p.1623)*

Inter-School Differences.

The section above has explored intended messages at All Girls' and Co-Ed High. Staff at All Boys' College however expressed different intentions. In the early stages of the research, various teachers told the researcher that they had no intention to tackle unemployment as an issue. The prinicipal said for instance:

Br Doy: *As long as our kids are getting jobs once they leave school...and they are...there's evidence that they are...then we don't really need to worry about unemployment and transition-to-work.*
(Fieldnotes, 7/3/86, p.368)

Two teachers even questioned the truth of unemployment statistics and, like Ms Wyatt in the excerpt quoted above, pointed to the newspapers and the jobs advertised in the vacancy section as proof of their assertions (Fieldnotes, 22/10/86, p.1549). The reason for this was that students from their school were finding no difficulty in obtaining employment.

The belief that the College was largely immune to labour market contraction was shaken by the end of the school year - to the extent that the intended messages about this issue took on another dimension and began to manifest the same ambivalence common to the other two schools. The principal said:

Br Doy: *I think there's room for complacency in our school because we believe that our kids are getting jobs...But the penny is going to drop sooner or later. Some do leave without jobs, or lose them very quickly, because they're found unsuitable by employers. And I know, after a few casual conversations with some staff over a cup of tea, they are not ready to face that one. There's a very real refusal of applying that to a wider context, about considering unemployment as a structural necessity.*
(Fieldnotes, 20/11/86, p.1708)

That even the All Boys' College students were not immune to labour market contraction was brought home to teachers there by the fact that towards the end of the year, the employment situation took another plunge and businesses in the city closed down at an unprecedented rate. In October, the principal informed the staff that he was receiving an average of two parents a week in his office who were in financial difficulties because their businesses were in trouble. He told the staff to be careful in setting fees for extra-curricular activities in order not to pressure such parents. (Fieldnotes, 20/10/86, p.1512). By the end of the year and because of these new circumstances, there was an obvious increase in awareness among teachers at All Boys about unemployment - one teacher led staff prayers and a reflection about unemployed people. The Careers Adviser admitted that it was *"within the bounds of possibility that there'll be a number of boys who will be*

unemployed." (Fieldnotes, 4/11/86, p.1598). It will be shown however that these intentions, at least during 1986, did not go beyond prayers - the actual messages given to students reinforced optimism about a guaranteed secure employment future.

Intra-School Differences.

The picture of teachers presented so far has emphasised their readiness to ensure the continuation of the system as it existed - in other words, while surveying possible areas of knowledge to be transmitted to students regarding the area of "Work", teachers made conscious and calculated decisions which had more to do with questions of control and order than with objectives of critical awareness. These decisions were not adopted without contestation, neither was there unanimous agreement within the body of teachers observed. This sort of contestation was evident, to a greater or lesser extent, in all three schools. However, the presence of progressive teachers heightened the dialectic in this and other areas of the curriculum. One example is given here to illustrate this process. The role of teachers as censors of knowledge became obvious at All Girls' High, where the Counsellor, Ms Ellis, and the Careers Adviser, Ms Tyler, were co-ordinating a meeting for Social Studies teachers to help them plan their Careers Unit with fourth form students. There was general agreement that unemployment should be mentioned. As the overall theme for fourth form social studies was "Social Change", it was argued that unemployment and the changing nature of work fitted perfectly within that theme. Ms Woods however, who has already been identified as a progressive teacher, insisted that the topic should be treated at greater length and receive more than mere acknowledgment of its existence.

Ms Ellis: *If we focus on unemployment, that will be quite a depressing picture we will be presenting: we can focus on the fact that "career" does not necessarily mean a job, but also a question of living and what one can do.*

Ms Woods: *Once we tackle the question of unemployment, we should show them that it's not their fault.*

All: *Yes...That's true.*

Ms Ellis: *Well...we can do a number of things. We can ignore the issue of unemployment, we can say that the problem is insoluble, and we can overemphasise it.*

Ms Woods: *We have to remember that we have to show them that it's not their fault. If my memory serves me right, in 1984 there were ninety four applications for some unskilled vacancies. No way should the unemployed feel guilty!*

Ms Wills: *We should go into person building and development.*

Ms Woods: *How are they going to do that with eighty dollars a week?!*

Ms Ellis: *We also have to remember that there are jobs in New Zealand that cannot be filled. I know that from employers...and if we present this picture of unemployment, many will reach the conclusion: "Why bother working hard at school if there's no reward at the end?!" Their whole attitude towards work, and their work habits will be eroded...we will only de-motivate them.*

Ms Woods: *That's happening anyway!*

Ms Ellis: *But to emphasise it...it can be so de-motivating to show students. That's dangerous because they're closing the doors to trying. If we give them this knowledge, many will just say "Why bother?!"*
(Fieldnotes, 9/7/86, pp.932-3)

Summary.

Teachers' intended messages regarding the nature of the labour market have been shown to favour emphasising the positive, so that schooling could continue to legitimate its structures and ward off the increasing demotivation of students. While this was shown to be a general trend, it has also been suggested that teachers do not act as a "group" - even when they meet to discuss curricular issues. Rather, teachers, guided by their personal ideologies, can act autonomously to countermand messages principals, heads of departments and colleagues have agreed to communicate.

6.2. ACTUAL MESSAGES.

The teachers', concerned as they were to support the *status quo*, carried their intentions through into action. The messages actually transmitted to students are here organised around two areas: first, messages about a contracting labour market are described (Section 6.2.1.). This is followed by an exploration of the messages teachers gave about the causes of unemployment and ways of securing employment for oneself (Section 6.2.2.).

6.2.1. A CONTRACTING LABOUR MARKET.

Messages about the property a contracting labour market are described with reference to: [1] general messages [2] messages specific to gender and [3] messages specific to ethnicity.

[1] General Messages about Unemployment.

One proposition is advanced, that teachers use unemployment as a means to strengthen their control of students and to legitimise the exchange of schoolwork for qualifications.

Inter-School Similarity.

The majority of teachers observed at Co-Ed and All Girls' High spoke about, or at least referred to the problem of unemployment. Thirteen of the twenty teachers observed kept these references to incidental comments, while two Economics teachers and two English teachers (All Girls) and three Social Studies teachers (two from Co-Ed and one from All Girls) tackled the subject throughout a whole lesson or lessons. The following Social Studies teacher at Co-Ed High is typical of those teachers who made brief references to the reality of labour market contraction. During a unit on "Careers and Work", he used a resource book printed in 1971. At one stage the book made reference to aspects of the economy, and the teacher commented to the students:

Mr Roach: The book was written in 1971...at that time unemployment was not important. There had been previous times when it had been, but from 1945 to 1971, we had in New Zealand what was called a "full employment economy." People could get a job after leaving school, and people could change from one job to another very easily. Now that has changed. From 1972 onwards, unemployment started to rise. For five to six years politicians thought and said they would work it out and go back to the previous employment situation. Nowadays we believe that unemployment is here till the forseeable future... Well, that's the sort of world you are in!

(Fieldnotes, 10/6/86, p.809)

A Co-Ed Social Studies teacher gave more than a cursory reference to unemployment. She spent two lessons on the topic, and utilised a video-recording of a television programme called *Out of Work*, a documentary from a locally produced series entitled *Viewfinder*.

Various messages were given about how to claim the unemployment benefit, and about the fact that *"Your country has a problem, not you, and those who call you bludgers are ignorant." (Fieldnotes, 19/8/86, p.1154).* At the end of the video, Ms Dewe told her students: *"The chances are really high that all of us will be unemployed at some stage. Ten years ago, everybody expected to get a job. There were lots of vacancies, lots of jobs. Not so today." (Fieldnotes, 19/8/86, p.1155).*

At All Girls' High, an English teacher gave her fifth form class two poems dealing with the feelings of an unemployed person. One, by local poet Janet Frame and called simply *"Unemployment"*, spoke of the waste of an unemployed person's skills, who says:

> *I collect my weekly allowance. I go home,*
> *I cuddle my wife, feed the cat*
> *and for no purpose in no place, grow fat.*
> *("Unemployment" by Janet Frame)*

Another poem used was written by Ross Mullins. Again, it is the *"Beneficiary"* who speaks angrily about the benefit as a *"pay-off for their silence."*

> *So come down to doletown*
> *Fill out a form or two,*
> *Sign away your self-respect*
> *And the welfare state will care for you.*
> *("Beneficiary" by Ross Mullins)*

At one stage, commenting about the poem with the students, the teacher said:

> Ms Berne: *Since the time these poems were written, unemployment has become institutionalised...woven in society and become a part of it. There is an acceptance that it is going to remain there. How many of you would enjoy being on the dole? ...Nobody?...You never know when it will be you. Even highly qualified people end up redundant, which is a sobering thought.*
> *(Fieldnotes, 13/8/86, p.1127)*

It is important to note that those teachers who did address the issue of unemployment at some length did not ask the question the problem begs - namely, alternative economic structures which might contribute equitable and democratic solutions to the problem. As noted throughout the previous chapter, most of the teachers' messages were couched in *status quo* themes rather than the sort of "thematic investigation" and critical awareness suggested by Freire (1972). The thrust of the majority of messages therefore suggested that students adapt to a new situation, and learn how to use the leisure offered by unemployment. As one Social Studies teacher

from All Girls' High said, *"When I speak about unemployment, my focus is personal development, and the creative use of leisure time."(Fieldnotes, 7/10/86, p.1402).*

Inter-School Differences.

While information about unemployment and its negative effects was played down with students at Co-Ed and All Girls' High, the issue at All Boys' College was denied. Students were reassured that if there was a problem, it need not concern them because the old boys network - what students and teachers jocularly referred to as "the Marist Club" and even "the Catholic Mafia" - would take care of them. As a teacher from the school told the researcher:

> *There are references to work made at All Boys. One of them which is often mentioned is the success our boys have in getting jobs. That's what we hear at Assemblies...Why that is...perhaps the family networks back it up, and they'll give our boys a go even if they're not the best they could get on the open market. So, probably it's an old-boys' kind of network...perhaps not so sophisticated as it might be in older, more traditional schools, because All Boys' is a pretty young school...and it's also something about the city. There seems to be a lot of businesses operating with Catholics at their head.*
>
> *(Fieldnotes, 20/10/86, p.1510)*

Teachers not only played down but practically denied the fact of unemployment. One technical teacher said:

Mr Cox: *I don't think of talking about unemployment. I reinforce the positive side about doing what you want to do. So, I encourage my students to look at the paper on Wednesdays, when there are pages of situations vacant, put a circle around jobs they're interested in. My message is that most students can aspire to do what they want to do.*

(Fieldnotes, 22/10/86, p.1549)

The Careers Adviser took pains to assure students and parents that employment opportunities still existed. Introducing a panel of speakers at a Careers Evening, he said: *"The reason these business people have been invited is to show you that there is life after school." (Fieldnotes, 28/7/86, p.1026).* He gave similar messages in different ways in class during a social studies unit on work with fourth formers. Despite a newspaper cutting pinned on the class noticeboard about the hundreds of jobs lost that year in the New Zealand timber industry, the Careers Adviser spent four of a total of twelve lessons in explaining his "formula of success" to

the boys - a formula which, he insisted, would guarantee them a job. He acknowledged that young people were less attractive as candidates for jobs because they were less experienced and yet got the same wage as older workers (Fieldnotes, 12/8/86, p. 1113), but offered his students optimism and guarantees:

Mr Tate: *I will teach you how to be successful. I'll even give you a formula for success...in the States they would pay me thousands of dollars to get infomation like this! The trouble with the pathway to success is that you have to work for it. Those who never achieve anything are those who don't put anything into it. If you try hard enough, you'll get anywhere.*

(Fieldnotes, 12/8/86. p.1114)

The same optimistic and meritocratic message was given by a panel of "old boys" from the College who were invited to speak to the school as part of the activities to mark the school's Silver Jubilee. One of them, a junior executive with a food retailing company, said:*"I encourage you to do the best you can with what you've got and what you are...and you'll do anything." (Fieldnotes, 22/10/86, p.1549).*

Summary.

It has been shown that the problem of unemployment was generally played down by teachers in all three schools observed. When the issue was addressed, it was often for reasons of control and order, rather than to lead to a critical discussion of causes and alternative possibilities. At best, teachers suggested that a positive use of leisure would minimise the negative aspects of being out of work. An important difference was observed at All Boys' College, where teachers blunted the threat of unemployment to their students by suggesting that the old boy networks would guarantee employment.

[2] Gender and Messages about Unemployment.

The single proposition advanced here is that a critical ideology such as feminism sharpens and enhances the possibilities of transformative messages being given in the school. When this ideology is shared by a community of teachers, the transformative potential of critical education is, to some extent, realised.

Inter-School Differences.

Various issues relating to the repercussions of a contracting labour market on women were addressed at All Girls' High. They were not observed being addressed as fully at Co-Ed High and not at all during any of the observations at All Boys' College. Messages were communicated to the students at All Girls' High in a consistent and organised way - there was only one exception noted to this, and that came from the Careers Adviser who expressed reservations about the "Girls Can do Anything" campaign at her school, mainly because her subject, Secretarial Studies, was not given status. She therefore told her students that there were still plenty of jobs available for women with secretarial and office skills (Fieldnotes, 10/5/86, p.565). Most of the staff however shared the same feminist ideological perspective. A campaign was mounted to draw attention to the fact that traditionally female jobs were most at risk of redundancy. The school Counsellor circulated a paper about the "Availability of Jobs" with all fourth form students and their parents, based on the *Looking Ahead* series. One section read:

> *Women still tend to become clerks, typists, shop assistants, teachers and nurses. These are generally the static areas where job opportunities don't keep pace with the number of people looking for work. That's why more women are entering "non-traditional" occupations - painting and paper hanging, servicing electrical appliances, fixing cars, and making joinery - all jobs that are mostly done by men.*
>
> *(Fieldnotes, 23/7/86, p.990)*

The principal also gave the following messages in the school newspaper:

> *The campaign to increase the number of students taking subjects like physics, chemistry, accounting, economics and workshop technology has proved very successful at school. However, we are still concerned that most of our students, when thinking of future employment, still look to the traditional female areas for their jobs or further training. This is disturbing because all the current evidence seems to show that jobs are becoming scarcer in several of the traditionally female areas of employment.*
>
> *(All Girls' High Bulletin: Term 3, 1985, p.3)*

Such a message was given consistenly by Social Studies, Economics, and English teachers observed at All Girls' High School. One Social Studies teacher told her students: *"A lot of people argue*

that women are taking jobs away from young people, from men...But they're not in any position to deny people rights: if they want to work, then they should be able to work!" (Fieldnotes, 7/10/86, p.1402). An English teacher told her fifth form students about women being used as a reserve army of labour: *"History shows us that when there is a need for workers, women are employed, but when there is a recession, they are the first to be let go. Employers say: 'They have a husband to support them, so we'd better make females redundant.'...They don't realise that the women might be the main wage earners." (Fieldnotes, 11/8/86, p.1109).* Another English teacher tackled the issue of gender and unemployment from another angle - she argued that housework should receive the status, and salary, of other types of work. (Fieldnotes, 3/7/86, pp.903-4).

Another message given specifically to students at All Girls' High by different teachers was a warning to the effect that because of a shrinking labour market, females were at a great disadvantage: once they stopped work to bear children, they were running a risk of not finding their job when they wanted to re-enter the labour force. Ms Woods pointed this out (Fieldnotes, 13/8/86, p.1117), as did Ms Hirst (Fieldnotes, 3/10/86, p.1373). None of the teachers observed at the other two schools did so.

Summary.

It has been shown that at All Girls' High, there was a general consensus about the messages to be given to students about the implications of a contracting market for women. At Co-Ed High, the issue was not dealt with in the same detailed and concerted critical way - references, when made, were brief and given only in passing. The issue was not raised at All Boys' College.

[3] Messages Specific to Ethnicity.

Two propositions will be advanced. First, Pakeha teachers are ill-equipped to address issues of racial inequality and injustice in New Zealand. The awareness of their own inadequacy results in avoidance of issues which make them uncomfortable. Second, this avoidance results in the direct reproduction of circumstances which

lead to further inequalities and injustices suffered by Maori students. Both propositions are explored below.

Inter-School Similarities.

In Chapter 1, the impact of unemployment on Maori people was discussed. Data show that all the teachers observed and/or interviewed were aware of the extent of unemployment of Maori and Pacific Island people. Data also show that for a number of different reasons, the problem was either addressed superficially or not at all by Pakeha teachers - even when these were identified to be progressive in other areas in this study. The issue was completely absent from All Boys' College. On the other hand, Maori teachers at All Girls' and Co-Ed High gave the issue priority.

Various Social Studies, English and Economics teachers at All Girls' and Co-Ed High presented their students with statistics to show that Maori and Polynesian people in New Zealand were suffering the major burden of unemployment. However, such teachers were found to be uncomfortable when attempting to explain why this happened. At Co-Ed High, in line with the school ethos of addressing issues related to ethnicity, teachers were observed more often than at All Girls attempting to communicate specific messages about the over-representation of Maori people in unemployment statistics. In both schools however, the messages were summarily dealt with and teachers passed on to other topics. There were various reasons for this. Teachers and students were first of all anxious and embarrassed about directly addressing subjects even remotely related to racial injustice and conflict, especially when Maori students were in class. One Social Studies teacher from Co-Ed High said for instance:

Ms Tern: *I must admit I went into the class that day feeling a little concerned about what was going to arise from my telling them that Maori girls are the most vulnerable to unemployment, and I thought: "Well, I'm just going to have to handle it according to what comes up." But the thing was, I got no response at all to my questions...perhaps my questioning technique didn't lift them for some reason to respond. But I have a feeling there was a sort of embarrassment in the class.*

(Fieldnotes, 13/8/86, p.1131)

A further reason for this avoidance by teachers was the fact that they were aware that they themselves had racial prejudices. An Economics teacher from All Girls' High expressed her anxiety about tackling the same issue, and said: *"I'm not looking forward to tomorrow's lesson. Usually they come up with arguments saying that Maoris are lazy, and I'm not very sure how to handle things like that." (Fieldnotes, 29/9/86, p.1335).* A record of her lesson suggests another reason for a frequent phenomenon observed among teachers in this study - the avoidance of situations and topics (like race and trade unions) which might lead to conflict, disorder in class, and teacher discomfort (see Hargeaves and Woods, 1986). This discomfort is evident in the following excerpt:

Ms Hunt: *I don't want racist arguments...but why is it that Maori females are most vulnerable to unemployment?*

Linda: *No one will employ them because they go off and have babies all the time.*

Lee: *Because of the social conditions Maoris live in...they don't encourage students to stay longer at school or go to tertiary education.*

Ms Hunt: *Yes...20% of our school are Maoris, but if you look at the 6th and 7th Forms, there are hardly any Maoris. Without going into reasons...you can find ten, twenty reasons...it could be an economic reason...*

Louise: *Because of all their relations...they want somebody to take care...*

Ms Hunt: *You mean the home support network is more important than getting a job...yeah...*

Vicky: *But miss, Lee was saying they don't go to tertiary education...but sometimes Maoris are chosen for university despite perhaps being less intelligent!*

Ms Hunt: *I don't want to open this can of worms!...Louise, read the next section...*

(Fieldnotes, 30/9/86, p.1336)

This avoidance strategy was well described by one Co-Ed teacher who said: *"The way we structure our Social Studies in the school gives the teachers the right or the opportunity to choose those sorts of things they're most comfortable teaching...and the majority of teachers are uncomfortable with the whole question of race." (Fieldnotes, 24/7/86, p.998).*

Teachers felt inadequately equipped to address the issue in the classroom. Four teachers expressed their anxiety at revealing their own prejudices about Maori people, while others felt that Maori students would be even more discouraged by learning some of the causes of unemployment among their race - racial discrimination in hiring procedures (Fieldnotes, 18/9/86, p.1201). The latter teachers felt, therefore, that the wider social structure, with the injustices embedded in it, limited the sorts of messages they could realistically give to their students.

The different reasons canvassed above limited the actual messages being communicated to Maori students, and meant that those messages which were communicated were either inadequate or verged on being racist. "Inadequate" messages regarding Maori students and unemployment comprised exhortations that they should remain at school for as long as they possibly could, get qualifications, and beat unemployment that way. Such messages are considered inadequate because they do not consider other problematics in causing Maori unemployment, such as discrimination in hiring practices (see Spoonley, 1978). This type of message had a certain urgency for some teachers who recognised that Maori parents, generally from low socio-economic groups and struggling to make ends meet, often pressured their sons and daughters to leave school and take any job that came in sight. Very often, such jobs were seasonal and temporary (Fieldnotes, 7/10/86, p.1401). So, the All Girls' High principal felt that: *"If we can hold Maori students in the system, and we've seen this happen, they will make it. If we hang on to them long enough to develop those personal skills." (Fieldnotes, 13/10/86, p.1485).* It is important to note that the underlying implication of such exhortations is one which construes the Maori to be deficient.

Other "inadequate" messages were those that urged Maori students to do Maths and Science subjects - because that would lead to greater chances of employment - [1] and to aim for a wider range of subject

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1. Statistics collected from All Girls and Co-Ed High show that less than five percent of Maori students took Maths or Science at School Certificate level. Various science teachers echoed one Co-Ed teacher who said: *"My experience of teaching science to Maoris is nil...I've never had any to teach!" (Fieldnotes, 10/10/86, p.1496).*

choices and careers. Teachers pointed to special training courses and bursaries offered to support Maori students' entry into a wider range of occupations (Fieldnotes, 23/7/86, p.990). All these messages skirted around various other problematics, including the issue of the irrelevance of monocultural schooling to Maori students.

Another kind of message addressed by Pakeha teachers to Maori students regarding unemployment verged on being racist. On thirteen different occasions thoughout the year, various teachers judged the state of Maori people's unemployment to be a result of their own laziness - in other words, Maori people had only themselves to blame. Four teachers described Maori students as "happy-go-lucky" - and suggested that compared to the Indian and Asian races, they gave less importance to the work ethic. One said:

> *They turn up for work four days a week...maybe they don't work as hard at the job as the neighbour who's not a Maori...and so employers, very often will say "Well, O.K., look...this is a guy who when he gets his money is going to go down to the boozer and have a hell of a hang-over on Friday, and I need this man on Friday or Christmas eve or whenever...and he won't turn up." So that's part of the problem.*
>
> *(Fieldnotes, 4/11/86, p.1599)*

Another said that to beat unemployment, Maori students had to develop an adequate work ethic. She actually gave them messages to this effect:

> *I tell Maori girls: "You have so many opportunities laid out there for you with Maori Affairs backing you in every way! All you've got to do is to hang on in, and take advantage of that, and try to get some of these skills. You don't have to be brilliant, you've just got to be there and you've got to listen and to hang on and you've got to get by...and if you make the grade, there's just so much there available for you." And I cajole them and scream at them. But they're bloody lazy. They say: "Why bother! We'll draw the unemployment benefit!" And then they blame the system!*
>
> *(Fieldnotes, 26/11/86, pp.1723-5)*

A major problem with all the attempts by Pakeha teachers to address the issue of high Maori unemployment is the former's construction of the problem in terms of the latter's personal pathology rather than in the linkage of the personal and the political in the lives of subordinate ethnic groups.

Intra-School Differences.

Mr Ratu and Ms Hine at Co-Ed High, and Ms Warena at All Girls' High were basically in agreeement with Pakeha teachers that Maori students had to be persuaded to stay at school and get more qualifications. An important difference was observed however in that they were consistently more aware, sensitive and sympathetic to all the circumstances that pushed Maori students out of school and caused them to fail. They therefore did not attribute failure to Maori students' deficiency as much as deficiencies in the overall established order - be it the school or the economic system. It is important to note that some of the explanations offered by Maori teachers apply across class rather than just ethnicity. In fact, all three Maori teachers mentioned such aspects of working class conditions of life as financial problems, which made many Maori parents urge their children to go out to work as early as possible; the fact that few Maori parents had qualifications and therefore did not appreciate school enough to give sufficient encouragement to children; and the fact that some Maori parents had *"this old fashioned idea that girls shouldn't have an education." (Fieldnotes, 21/10/86, p.1533).* Maori girls also had to fulfil a role as homemakers helping their mothers prepare supper and look after younger siblings (Fieldnotes, 21/10/86, p.1533).

The Maori teachers were therefore more ready to blame socio-economic factors, which they saw as the result of an unjust system - the heavier burden of which was carried by Maori people. Such unjust systems were reflected in the school. While Co-Ed Maori teachers admitted that teachers were generally doing their best to help Maori students, Ms Warena at All Girls' High spoke of her incessant efforts to counteract the damage done to Maori girls by Pakeha teachers.

> *They put the girls down in so many litle ways! Sometimes I get so exhausted, not because of the kids, but because of the battle of trying to instil into those people over there in the staffroom that what they're doing is wrong...*
>
> *(Fieldnotes, 21/10/86, p.1541)*

Within the limitations of a monocultural system, Maori teachers developed two sorts of messages to give students about unemployment. Both are considered to be reproductive of the

established order, however, in that the critical awareness characteristic of Maori teachers was not translated into a praxis which challenged the foundations of a monocultural society where ethnicity played a crucial part in an individual's chances for securing employment. Maori teachers therefore on the one hand cajoled their students to attempt to succeed in a Pakeha education system, and on the other exhorted forbearance among those who failed - in this way, Maori teachers themselves became handservants to the *status quo*. They pointed to themselves as role-models to assure their Maori students that it was possible to make it against so many odds: *"I keep telling the kids that me, who was just an ordinary Maori girl with no shoes and no anything, if I could do it...get your ideas going!" (Fieldnotes, 21.10/86, p.1534).* They urged them to adopt some Pakeha values which would help them succeed in the Pakeha system:

> *I tell them that we need to get all those things to help us get a job, say, getting there on time. So, what do we do? We take on all those things that will help us. You go to school and you learn. So what you're doing is really to sit here and listen to the Pakeha system and use all the good things...Don't listen to all the funny things that they have to tell you. I keep telling them to stay at school, and to come back to school if they don't get a job.*
>
> *(Fieldnotes, 21/10/86, p.1538)*

Finally, they urged forebearance. At Co-Ed High, Mr Ratu and Ms Hine organised a special day for all the Maori students who were thought to be at risk of unemployment because of their propensity to play truant and to drop out of school at the earliest possible age. Maori people from a Kokiri Centre - a Craft training centre for Maori unemployed - were asked to address the students. The message the co-ordinators gave the students was basically one of preparation for the inevitable destiny of unemployment, and that they should try to keep to the straight and narrow despite that. One of them said:

> *There are no jobs out there for us...We'll be seeing some of you at our Kokiri centre. Hold on fast to your* taha Maori *and be proud of it, and do not fall into evil ways.*
>
> *(Fieldnotes, 7/11/86, p.1630)*

These processes and messages were not observed at All Boys because there were no Maori teachers there, and only a handful of Maori students.

Summary.

This section has presented one property of the category regarding messages about the nature of the labour market. It has been shown that teachers generally played down, and in some instances denied, the crisis in employment. When unemployment was raised as a topic, the intention has been shown to be one related to control and order rather than the goal of critical evaluation of a failing economic system. Exceptions to this were messages which set out to show that the economic system consistently failed specific groups of people, identified by their gender, by their ethnicity and by their class. It was shown that an ideological sharpness and critical insight was brought to the context of gender and unemployment, especially at All Girls' High. The same could not be said of ethnicity and unemployment. Here, Pakeha teachers, for diverse reasons, avoided the topic, while Maori teachers, caught in the grip of a monolithic established order, could only offer Pakeha strategies for success in Pakeha systems on the one hand, and forbearance on the other. The following section explores another property of this second category, namely the reasons teachers give to explain the causes of unemployment.

6.2.2. CAUSES OF UNEMPLOYMENT AND WAYS TO SECURE EMPLOYMENT.

Messages related to the property "causes of unemployment and ways to secure employment" are described with reference to:
[1] Intrinsic Causes and [2] Extrinsic Causes.

Intrinsic causes and explanations were found to be the most common and frequent in the three schools, and are therefore grouped together under the heading *Inter-School Similarities*. Extrinsic ones were rare, and depended more on the ideology of individual teachers than on the ideology developed by groups of teachers in particular schools. They are therefore grouped under the heading *Intra-School Differences*.

The property explored in this section carries with it a corollary - the obverse side of messages purporting to explain "why you don't get a job" (causes of unemployment) is, of course, "how to get a

job" (or, how to overcome unemployment). While it is realised that the first tackles macro issues, and the latter is engaged at the micro level of how an individual can survive macro issues, both are treated simultaneously because of the similar data they draw on.

[1] Intrinsic Causes of Unemployment.

Inter-School Similarities.

Four major propositions are advanced. First, teachers adopt psychological rather than sociological models in the explanation of social phenomena like unemployment. This has definite implications both for their ideology and their pedagogy and leads to a second propostion: on the one hand micro issues are the focus, so that an appreciation and communication of messages about the structuring influence of macro phenomena is absent while on the other, the pedagogy mirrors the ideological focus, so that social skills teaching rather than a critical grasp and decoding of social forces is imparted. A third proposition states that this sort of ideology and pedagogy blinds students rather than empowers them to address the *status quo*. Students are enjoined to accept and cope with the changes demanded by economic restructuring. Fourthly, it is proposed that schooling encourages qualities in students which are functional to a specific location in the labour market, namely the secondary sector where obedience and compliancy rather than creativity and initiative are the characteristics required of workers.

[a] The Unemployed's own Fault.

Seven of the twenty teachers observed delivering a unit on work implied or said quite directly that those who were unemployed had only themselves to blame. It has been shown how such messages were implied in beliefs held by the majority of teachers at All Boys' College. At All Girls' High, the emphasis put by the principal, the Careers Adviser and other staff on the fact that there were many jobs out there for those with the right personal qualities ensured similar implications. The playing down in all three schools of the extent of unemployment, and the overwhelming focus on the skills of job-getting implied that if only such skills were

mastered, then jobs were available - this point will be illustrated in other sections in this chapter (see page 288). These implications were also present in ideological positions taken by teachers during conversations and discussions with students in class. The following excerpt from an Economics lesson with sixth form All Girls' High students illustrates this point well:

Rita: *It's too easy to get the dole I reckon...*

Pat: *They should have the dole for two years, and that's all, like in the States.*

Lily: *My father works at the Social Welfare and he worked out that he would get a thousand dollars more a year if he was on the other side of the counter.*

Ms Hunt: *Yeah..O.K....We've heard enough here to show us a worrying aspect of the economy...benefits which take away the incentive to work. I know I wouldn't be happy getting money for not working. I know a girl who was on the dole...she was so bored. Those who are on the dole for fun probably spend it only on smoke and beer.*

(Fieldnotes, 3/10/86, p.1340)

Such clues to the teachers' personal perceptions and prejudices served only to reinforce those which students had gathered from the wider community. At All Boys' College, the Careers Adviser's "formula for success" reaffirmed a meritocratic notion of society, where effort led necessarily to rewards. Mr Tate quoted various research studies carried out in the 1950s to the effect that:

> *It was found that people who did not succeed were those who would give up on problems early. People who fail feel outer controlled. They do not believe in their own responsibility for failure...always some other circumstance is to blame.*
>
> *(Fieldnotes, 19/8/86, p.1149)*

[b] Lack of Qualifications.

Teachers gave different messages about the relationship between qualifications and unemployment. Two are highlighted here because they indicate the often contradictory positions teachers found themselves in when giving messages which on the one hand acknowledged the rise and rise of unemployment, and on the other stressed the need for increasing commitment to a work ethic as represented by total investment in education and the gaining of qualifications.

Teachers who made more than a passing reference to unemployment made students aware that as the market continued to contract, qualifications would no longer necessarily guarantee a job. Four of the twenty teachers observed made comments that *"Getting qualfications doesn't guarantee you a job, but it increases your chances." (Fieldnotes, 11/8/86, p.1109).*

A second message about the relationship between qualifications and unemployment was however more common, and was made by all the teachers observed. Examples from All Boys' College will serve to illustrate the emphasis found in all three schools that certification led to jobs. Mr Tate for instance admonished his fourth form Social Studies class:

> *I'd like you to realise what the real world is like out there. I want you to front up to the situation this year. There's more chance of getting jobs with skills and qualifications. Life is a competition. You heard the deputy principal this morning advertising for the Air Force. In all New Zealand they want twenty pilots...I bet you two hundred are applying. It's a question of qualifications, and you can't realisitically expect to be chosen unless you have these qualifications.*
>
> *(Fieldnotes, 12/8/86, p.1114)*

Teachers in all three schools emphasised the necessity of all forms of qualifications. On the one hand achieving students were told that the usual certificates, namely School Certificate, were no longer sufficient: *"If you get School Certificate it's better. It's so hard to get jobs out there, even if you have School C." (Fieldnotes, 8/10/86, p.1429).* On the other, under-achieving students were urged to *"Stick at school and get some qualifications, even if they are alternative certificates to School Certificate such as Regional Maths." (Fieldnotes, 28/7/86, p.1028).*[2] If even these could not be obtained, then they should aspire for *"a good behaviour report if nothing else." (Fieldnotes, 7/3/86,* p.372). In the competition for "employment coupons", teachers encouraged attitudes - namely obedience and compliancy - which were appreciated by employers in workers labouring in the secondary sector of the labour market. These qualities could be certified

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2. There are two kinds of alternative certificates offered to students - "Local Certificates" (i.e. alternative courses set by individual schools) and "Regional Certificates" (i.e. alternative courses set and controlled by a group of schools in the region).

and used. Teachers in all three schools pointed out that certificates like Regional Maths *"report on attitudes and therefore tell an employer whether you're responsible and can handle a job. You're more worth to him than someone who is quick to understand but who has to be pushed to work." (Fieldnotes, 24/6/86, p.861).*

All three schools issued official reports to students, which, like alternative certificates, referred especially to attitudes and personal qualities rather than academic abilities. Teachers made occasional reference to such school reports in class, urging the students to behave well because that would get them a good report which in turn made it easier to get a job. (Fieldnotes, 7/3/86, p.372). A teacher told a group of fifth form students at Co-Ed High:

> *If you happen not ot be quite the bright cookie, don't be put off by your failures at school. That's where the school report becomes important. Some employers are more impressed by comments teachers make...comments like "tries hard", or "is a responsible person" or "trustworthy" are valuable.*
> *(Fieldnotes, 26/9/86, p.1298)*

At All Girls' High the principal told the staff at a Teachers' Only Day that there was

> *...a wholesale use of school reports by employers to recruit students, and they are looking for such comments as "reliability", "co-operation", "numeracy" and "literacy". Employers also pick up things like "has not reached their full potential" or "could work harder".*
> *(Fieldnotes, 13/11/86, p.1669)*

Two teachers disagreed with the idea of giving information to employers which, according to Ms Woods, *"condemned some to unemployment - Bosses should take responsibility for that, not us." (Fieldnotes, 13/11/86, p.1669).* All the other teachers observed and/or interviewed accepted this function, unaware of the extensive literature which shows that the behaviour demonstrated by individuals at school, especially if they are disillusioned by education, is no indication of how they will perform in the workforce.

A final kind of alternative certificate comprises references students could obtain from employers whom they had worked for in a part-time capacity. The *Looking Ahead* booklets make reference to this:

> *Employers will be interested in your personal qualities. They will also want to know how you approach work and study. Perhaps they will get some idea from school reports and references from people who know you well.*
>
> *(Looking Ahead, v.1: 1986, p.9)*

The booklet also offered a list of qualities appreciated by employers, namely the prospective employee's aptitude in organisation, output, communication, versatility, initiative, and dependability (*Looking Ahead*, v.1: 1986, p.9). These were the same personal qualities which teachers encouraged students to develop. It is important to note that such qualities are functional to a very specific location in the labour market - the secondary sector.

Intra-School Differences.

Teachers were aware of the dilemma of promoting qualifications at a time when high unemployment was creating qualification inflation. While most were aware of the contradictory messages they were giving, and the fact that more qualifications would not really solve the macro issues of a contracting labour market, only two instances were observed where the problematic of certification was discussed with students. One example came from All Boys' College, where a Guidance Officer from the Department of Labour invited to address school-leavers made the following comment:

> *The trouble is that so many people are unemployed, employers are asking for School Certificate even to do work in dairies...which is very silly, because S.C. has nothing to do with that.*
>
> *(Fieldnotes, 28/7/86, p.1028)*

The other example came from Ms Woods, who on various occasions criticised the fact of employment being based on academic qualifications. She addressed the issue with her fourth form social studies class and at one stage said:

> *Why bother to do exams? U.E. was there for going to University, and what was happening was that bosses in factories were giving jobs to those who had U.E., and ignoring those who were possibly better at the job. They were using it as a crutch to select people. That might sound a bit rude about employers, but it is what happened.*
>
> *(Fieldnotes, 12/8/86, p.1116)*

[c] Lack of Skills.

Teachers gave messages about the relationship between not only qualifications but also skills and unemployment. Teachers from all three schools, and particularly from All Girls' High, told their students that because of decreasing job opportunities, those who were unskilled had reduced chances in the competition to secure employment. This message suggests that in a modern world, jobs require an increasingly high level of skills. Such a message constructs a particular view of the world of work, a view that has been strongly debated by a number of authors such as Braverman (1974) who have argued that work is deskilled in advanced industrial contexts.

Messages about the increasing need for skills were given by all three schools in a variety of ways. An article in a school newspaper published once a term and sold at secondary schools, including Co-Ed High and All Girls' High, had a section entitled "Looking ahead to your Career in Life". This particular section was observed being utilised by five teachers from both schools, and the following information was highlighted for the students. The article asserted: *"It is very clear that, in future, the demand for skills will increase, regardless of the type of job. You must be prepared to move out into this highly competitive job market, armed with the highest level of skill you can manage." (School Bulletin, 2nd Term, 1986, p.7).* At various parents' and students' evenings where subject choice was discussed, both the principal and the Counsellor of All Girls told their audience:

Ms Wyatt: *Don't read the front pages of the newspapers when they talk about unemployment. It's only for those without skills. There's a decreasing number of jobs for unskilled people, but there are thousands and thousands and thousands of jobs out there for people with technological and personal skills.*

Ms Ryan: *Ideally you're to stay at school as long as you're able to. Before you were able to leave school early and get a job. Not now. Today the story is to be versatile, to get more education...there are no jobs for people without skills.*

(Fieldnotes, 20/10/86, p.1546)

Similar messages were given to Co-Ed and All Boys students. A Department of Labour official who visited both schools told a group of school leavers:

> *If you can possibly look at some training after school,that would help you a lot. The job market has changed...those who have no skills have more chance of being unemployed. So, get as many different kinds of training as possible...such as photography. Enrol in a course, learn how to use a computer, how to drive...many get knocked out of a job because they don't drive. Learn a language, such as Maori...there are lots of jobs where that's a useful thing.*
>
> *(Fieldnotes, 8/10/86, p.1432)*

[d] Lack of Flexibility.

Teachers presented a view of work which not only required more skills, but also a new type of "flexible", "versatile" worker, who would be ready to change jobs, retrain, get different qualifications, and start in another area. This message was given on various occasions at all the three schools. The *Looking Ahead* booklets read:

> *It's hard to plan for a world of change. People who can't or won't adapt are most at risk. In the past, most people followed a single line of work. Young people today can expect as many as three or four career changes in their working lives.*
>
> *(Looking Ahead: Homeguide, 1986,p.6)*

> *Whatever the job you choose, you'll have to learn to live with change...Perhaps you'll work in the same place for a few years - most likely you'll have to learn new skills as new technology is introduced. Many people change their occupations completely during their working life.*
>
> *(Looking Ahead v.1: 1986, p.19)*

These messages were highlighted by teachers in all three schools and were observed being given on eight different occasions outside the classroom - namely at school assemblies, prize giving ceremonies, vocational guidance interviews, and careers conventions. On all occasions, the message was that *"One of the important things is coping with change." (Fieldnotes, 4/3/86, p.360)*. The All Boys' principal told all the students gathered in the assembly hall before the start of a subjects choice exercise:

> Br Doy: *Make your subject choices wisely. The important thing today is to learn how to learn. Experts say that people born in the late 1960s and early 1970s will change their job three times at least...and employers are looking for people willing to learn and re-train.*
>
> *(Fieldnotes, 17/10/86, p.1499)*

Similarly, the All Girls' principal told parents and students gathered for a subjects choice evening that:

Ms Wyatt: *Many leaving All Girls' High will have an exciting time, a challenging career, a broken career pattern, with periods of re-training for jobs. Take Science, Maths and English. A lot of courses and training opportunities specify these requirements. Keep your options open.*

(Fieldnotes, 20/10/86, p.1546)

All the above messages were reinforced by speakers invited to address students on various occasions at all the three schools, in order to, as it were, put a seal of approval on what the teachers were saying. A manager of a vehicle workshop, invited to speak at an All Boys' school-leavers' evening, told the students:

What makes a good apprentice? It's difficult to say, but here are some qualities: dedication, conscientiousness, and a willingness to learn. With the technology moving as it is, the basic skills are no longer enough. The microchip revolution is now well under way. We're now looking for boys with the right aptitudes and attitudes to this change. You will have to be ready to re-train, because our industry is going through a transition period, with the technology revolution providing an exciting time for boys.

(Fieldnotes, 28/7/86, p.1031)

It is important to note that on all occasions, the message about the need for an adaptable, flexible worker was given as a fact to be accepted rather than to be critically examined.

[e] Wrong Attitudes and Personal Qualities.

Most of the data explored so far in this property give a particular message to students about the causes of unemployment and the ways to overcome it. This message is that personal qualities - whether they are evident in school qualifications or alternative certificates of any sort, and always those qualities which are appreciated by employers - will tilt the balance in favour of a life marked by dependence on the state or a respectable life in employment. This message is considered to be an important aspect of the representation of the world of work by teachers to students, and bears further investigation. Moreover, observation and interview data from all three schools give substance to the proposition that high levels of unemployment give rise to a situation where schooling emphasises the needs of business over democratic ends. Teachers in all three schools therefore enjoined students to develop qualities which employers were known to want.

Such qualities were referred to unproblematically, and constructed a view of human qualities as commodities, aspects of the "personality package" which would bring a higher price on the market.

The most influential person in emphasising attitudes as a means of job-getting was the All Girls' principal. Her opinions, formed after meeting a large number of employers from all over New Zealand, found a ready ear among a large number of staff at both her school and others. She expressed her views to the researcher:

R.S.: *What sort of relationship should exist between school and work?*

Ms Wyatt: *Well, after my meetings with business communities, I believe they want people with a particular type of skills...not necessarily a work skill...ehm, say being able to use a particular machine or whatever, because they will provide that training...But they want to know that the persons who they will employ will turn up on time, work the full day, take instructions, work co-operatively and so on. And these sorts of personal skills we can teach to a degree in school.*

(Fieldnotes, 13/10/86, pp.1488-9)

Similar discourse was noted at all three schools. The Co-Ed High principal talked about the need to encourage *"flexibility, confidence, self-esteem, responsibility, stickability and adaptability"* in students which he saw *"very much as vocational skills."(Fieldnotes, 6/11/86, p.1626).* The All Boys' principal urged students during assembly to develop *"those qualities which employers want, such as a readiness to work hard." (Fieldnotes, 2/7/86, p.901).* He encouraged *"right attitudes"*, namely *"a sense of self-discipline and responsibility, and a readiness not to re-write the job from the very first day." (Fieldnotes, 3/2/86, p.5).*

The same messages were observed being given by teachers too. Social Studies teachers doing their unit on work emphasised personal qualities and work attitudes. A case in point is Mr Roach, who gave his Co-Ed High fourth form students a number of leaflets describing various jobs, saying:

The idea of this exercise is to get you to analyse what is required in a job. You should be thinking on the lines of what employers want from employees...And this will lead to what you are as people, to see what qualities I have and from that

> *it leads to considering what things could I do to get those qualities.*
>
> *(Fiednotes, 6/6/86, p.806)*

In the following lesson, Mr Roach asked his students to draw up a list of such qualities, which included being tidy, confident, reliable, energetic, innovative, honest and stable (Fieldnotes, 10/6/86, p.809). Personality was to be moulded not for some moral or philosophic reason, but for its instrumental value in gaining employment. A Social Studies teacher from All Boys' College told his fourth form class:

> *Employers are looking at personal qualities too. What has personality to do with the job? You might be a whizz kid, do accounts perfectly for your job, but you don't get on well with your mates, or you don't have a sense of humour, or you're always grumpy...and certain things are contagious, and can spread all over the place. Can you do something about changing your personality? Don't go around with a grim face. Enthusiasm is contagious too...that's the kind of person employers want to see.*
>
> *(Fieldnotes, 12/8/86, p.1115)*

Careers Advisers were especially important in advising students that securing employment depended on the personal qualities of the applicant. Indeed, all three Careers Advisers were observed performing a pre-selection function for employers. One of the latter said to Co-Ed High students at a school-leavers' seminar:

> *If we're looking for an apprentice, we tend to go to schools and get inside information from your guidance teacher, otherwise we're inundated by applicants. We get a fair idea of your personality and how you will perform with us that way. Punctuality, appearance, qualifications, references, school reports.*
>
> *(Fieldnotes, 20/11/86, p.1717)*

This pre-selection function for employers was observed being met by the All Boys Careers Adviser in the actual wording of his job vacancy advertisements on his Careers Noticeboard. Notices like the following appeared regularly throughout the year:

> ***OPPORTUNITY: PLUMBING APPRENTICESHIP.***
>
> *Boy interested must * be 14 Years of age.*
> ** have School Certificate (English and Maths)*
> ** "clean-cut": No earrings or fancy hairdo.*
> ** strong and fit * able to do as told * keen.*
> *This is a great opportunity for the right boy.*
>
> *(Fieldnotes, 28/4/86, p.654)*

Other notices indicated the tacit acceptance of employers' criteria found in all three schools: *"Boys who can do as told wanted"*

(Fieldnotes, 17/6/86, p.831). "Boys who will accept responsibility, who will not want to run the show two days after joining." (Fieldnotes, 26/6/86, p.866).

Employers were also invited to all three schools to tell students what they were looking for in job applicants. These put "attitudes" even more firmly at the top of the list. At an evening for school-leavers and their parents at All Boys' College, a bank manager said:

> *Qualifications are not the be-all and end-all, though they indicate that a person has worked hard at school. There is this true story of a person with a Ph.D who couldn't get a job...He applied for twelve positions, and couldn't get one. He went for advice and was told "Do you smile? Do you communicate the attitude tht you're full of enthusiasm for the job? How do you present yourself?" Well, he polished his appearance, and practised his smile, and he was faced with the embarassing situation of applying for three jobs and getting accepted by all three!*
>
> *(Fieldnotes, 28/7/86, p.1030)*

Parents were encouraged to *"Be parents: Develop good working habits in your children, such as punctuality, and not to accept the excuse that they are "sick" too easily when they want to give school a miss. Develop good work behaviour, such as being clean, respectful towards authority." (Fieldnotes, 28/7/86, p.1029).* Two employers speaking at a seminar for school leavers at Co Ed High emphasised attitudes, and one said:

> *Punctuality, appearance, qualifications, references, school reports...I'll be looking for personality traits...we're not necessarily looking for high qualifications. Be adaptable and an all-rounder. If you have all these things, you have a chance in the workforce. We're looking for empathy, commitment, common sense, attitude...happy, out-going people. We're looking for eighty percent attitude and twenty percent skills.*
>
> *(Fieldnotes, 20/11/86, p.1717)*

It is important to note the contradiction: teachers suggest that skills are increasingly demanded in the workforce, and yet these skills are described in terms of personal qualities rather than technical or academic skills.

[f] Lack of Positive Self-Presentation and Self-Management.

Over seventy percent of the time dedicated to careers education in all three schools, whether this was during Social Studies lessons or in other areas of the curriculum, was spent in communicating messages about developing the personal qualities identified in the section above. In other words, social skills teaching rather than critical investigation of the world of work was the overwhelming objective in the majority of educational encounters observed. A key series of messages to students about job-getting was related to how to present qualifications and attitudes to employers and to persuade them that they - the students - actually had the right qualities for the job. Teachers spent a large proportion of their time coaching students for interviews, to write letters of application and to present *resumes* or *curriculum vitae*.

Letters of Application and the Interview Folder.

All teachers observed spoke about the importance of being able to read job vacancies from newspapers and fill in application forms or write letters of application. These writing skills were taught both in English and Social Studies, so that students occasionally remarked that they were repeating the same material. (Fieldnotes, 5/8/86, p.1089).

A very precise set of instructions was given as to the way a letter of appplication was to be presented. These concerned type of paper, lay-out of address, margins, how to start and end a letter, and the over-all importance of being neat and tidy. As one Co-Ed teacher said: *"Employers screen applicants because they can't possibly interview two hundred people. They can use your photograph or handwritten application to get an idea of you." (Fieldnotes, 20/6/86, p.853).* An All Girls teacher told her class that the letter of application *"must be perfect, no spelling mistakes, no twink, and you don't send a photocopy of your letter. Use a nice piece of paper. There should be no pencil markings, no red pen used. Remember some people make a judgement on the sort of person you are on handwriting...Remember, perfection." (Fieldnotes, 5/8/86, p.1089).* Like other teachers in the other schools, an All Boys' Social Studies teacher presented his fourth form class with a

model application letter, and then asked the students to choose a vacancy from newspapers and "apply" for that job. Like other teachers too, he gave details of how to write a "personal profile", alternatively called *"resume"* or *"curriculum vitae"*, which could be attached to the letter of application, or presented as an "interview folder" if an interview was won. The All Girls' High Careers Adviser was especially insistent - she told a group of sixth formers following a unit on job-getting skills within the recreation programme:

Ms Tyler: *The more attractive you make the folder, the more chance you have of impressing the employer and therefore more chance of getting the job. nowadays, many people have this sort of folder, including forty year old men, swept-up Executives who, because of retraining, have to go for interviews to get another job.*

(Fieldnotes, 14/4/86, p.604)

She also prepared a model of an interview folder in her careers room for students to emulate, and told parents of its importance in a subjects choice evening organised in the last term. (Fieldnotes, 20/10/86, p.1547).

Preparation for Interviews.

With the exception of Ms Woods, all Social Studies teachers observed gave a lot of importance to the question of preparing students for job interviews. Some spent up to one third of their lesson on "Work" coaching students down to the finest detail of how to behave and what to expect in an interview.

Teachers used various resources to coach students for interviews. One of these was a "Job Seekers' Kit" produced as an educational resource by a local newspaper. Students were to learn the type of questions asked by interviewers, the answers which made the most impact, and the behaviour which was considered suitable. Comments from teachers were remarkably similar in all three schools. The following advice given by a Co-Ed Social Studies teacher is typical:

Mr Roach: *Notice that you are invited to sit down. You don't grab a chair and say "Good day!" It's at this point that the employer is looking at the first impressions. These are important. The person may come out reasonably well later, but if the first impression is poor, that will be a bad mark against him. Notice too that the first few questions are*

> *aimed to set the person at ease...They ask easy questions which a person ought to know.*
>
> *(Fieldnotes, 12/6/86, p.815)*

At All Boys' College, the Social Studies teacher dictated the following to his fourth form class:

> *Mr Tate: Dress neatly. This does not mean that you have to buy special clothes. It does mean that your clothes should be clean and not look as though you have been sleeping in them under an oily car. Also, do not have a way out hairstyle, ear-rings or tattoos. Sociologists in New Zealand did a study of tattoos. Ninety percent of people who wear tattoos had been to jail. Do not chew gum, and be punctual. The interview is an opportunity to sell yourself in a short time. It is also an opportunity for you to do the wrong thing and blow it.*
>
> *(Fieldnotes, 25/9/86, p.1223)*

Eight teachers from the three schools asked their students to role-play interview sessions, taking turns to be either the employer or the applicant. The class was then invited to make comments about how that particular interview had gone. Video recordings of a job interview were shown at All Girls' and Co-Ed High, with various messages about how best to present oneself and behave at an interview. One video showed a person making all the wrong moves, but who gradually corrected his mistakes in order to present a final, and presumably better edition of an interviewee. At Co-Ed High, sixth form students laughed at the transformation of a young man into a well-dressed, clean and tidy-looking man, even though the commentator had said earlier: *"We don't want to turn you all into conservatives." (Fieldnotes, 18/3/86, p.451).*

Teachers, using videos and other materials, showed that young people with a shy outlook would not do well, that it was best to be polite and friendly *"without overdoing it"*, and sure and confident of oneself, but again *"not too cock sure"*. Practical hints were given about disconcerting questions that could be asked during interviews, such as: *"Why did you leave school so soon?" "Why do you want to work with us?" "Have you been in trouble with the law?" "Don't you think that, having been to an all-girls' school, you don't really know what life is all about because you've been too sheltered?"* At Co-Ed High, the Careers Adviser gave sixth formers a list of typical questions asked, and what the employer wanted to know or find out by asking those questions. The students then had to work out what an inappropriate answer would be like, and an alternative, appropriate answer to the questions. He then gave them his own version as a model (Fieldnotes, 18/3/86, p.454).

With the sole exception of Ms Woods, these strategies in the job-getting package were never presented as problematic. The fact that these skills would become ineffective once all students learnt them was never addressed by teachers. Neither was the fact ever acknowledged that these skills were specific to a class and culture context. Data will be presented first to account for the exception to this assertion, and then as it applies to gender and culture.

Intra-School Differences.

The only teacher to highlight the problematic implicit in this coaching for interviews was Ms Woods. She told her students that since they were *"applying at a time when unemployment is pretty high, it becomes a fairly obscene business of greasing people up. You have to persuade them that you're the person they want." (Fiednotes, 20/8/86, p.1161).* She felt obliged to do similar exercises as other teachers - her own students would be disadvantaged by not mastering interview skills. However, she was the only teacher observed who told her students that:

> *The boss has a limited right to know about your private life. The problem is that if you say such and such is not your business, you might not get the job. This article in the paper was saying that some employers even ask what your relatives died of, or if you have a history of mental illness in your family. And I frankly think that that's none of their business, such as if you're single and have children. They don't have the right to turn you down from the job.*
>
> *(Fieldnotes, 25/9/86, p.1246)*

Gender and Self-Presentation.

Girls at Co-Ed and particularly All Girls' High were encouraged to display certain "female" characteristics during interviews. For the latter school especially, this contradicted other messages about female emancipation from traditional images that the school gave in other contexts. This reinforcement of stereotypical behaviour was evident for boys too - a teacher from All Boys for instance told his students to *"shake hands firmly when you go for a job interview, because if you have a weak handshake, you will be considered to be a cissy." (Fieldnotes, 22/9/86, p.1243).* Particular emphasis was given to the coaching of girls, however.

Ms Hirst is used to illustrate this observation, because her messages in this context stand in contrast to other feminist messages she gave elsewhere (see for instance page 349). It would seem that even a strong, progressive ideology gives way to the imperative of securing a livelihood. She gave a series of four lessons on self-presentation. She wrote on the blackboard: *"INTERVIEW SKILLS: HOW TO SELL YOURSELF."* Students protested:

Rina: *It's crude!*

Jenny: *It's like we're going on a street corner!*

Ms Hirst: *The interviewers are intent to make you feel uncomfortable. The idea is to put you on the spot, to see how you react. You might be asked: "Do you sleep with your boyfriend?" or "When are you going to have children?"*

Class: *Oh miss!*

Ms Hirst: *You'll be asked a lot of awkward and uncomfortable questions. You can't just say "That's personal!"...Employers feel they have the right. You have to wake up to the fact that you're at a real disadvantage in a lot of areas because of the fact that you're a woman. If you want to change the situation, you'll have to get a sex-change operation.*

(Fieldnotes, 4/8/86, p.1080)

The teacher presented them with a list of hints on *"how to appear"* which included *"no chipped nail polish", "wear a deodorant...but not too much perfume", "sit up straight and don't cross your legs." (Fieldnotes 4/8/86, p.1081).* She then went on model a good posture.

Ms Hirst: *You put your bottom at the back of the chair...like this...and your back straight...but not stiff like a robot.*

Marion: *But miss, you find yourself slipping all the time!*

Ms Hirst: *Another thing is that adolescent girls tend to lean forward, as if they were embarassed about their bust, and try to hide it.*

Ngahia: *Do you show it then?! (Everybody roars)*

Wendy: *As if it were an asset!*

Ms Hirst: *These things are known by women in beauty contests...they are things you have to know about.*

(Fieldnotes, 4/8/86, p.1083)

Class, Ethnicity and Self-Presentation.

The presentation of the "self" for interviews required the editing of that self to conform not only to gender stereotypes, but also to class and ethnic descriptors. The latter were observed being specifically addressed to working class and Maori students. The All Girls' Careers Adviser told the researcher:

Ms Tyler: *Well, this is what I try to encourage with students who are going to interviews and who are not up to scratch. I say "Look at the way your socks are...You're not going to wear those scruffy-looking shoes to that interview are you?! And for goodness' sake, stop twiddling your fingers!" Without personally attacking them I try...but it is hard, and it's a question of grammar too. A lot of them come to me and they say: "What about yous?" and "She sez this" and I say: "The word is 'says' not 'sez' and you don't use the plural...you say 'you'".*
(Fieldnotes, 26/11/86, p.1729)

Most of these messages were directed at Maori students - the comments Ms Tyler makes about language, for instance, refer to a particular linguistic register used by Maori students. At All Girls' and Co-Ed High there was even a section in a "Job Seekers' Kit" where various points were made to show what misunderstandings might arise during interviews because of cultural differences. A few examples are:

> * *As a sign of respect Samoans will sit down as soon as possible when meeting supervisors. Pakehas stand up as a sign of respect. The employer will probably be expecting you to stand and meet people, and wait to be shown where to sit.*
>
> * *Maoris and Pacific Islanders use their bodies more in talking than Pakehas. Body language like shrugging your shoulders, shaking or nodding your head, may be interpreted that you are not interested.*
>
> * *To Maoris and Pacific Islanders it may be rude to look people in the eye, whereas to Pakehas it means that you are interested, polite and confident.*
> *(The Job Seeker's Kit)*

Again, Maori and Pacific Island students are enjoined to forsake aspects of their own culture, shed their ways and adopt Pakeha ones for the sake of satisfying (Pakeha) employers. At no stage was it suggested that they had a right to expect employers to understand and recognise cultural differences.

[g] Lack of Contacts and Networks as intrinsic causes of unemployment.

It was sometimes suggested to students that employment could be secured by having personal contacts with employers, or by using the contacts with employers established by the school, and particularly by the Careers Adviser over the years. Teachers did not overtly highlight these networks - often teachers appeared slightly embarrassed about what one All Boys teacher called jokingly *"the Mafia-type networks"* operating in the school (Fieldnotes, 29/10/86, p.1565). All three schools had similar sorts of networks with employers, though the ones at All Boys' College were particularly developed.

At All Boys' College, the Careers Adviser spoke of the school's *"mutual support system" (Fieldnotes, 5/2/86, p.48)* and showed the researcher a list of all the catholic employers in town who could be contacted for placement of school-leavers. He also felt that he had been chosen for the position of Careers Adviser because of: *"a very good network of friends, many of whom have their own businesses or who manage a business for others, and so if it is that the boy needs help, I can pick up the telephone and say: "I've got a great little boy here, and please give him an interview." (Fieldnotes, 4/11/86, p.1593).* One of the city's catholic employers justified these procedures to the researcher saying *"We're a small minority in New Zealand...so we take care of our own." (Fieldnotes, 20/3/86, p.486).* A teacher who had been the Careers Adviser before Mr Tate spoke of the value of catholic business community in the city in securing employment for the College students:

> *I got all of the students into jobs. You see, the family network really works at that catholic school. A lot of parents are rich, professional people, so they would phone me up whenever they needed somebody for a job, and I would place a student. At All Boys' College it's really true what they say: It's not what you know, but who you know.*
>
> *(Fieldnotes, 10/4/86, p.561)*

Both All Girls' and Co-Ed High had their own contacts with employers, though they were less extensive and less frequently mentioned to than at All Boys. All Girls' High had developed

especially strong contacts with a garment factory, the manager of which offered jobs regularly to students from All Girls'. At Co-Ed High, the Careers Adviser spoke of the strong networks with employers which had been developed by transition teachers, and explained how employers took students from a specific school because previous students had done well.

Mr Haigh: *Sometimes we have placed somebody from Co-Ed High at a particular place, and that person is transferred or promoted, and his position becomes vacant. The employer might think of us because they were pleased with the previous student...and there seems to be a pattern. For example, we've had four students being employed by Bank of New Zealand last year, and only one with ANZ bank.*

(Fieldnotes, 4/3/86, p.358)

A technical teacher from the same school said that at least six of his past students were working for the Ministry of Works:

> *My students are chosen for the vacancies because I have an ex-student with clout at the Ministry of Works. It's a shame, but it's always been like that, since I started working. It's who you know.*
>
> *(Fieldnotes, 14/11/86, p.1681)*

Moreover, the researcher frequently noticed letters from employers arriving on the Career Advisers' desks. One was from a draughting company offering employment to a "hard working student" and spoke of the mutual benefit to employer and school. (Fieldnotes, 27/2/86, p.245).

Despite acknowledgement of the use of networks to secure employment, only three references were made to specific messages about it to students. One was a brief reference in a *Looking Ahead* booklet which said:

> *Do you know of people who might help? Someone who knows the applicant can put in a good word. It's wise to use whatever contacts you have.*
>
> *(Looking Ahead: Homeguide: 1986, p.10)*

A Social Studies teacher at All Girls' High mentioned the use of personal contacts as a part of the job-getting package, and advised her fourth formers to: *"start looking at what your friends' parents do. You might get a job that way!" (Fieldnotes, 29/7/86, p.1041)*; a Co-Ed High Social Studies teacher told his students: *"one of the things that happens frequently today is that people get jobs through contacts parents or friends have."(Fieldnotes, 29/5/86, p.754)*.

At no stage was there an analysis of the problematic involved in such networks - though teacher embarrassment about talking about it openly indicated that there was an awareness that this taken-for-granted practice was not totally legitimate. There was certainly no awareness noticed that some groups, identifiable by their ethnicty, were in a disadvantaged postion regarding the availability of such networks (see Becker, 1979).

[h] Being Too Choosy.

Teachers were seen in a quandary because on the one hand they extolled the importance of students staying on at school, and on the other they found students who took them at their word and refused to leave until they found a job they liked. Teachers therefore gave different and contradictory messages to different kinds of students. They were observed in all three schools attempting to persuade "achieving" students to stay at school and get more qualifications and aim "higher". At All Girls' High for instance, teachers were overheard expressing dismay in the staffroom that a particularly bright student was leaving school for an office job (Fieldnotes, 8/5/86, p.717). On another occasion, one teacher was overheard telling another *"Do you know that Tania is leaving school? Such a nice, conscientious girl! She found some office job. We should try to talk her out of it." (Fieldnotes, 21/4/86, p.648).* Other students were however considered to be "too choosy" or "too fussy" about accepting a job offer which they were lucky enough to get. "Realism" and expediency were addressed to lower-achieving students and judgements made about the educational and career futures of students. The All Girls' High Counsellor advised Social Studies teachers:

Ms Ryan: *We can show those students who are not doing so well at school that perhaps they can take the first job that comes up, and once they have a start, and get a few good references, then they can move on, because many of them have unreal expectations.*
(Fieldnotes, 9/7/86, p.934)

This message was given in all three schools, and particularly so to the less achieving students. An English teacher at All Boys said:

> *At times students have come to me and said: "I have a job offer...My parents want me to finish the academic year. What do you think?". I'd answer "Grab the job with both hands...You can always attend night classes if you're keen."*
> *(Fieldnotes, 13/11/86, p.1675)*

The Labour Department booklets also advised students against being adamant about wanting a particular job, and warned: *"Competition makes it difficult for everyone to reach their goals." (Looking Ahead: v.1:1986, p.20).* A Co-Ed High Social Studies teacher told her fourth form class: *"It's hard nowadays to get a job where you like what you do." (Fieldnotes, 20/8/86, p.1170).* These messages were observed to be similar to others parents were giving their children. This could be ascertained from interviews with teachers. The Co-Ed principal said: *"Sometimes parents seem to be encouraging their children to take the first job they can, rather than aspiring higher...and in some cases I've had to talk them out of that." (Fieldnotes, 6/11/86, p.1629)*

Summary.

It has been shown that in various ways, teachers and schools construct a particular picture of the world for their students, and consciously or unconsciously they attempt to continue legitimating a failing system. To do this they give contradictory messages: on the one hand they recognise that qualifications are being inflated, on the other they urge certification and self-presentation skills as a way to salvage individual victories at the expense of "anonymous" others and out of a collective defeat. In the process they increasingly emphasise the ends and criteria of employers rather than the needs of an education which critically approaches the changes taking place in society. By engaging in a discourse and practice which fails to rise above common sense assumptions to a better understanding of the reasons for unemployment, teachers also encourage a compensatory form of education, based on the teaching of social skills and the developing of a market-oriented personality - this construes youth as deficient. In other words, the reasons for unemployment are to be found within the individual, and it is the individual, not ideologic/economic/politic realities which need to be transformed. Once again, teachers - consciously and unconsciously - act to support the established order, and especially when this established order, by not coming up with the returns it promises in terms of jobs and a reasonable livelihood, is no longer legitimate.

[2] Extrinsic Causes of Unemployment.

Intra-School Differences.

While the burden of the messages given at school emphasised the micro dimensions of unemployment - and in so doing construed youth as deficient and somehow responsible for their own unemployment - it is important to note that there were some intra-school differences based on the ideology of particular teachers. Six of the twenty teachers observed in classrooms tried to dispel the caricature prevalent in the students' minds about the "dole bludger" - a caricature which painted the unemployed as having a "good time" on tax payers' money. The All Boys' Career Adviser gave messages not to students generally, but rather to individuals whom he considered "unemployable" and who came to see him for vocational guidance.

Mr Tate: *I try to tailor the message that I give to the boy concerned, because if you get a boy who's going to be virtually unemployable, where the chances are he's not going to get a job in his lifetime...and that's becoming a possibility for some of them...then I have to try to get him into the idea that there's no great stigma attached to maybe draw the dole for the rest of your life.*

(Fieldnotes, 4/11/86, p.1591)

The message was given to greater number of students at All Girls' High by two teachers - one was Ms Woods, and the other was Ms Berne. The latter, an English teacher used poems to show the indignity suffered by the unemployed at the hands of society, and to present a realistic and sympathetic portrayal of the unemployed. When a student disagreed with this presentation of the unemployed and asserted instead the commonly held caricature, the teacher countered that with information which helped the student listen more closely to the messages in the poems.

Hannah: *But miss, not all the unemployed are depressed. Some save up money and buy a motorcyle and have a good time.*

Ms Berne: *True, there are some who use the system, but statistics show that these are very few. Many people want to be occupied and feel good about themselves.*

(Fieldnotes, 13/8/86, p.1129)

Even more specific and detailed efforts were made by a Co-Ed High Social Studies teacher, who showed her fourth form class a video entitled *Out of Work*, which carried the following messages:

> *Your country has a problem, not you. Those who say you're a bludger are ignorant. Don't feel guilty if you have to go on the unemployment benefit. Your parents have been paying taxes, and you will be paying it back in taxes once you get a job. It's only natural that you feel ashamed if you're unemployed. So many people are telling you to feel that. But taxes pay for Accident Compensation, for widows, so why not for the unemployment benefit? So, don't hesitate to register for the benefit. If you don't tell that you're unemployed, you're telling the government that everything's right and rosy, and they won't plan for the unemployed.*
>
> *(Fieldnotes, 19/8/86, p.1154)*

Two other Co-Ed High Social Studies teachers gave similar messages, but spent less time on the topic and did so in a less organised way. One talked about unemployment in the context of leisure and told students: *"You don't go off and feel a failure when you get your first knock-back in a job." (Fieldnotes, 14/2/86, p.171).* The other presented the views of the two major political parties about the question of the unemployment benefit, and invited the students to decide who they agreed with.

> *Mr Roach: So, some are saying, we're not giving money to people who are sitting on their backsides...You've got to do some further training, or get some more skills, and then you get the allowance. One political party is advancing one thing, and another party another thing.*
>
> *-(Fieldnotes, 10/6/86, p.808)*

While some of these messages may be considered to be too brief to inform student thinking about unemployment and its causes, their importance lies in suggesting to students that alternative explanations do exist. Some teachers went a step further to argue that these alternative explanations for unemployment, explanations based in the realms of the economy rather than of individuals, were more appropriate. Messages regarding the economic causes of the rise of unemployment were given to all students in all three schools through the *Looking Ahead* booklets. All Social Studies teachers used this section, asking the students to read it in the classroom or at home. It was however highlighted at All Girls' High, especially since the Counsellor had it duplicated and sent to all the fourth form students' parents. It discussed the availability of jobs in terms of various contributing factors, including economics, an increasing number of people looking for jobs, labour market planning, technology, changing social attitudes, and competition. The Counsellor introduced the paper as follows:

> *One of the hardest things we as adults and parents have to understand about jobs and careers is that the 1980s and 1990s are a lot different from the 1950s and 1960s when we left school and got our jobs. We find it hard to understand why our children cannot walk into a job as we did. We find it difficult to accept unemployment. We include here an article which highlights some of the important points about the availability of jobs. Please read the article and discuss these points with your daughter.*
>
> *(Fieldnotes, 13/7/86, p.990)*

Besides this general effort, it was mainly Economics teachers who attempted to give an account of the economic reasons for the increase of unemployment in New Zealand. This set of messages and explanations therefore only reached a small number of students who took this subject option. The Economics lessons observed which dealt with unemployment were not always satisfactory in that, as in one case, the teacher was unable to explain to students why there was a massive increase in unemployment in New Zealand between 1977/1978 (Fieldnotes, 16/6/86, p. 828). Two of the three economics teachers observed also gave classical, structural functionalist explanations - this gave credence to the observation of Ms Woods, who also taught economics, that economics was often presented to students *"as a science rather than as a value system." (Fieldnotes, 24/6/86, p.858).*

SUMMARY.

The data presented in the sections above show that teachers are addressing the issue of unemployment in some ways. Their messages can be said to suggest a formula for job-getting, whereby:

JOBS = ATTITUDES + QUALIFICATIONS + SELF-PRESENTATION SKILLS + NETWORKS.

This formula or set of messages excludes any deep analysis and understanding of the macro issues which cause unemployment. Thus, the ultimate message reinforces a blame-the-victim approach where students are encouraged to relate to the problems of a contracting labour market at the individual rather than political level. The following sections will present data regarding the reception by students of these messages, and whether they were accepted or resisted, and why.

6.3. STUDENTS AND THE NATURE OF THE LABOUR MARKET.

INTRODUCTION.

The previous chapter has shown that the messages actually received by students are mediated by various factors which include competing or contrasting messages given by parents, friends and the media; their own experience in the labour force as part-time or casual/seasonal workers; their gender; their race; their class; and finally their readiness or otherwise to accept the givers of school-to-work messages within the school as reliable and knowledgeable "oracles" of what was really happening in society at large. Such variables worked singly or in combination to filter the messages actually given by teachers, not only as the latter declared them to be, but also as the researcher observed them being given.

This section gives an account of the students' reception, acceptance and contestation of messages transmitted at school about the nature of the labour market - particularly with reference to the aspect of unemployment. The exploration of data is organised around two major headings:

[1] A contracting labour market (Section 6.3.1.) and

[2] Causes of unemployment and ways to ensure one's own employment (Section 6.3.2.).

6.3.1. A CONTRACTING LABOUR MARKET.

The property "a contracting labour market" is described with reference to the extent of students' reception, acceptance and contestation of teachers' messages about it.

Three propositions will be explored in this section. First, that messages about unemployment are given with different emphasis to different groups of students identifiable by their level of achievement. Second, that different groups of students, identifiable by their class, ethnicity and level of achievement, react differently to messages about unemployment. Third, students are capable of penetrating the discourse of credentialism fostered

at school. They weigh their chances of translating symbolic capital into real capital by the securing of a job, and accordingly invest in or detach themselves from schooling. All three propositions are grounded in data presented below.

[a] Students' reception of messages about a contracting labour market.

Students, even when in the same school, gave conflicting answers to the researcher's inquiries about whether they received messages about unemployment from teachers. These conflicting answers can partly be explained by the fact that groups of students had different teachers who, as has been shown in preceding sections in this chapter, gave different messages about the nature of the labour market. Five sixth formers from All Girls' High agreed for instance that:

> *All the teachers have got different views about unemployment...so you don't really know. Some say that there's jobs out there if you want them, and some say there's none, and you're not going to make it, and go: "I doubt if you're going to get a job."*
> *(Fieldnotes, 6/10/86, p.1410)*

Students who said that teachers mentioned unemployment also observed that such messages were generally given in order to urge them to study harder at school. At Co-Ed High for instance, a group of fourth form students said that their Social Studies teacher had given them unemployment statistics. Their conclusion was *"that these days you've got to work a lot harder at school to get anywhere...to get a job." (Fieldnotes, 30/7/86, p.1048).* Sixth formers from the same school felt that teachers consistently gave them messages *"that it's tough out there nowadays...that school is really easy compared to when you leave...that there's unemployment, and if we want to have a job, we have to try to do reasonably well at school." (Fieldnotes, 15/4/86, p.614).* Students interpreted messages about unemployment mainly as instigations to work harder at school - this was true even in situations when the teacher was intending to communicate another message. At All Girls' High for instance, fifth form students misinterpreted Ms Berne's intentions of generating sympathy and understanding for the unemployed. Five students interviewed from her class felt that their teacher had used the poem *"The Beneficiary"* for a particular reason:

> *It made you think: "Oh well! I'd better get School Certificate this year, otherwise that person might be me...it might be me going down to the Labour Departament to get my dole money, without a job.*
> *(Fieldnotes, 20/8/86, p.1164)*

Students from all three schools also felt that teachers did not broach the subject of a contracting labour market. These responses were prevalent among All Boys students - for reasons discussed earlier - but they were also present in significant numbers at the other two schools. An interesting aspect of these responses is that, in the case of Co-Ed and All Girls' High, they were made after the researcher had actually observed their teacher give messages about the extent of unemployment. This fact throws further light on why conflicting answers were given by students from the same school and, on occasions from the same class. After a Co-Ed teacher had spent most of one lesson on unemployment, three fourth formers from the class agreed that:

> *It's always about employment...it's always about jobs and what jobs to do. Here they talk to us as if once you leave school, you're going to find a job, not that there's unemployment out there, and that you're most likely to be unemployed.*
> *(Fieldnotes, 17/7/86, p.967)*

In this case as well in other instances, the attention given by the teacher to unemployment was insignificant compared to the time spent on how to choose a job, how to apply for a job, and coaching for interviews. The teachers' tendency to play down the problem of unemployment and the focus on getting the students to be "job ready" constituted in itself another and different message.

[b] Acceptance and Contestation of messages about a contracting labour market.

Students engaged in different types of acceptance and contestation. Some, for instance, accepted but decided to ignore messages given by their teachers about unemployment. Others felt that what teachers were saying was true, but did not apply to them. Others still accepted the teachers' general message about increasing unemployment but responded differently to it. These various levels of acceptance, contestation and responses are explored in this section.

Inter-School Similarities and Intra-School Differences.

Data suggest that the message about increasing unemployment acted as a motivation for some students to invest more effort in school and in obtaining qualifications. Those students who felt disillusioned with school however were more likely to lose the little motivation they had in gaining qualifications of doubtful worth. Both responses are evident in the following interview with fifth formers from All Girls' High.

Trisha: *Ms Berne was saying that at present, some people have got qualifications and they can't get a job to use them.*

R.S.: *What effect does that have on you?*

Tara: *You stay at school longer and get higher qualifications to have a better chance of getting a job.*

Angela: *Not me! I say: "Why bother?"*

Trisha: *Well, if you've got qualifications, then you beat somebody else that hasn't qualifications...so you're bound to get a job.*

Angela: *Yeah...but what if everyone tries to get the same qualifications as yourself?...And they're all trying to get this one job?*

(Fieldnotes, 20/8/86, p.1163)

Similar attitudes came to the surface in informal conversations among students at both Co-Ed and All Girls' High. An academic fifth former from the latter school said for instance: *"I know quite a few who think they're going to leave school and won't be able to find a job, and they say: "I won't get School Cert....so what's the point of working? I won't get a job anyway!" (Fieldnotes, 24/7/86, p.1010).* Such comments were also made when teachers like Ms Woods gave her students discouraging facts about the extent and spread of unemployment, and ended saying that because of redundancies and the profit motive in industry *"things look bad for you for the future."* Sitting at the back of the class, the researcher overheard a Maori student mutter: *"How depressing! Might as well go on the dole now!" (Fieldnotes, 13/8/86, p.1119).*

At Co-Ed and All Girls' High, school lost its legitimacy in the eyes of disillusioned students. While academic students felt that

they stood a good chance of securing employment, some felt that it hardly seemed fair to invest so much time and effort, and miss out on social life, in order to get qualifications which did not guarantee a job. One seventh former said:

Karen: *If you've been through four or five years of University, the government should promise you a job at the end of it, because you should have a reward after all that studying and training. But if you're not sure of what you're going to get at the end, it doesn't really seem fair on you. Because sometimes, even this year, you think: "Why do we have to study?!" You go home from school, and you're still studying and you've got homeworks and assignments, and others the same age as you have left school, they come home from work and they're out to parties...it doesn't seem fair sometimes.*

(Fieldnotes, 18/3/86, p.429)

The loss of the legitimacy of schooling was experienced at different levels by different students, depending on the chances they believed they had for capitalising on their efforts at school. Arranged on a continuum, it could be said that the most likely to become increasingly disillusioned with school were those whom the system failed - both at school and in the labour market. Maori girls would therefore feature highly at this end of the continuum. At the other extreme would be students who felt confident that their efforts at school would be rewarded both in terms of qualifications and of a "good" career. Between the two extremes are large groups of students who reacted differently to messages about unemployment. A small number of students decided that their best bet lay in staying on at school, transferring to a transition course, and getting a job that way. A picture of these students will be presented in detail in Chapter 8. A larger number opted to remain in the mainstream and work at getting qualifications. Some teachers complained that many of these students who were neither "high" nor "low" achievers did not assimilate the information about the problems of unemployment. At Co-Ed High Ms Tern said of such students:

My feeling is that they don't want to think of the future...they came across as quite immature as fourth formers. It just doesn't seem an issue to them! I think they also feel confident that what we're talking about won't happen to them.

(Fieldnotes, 13/8/86, p.1133)

An interview with her class and with other students showed however that the concern was there, that the message about unemployment had been acknowledged and accepted. That these students did not react

was due to a feeling of powerlessness in the face of the problem. One Co-Ed fifth former expressed well the concern felt by a majority of students interviewed at her school and at All Girls:

R.S.: *Do you ever think about unemployment?*

Ruth: *All the time. This might seem stupid, but I'm really upset about it sometimes. Like, I'd be sitting there or go out with my friends and have a really good time, and I come home and I sit there and think: "What if I don't get a job? What if at the end of the year I am still without a job?!" I'm really upset about it sometimes.*

(Fieldnotes,31/10/86, p.1583)

The information these students received - and accepted - not only from the school but also from the media and other social spaces they inhabited gave them great cause for concern. Students from Ms Tern's class proved that her judgement of them as "immature" was wrong. They said:

Blair: *I often think: "Am I going to get a job? Is it worth it?"*

R.S.: *Are there many of your friends who think like you do?*

Blair: *I think there are a lot of people who think like that...and it's mostly now that it's started to come about, because there's not a lot of chances. Like I want to be a dental nurse, but what chance have I got if five hundred people apply, and there's only fifty people accepted!*

Odette: *And you can't get jobs that you like any more.*

Toni: *It's even difficult to get into the University course that you want to!*

(Fieldnotes, 30/7/86, p.1056)

In the two high schools, what teachers mistook as indifference on the part of students was in fact an inability to cope with a mysterious problem which nobody around them seemed to know much about or able to control. For a majority of students in the mainstream therefore, the only strategy was to survive school and the demands it made closing their eyes to the threat of unemployment, and continue investing hopefully in education and in its credentials. Fifth form students from All Girls' High illustrate this process well:

Luisa: *We tend to push the problem [of unemployment] away...till when we meet it.*

Maryanne: *If teachers keep saying: "If you don't work hard, get School Certificate, and you're not going to get a job"...and then you think that a lot of people get*

these qualifications, and they don't get the job, you sort of think and say: "What's the point of sitting School Cert and Sixth Form Cert if you're not going to get the job anyway?" The best is not to think about it!

(Fieldnotes, 24/7/86, p.1008)

Students seemed to make a ritualistic pact with a destiny which they knew to be there. Only two responses seemed available to them - completely rejecting the legitimacy of schooling or the continued investment in credentials, knowing full well that their faith in them was, at best, unjustified. Having once taken the latter decision, students did not take kindly to teachers who kept reminding them of the shaky foundation for their faith. Students from Ms Woods' class resented her shattering honesty about the unemployment situation:

Martha: *She doesn't give us much encouragement...she really paints a dark picture about getting jobs and that.*

R.S.: *Is it a true picture do you think?*

Iris: *I think that if she raved on about how good it was, and then we go out there and it's really bad, we might get a big shock...so this way we're prepared.*

Martha: *She makes it sound so bad though!...You end up not listening.*

(Fieldnotes, 18/9/86, p.1193)

Students therefore found various ways of coping with the message of unemployment, by pushing it to the back of their minds, or even by "not listening" to the bad news. Even those students who refused to be discouraged, believing that positive thinking and determination would, as if by magic, change common defeat into a personal victory, admitted that their faith was nothing but a gimmick to boost their confidence and keep them going. An All Girls fifth former was interviewed:

R.S.: *Does unemployment discourage you?*

Sharon: *No...because I'm going to go out and get a job...You've got to go with an attitude that you're gonna do it, instead of leaving school and thinking: "Oh! I'm not going to get a job!"...You might just as well just sit around for a while and see what happens...You need positive thinking.*

R.S.: *And will that get you a job?*

Sharon: *No...(laughs)...But if you keep your positive thoughts there all the time, you know...But (laughing)...I suppose if everybody has this positive approach, it will make it worse for us!*

(Fieldnotes, 24/7/86, p.1009)

It is partly this need for a "positive approach" to the problem that explains why some students contested their teachers' (and others') messages about unemployment.

Inter- and Intra-School Differences.

There were two groups of students who did not appear to have the same apprehensions as most of the other students interviewed. This difference is accounted for by the fact that some students, identified by the school they went to or by the fact that they were high achievers, received different messages (from teachers and others) and constructed a different reality for themselves.

Students from All Boys' College were reassured by their school that while there might be unemployment out there, it was not going to affect them at all. The following excerpt from an interview with seventh formers shows that students both received the message, but at the same time were beginning to question its claims in the light of evidence they saw around them and which the school failed to acknowledge publicly:

R.S.: *What sort of messages about work does the school give you?*

John: *That leaving school and getting a job straight away is the be-all and end-all of life...it is! That's what you get at All Boys' College. That everyone leaves All Boys with a job.*

R.S.: *Is it a sort of pride?*

John: *Yeah...But it doesn't work now...not last year...*

R.S.: *Why?*

John: *Unemployable persons...I don't know...perhaps some just want to go on the dole...some of them want to become unemployed and bum around.*

R.S.: *So...are you taught about unemployment?*

Peter: *No...unemployment isn't discussed because All Boys isn't supposed to have it.*

R.S.: *But you were saying that there are a few who do become unemployed...*

John: *But they're ignored.*

(Fieldnotes, 29/4/86, p.658)

While students at All Boys felt they need not worry about

unemployment because their school networks would take care of them, other students who were academically successful in all three schools felt that their abilities ensured that the threat of unemployment would not apply to them. Co-Ed High sixth formers said:

Shareen: *Teachers are saying it's hard to get a job...that your chances of getting a job are really slim.*

R.S.: *Do you believe you might be unemployed?*

Christa: *I don't believe it.*

Carol: *We're not going to be unemployed because we're "A" course students. You get the message subtly from teachers - they tell us we're good and that we'll make it.*

(Fieldnotes, 12/11/86, p.1664)

Academic All Girls' sixth formers felt that to them, unemployment was just another statistic - they felt assured that *"It's no big deal...I'm not going to be in that position.":*

Janice: *Yeah...I mean, we sit back and think: "Yeah...another year at school, six years at Varsity, we'll be qualified psychologists, we'll get a job at hospital for a couple of years, then go private, make bulks of money...*

(Fieldnotes, 6/10/86, p.1414)

Summary.

Contestation and acceptance of messages regarding unemployment have been shown to vary among different groups of students identifiable by a number of factors. These included the school they attended, and whether they were high achievers. With achievement being closely related to class and ethnicity, the proposition that messages about unemployment are emphasised differentially and receive a different reception (acceptance, contestation, modification) from different groups is well-grounded.

6.3.2. CAUSES OF UNEMPLOYMENT AND WAYS TO SECURE EMPLOYMENT.

Reception of messages relating to the property "causes of unemployment and ways to secure employment" are described with reference to: [1] Intrinsic causes and [2] Extrinsic causes.

Data also refer to "ways of avoiding unemployment" and, more directly, "how to get a job". Students therefore construct their

own formula for job-getting after considering what, in their understanding, gives rise to unemployment.

[1] Intrinsic Causes.

In earlier sections in this chapter it was proposed that the burden of teachers' messages about the causes of unemployment led to a deficit model whereby individuals were construed as being responsible for their own unemployment. It was argued that this approach was constructed through a general lack of explanation of macro issues of unemployment, the prejudices of some of the teachers themselves, and through the emphasis teachers put on teaching pre-employment skills to their students. The same blame-the-victim attitudes were observed among over ninety percent of students interviewed, and it could therefore be said that students had accepted the major message teachers gave about the major cause of unemployment.

Three propositions are formulated in this section. First, students accept the formulation of unemployment as a problem produced primarily by the individual, and therefore to be solved by the individual. They therefore absorb the implied message given by teachers (and the community) about the unemployed, based as it is on a blame-the-victim model. A second proposition states that students are capable of penetrating much of the teacher discourse about credentialism. They resist messages of the primacy of qualifications in the job-getting package, and actively construct their own understanding of what elements will secure them employment. A third proposition argues that increasingly students are being forced to trade individualism and creativity for the personal qualities required by employers, and which they recognise to be the vital elements in the job-getting formula. These three propositions are explored in data below.

[a] Having the "wrong" attitude.

Over ninety percent of students interviewed referred to "common-sense" knowledge to assert that the unemployed were responsible for their own plight. This knowledge they had mainly absorbed from the community and from their own experiences in the family and with

friends, but they also referred to messages given overtly and covertly by teachers at school. Often students recounted anecdotes to prove or illustrate their point. There are scores of examples from all three schools to illustrate students' attitudes towards the unemployed, and their negative view of the "dole". They referred to unemployed friends who felt bored and had *"nothing to do, except getting into trouble"*. They were particularly opposed to friends who felt that it was: *"real neat and rugged to be on the dole. They get money for doing nothing...some people are making better money on the dole than they could do working. It's the tax payers who have to pay for it...half of them are just bums anyway! Bludgers!" (Fieldnotes, 4/4/86, p.548)*. Other students said they were advised by their unemployed friends not to leave school before they had a job because life was too boring without work (Fieldnotes, 27/6/86, p.875). Some mentioned members of their own family who had been *"on the dole for ages, and they get really down, because they're not doing anything, and they feel bad, bludging and all that." (Fieldnotes, 22/9/86, p.1231)*.

The images of the unemployed that students generally carried around in their heads were therefore frequently pejorative. Few students were found to have accepted the challenges some teachers had made to the dole-bludger myth. Students from Ms Berne's class, for instance, had received a sympathetic portrayal of the unemployed. Seven days after the delivery of that particular lesson, these students gave the following images of the unemployed:

R.S.: *What goes on in your head when you see a group of unemployed?*

Trisha: *What do they do all day?!*

Tania: *They spend all their time drinking!*

Manawa: *Yeah, but they drink because they're depressed!*

Grace: *But some of them might not want to get a job. They sit around getting fat. Some people don't mind being on the dole, like the Bikies. They get eighty dollars a week and they all board together in one house. They buy bikes and ride around all day, and they enjoy themselves. They're living off other people, they're not trying to get jobs.*
(Fieldnotes, 20/8/86, p.1165)

The factor most frequently mentioned by students in all three schools to explain people's unemployment was that they did not have

the "right attitude". This included anything from not presenting oneself well to the prospective employer, to being "lazy" (Fieldnotes, 4/3/86, p.346) "laid back" (Fieldnotes, 3/3/86, p.323) or "too choosy" (Fieldnotes, 24/9/86, p.1270) and "fussy" (Fieldnotes, 4/4/86, p.546) about which jobs to accept. In all the three schools, students affirmed that even although *"Everyone says it's hard, there's always heaps of jobs going around. It's only people who don't want jobs who don't get any...dole-bludgers. The unemployed, I think they just don't go out and look for a job." (Fieldnotes, 4/3/86, p.333).* The unemployed were often accused of *"bludging the system - if there was no dole, they'd get off their ass and find work!" (Fieldnotes, 2/10/86, p.1359).*

Lack of "positive attitude" - in other words, in light of comments made earlier, the unemployed's unwillingness to try because they knew that such attempts were doomed to failure - were often cited as reasons for unemployment. Fifth form All Boys students said for instance:

Rees: *If they go for a job, and somebody turns them down, they say: "Oh! I can't be stuffed going for another job!"...because they think if one has turned them down, the whole lot will turn them down...and then they just go on the dole and get into trouble.*
(Fieldnotes, 15/4/86, p.606)

The unemployed were in the wrong because, as a fourth form Co-Ed student said, they failed: *"to think positive...if you're going for an interview you mustn't go thinking: "Oh!...I'm not going to get it."...because you're most likely not going to get it." (Fieldnotes, 17/7/86, p.965).*

Students also received and absorbed teachers' general insistence on individual ways of combating the macro problem of unemployment. They recalled various teachers who urged them to polish up their behaviour - otherwise they would not get a job. Seventh formers from All Boys' College said:

James: *You get comments like: "How do you expect to go out to work if you can't do your own classwork and keep being smart all the time?!"*

John: *Yeah...And things like: "How do you expect to get employment when you're dressed like that?!"*
(Fieldnotes, 29/4/86, p.665)

Students formed pejorative opinions about the unemployed from sources which came predominantly from outside the school, but the

emphasis on pre-employment skills and the lack of education about the macro causes of unemployment meant that the prejudices in the community were not effectively challenged, let alone transformed.

[b] Ethnic Characteristics.

The images students had of the unemployed - "fat", "lazy", "slack-happy", "tea-cosies on their head", "bikies", and "mongrels" - coincided with their descriptions of Maori students. It became obvious that Pakeha students often had the latter in mind when they referred to the unemployed. There was a general awareness that a large number of the unemployed were Maori. Students mentioned not only Social Studies lessons and the media as the source of their information, but also "common-sense" forms of knowledge which many students had. Such knowledge was expressed in jokes and quips like one told to the researcher by a fourth former from Co-Ed High: *"Have you heard the joke that's going around at the moment? It goes: "What's long and brown?...A line of Maoris in the dole queue!"(Fieldnotes, 17/7/86, p.951).*

It has been shown that some teachers had similar images of the unemployed. Students actually picked up teachers' occasional prejudiced statements, as sixth formers from All Girls reported:

> *Teachers are nervous to talk about some things...sometimes it's brought up, this stuff about Maoris, but they get all built up about it, and their prejudices show too...Like our economics teacher. I heard what she was saying to her other sixth form class. She was saying "Maoris don't get jobs, and they get everything put on their plate for them."*
>
> *(Fieldnotes, 6/10/86, p.1412)*

Few teachers actually argued as publicly as this that racial characteristics were a direct cause of unemployment. Nevertheless, the teachers' valuing of culture-specific attitudes and behaviours as a means to job-getting - in the form of "correct" speech, dress, and posture for instance - resurfaces in student discourse as a direct denigration of ethic character. The covert message is therefore made overt by the students themselves.

The most direct comments denigrating race and placing the blame for Maori unemployment squarely on certain racial characteristics came from the schools where *taha Maori* was not highly esteemed -

principally at All Boys' College, and to a lesser degree, at All Girls' High. Similar comments were made at Co-Ed High, though these were sometimes tempered by an attempt to understand the cultural differences between the races. Maori people were accused by Pakeha students in all three schools of not caring whether they were unemployed or not: *"They don't make efforts at school. They go to the classroom and they don't even try." (Fieldnotes, 8/5/86, p.723).* They were blamed for leaving school early and not investing in qualifications (Fieldnotes, 24/9/86, p.1270), for lacking motivation and a good image of themselves (Fieldnotes, 9/10/86, p.1461). One seventh form All Boys student exclaimed: *"They've got to have education...Now they want their own system! What would they be like if we didn't have to come here a hundred and twenty years ago?!" (Fieldnotes, 1/10/86, p.1347).*

The blame for high Maori unemployment was also placed on the way Maori students dressed, spoke and and behaved generally. A Co-Ed fifth form student said: *"You just have to look at the field and you'll see why they're unemployed. They dress badly, and it's their attitude toward their job situation."(Fieldnotes, 9/10/86, p.1451).* Similarly, a seventh form student from All Girls' High told her friends: *"They're different...they push people around...They whack you, they spit...They've got a language of their own (she mimics Maori accent:) "You 'ere?!" (Everybody laughs). They've been in New Zealand all their lives, but they've still got an accent."(Fieldnotes, 15/4/86, p.619).*

Even those few students who referred to different ethnic characteristics - not to denigrate but to excuse Maori people and to show that they were not to blame for being unemployed - rarely made the leap from micro to the macro dimension. These few students felt that Maoris did not stand a chance in a system where the game was played solely by Pakeha rules. Maoris were said to share with other Polynesians a "carefree" approach of life:

> *They just take life for granted, that they're going to get something. They don't worry about what's going to happen to them...it's their culture...while amongst white people...it's always been, you know, you work hard and you get on with your life and aim at this and that...it's just in our culture to work harder. Some of them take life as it comes. And they're still nice people, but, you know, I don't think people should condemn them for behaving like*

that. But then, they don't always get the jobs because employers think that that's not the quality they want.

(Fieldnotes, 24/9/86, p.1272)

Others mentioned other cultural reasons, such as that *"Europeans have been taught how to get jobs...it's sort of part of their history...and Maoris, it's new to them...They can't get used to getting off the land. They're used to owning things, and fighting for it...through inheritance or whatever." (Fieldnotes, 17/7/86, p.953).* Others spoke about Maori students who came from families where their: *"parents are going out and spending it on booze and horses."(Fieldnotes, 23/9/86, p.1259)* - this led to failure at school and indirectly, to unemployment.

The common link between all these possible reasons is that students attributed unemployment to ethnic characteristics. The majority of students were seen to hold the belief that such unemployment was unjustifiable not because the system discriminated against Maori people, but because they pathologically brought in on themselves.

Maori students were aware of these attitudes towards them. While on the one hand they agreed with Pakeha students and accepted the notion that ethnic characteristics explained the high incidence of unemployment among their race, they also felt that they were being subjected to stereotyping - even a caricature - of Maori persons. Two fourth form Co-Ed Maori students said:

Rangi: *I don't blame the Pakehas some ways, because it's true that Maoris just hang around...it's the Maoris' fault...they give us others a bad name.*

Wairere: *And some employers will look at you and say: "Oh! I can't choose that Maori because he will steal."*

Rangi: *Or they'll punch somebody in the head...They sort of expect it to happen...but some of us are totally opposite. It's just what some Maoris have made the people to believe, you know...I feel really sad, because it all reflects back on us. They don't think about the inside. They just look at the outside, the colour.*

Wairere: *Ms Hine says: "Hang on! Hack it out! Hang in there! Don't let anyone put you down. If they want to take your place, just say 'No!'"*

Wairere: *Yeah..."Be proud of who you are...proud that you're Maori." That gives you the spirit.*

(Fieldnotes, 29/9/86, p.1324)

A group of Maori sixth formers from All Girls' High talked about a type of Maori whom they wanted to disassociate themselves completely from, and who often served as a stereotype for Pakeha students:

Melanie: *They're the "Mutus"...they're the Maoris that think they're big.*

Rose: *They're the ones who give the rest of us a bad name...They're the ones we all get stereotyped by. They're the ones that pinch, snatch and grab and steal...*

Therese: *You see them downtown...You can pick them out because they're in jeans, and colours and in dreadlocks...Rastas.*

Rose: *You see a whole bunch of them, and you walk on the other side of the road. Everyone makes us out we're the same as them...and you're not...The whole bloody world is a stereotype!*

(Fieldnotes, 10/4/86, p.575)

[c] Lack of Qualifications.

Students generally received and accepted teachers' messages that qualifications were an important part of the job-getting formula, although on the whole they gave them less importance than teachers did. At All Girls' High for instance, the question "What sort of messages does the school give you about getting jobs?" typically evoked responses like:

4th Former:
"Qualifications! They're always going on about those! They say that if you leave school, you may not regret it at the time, but within two years, you'll be regretting it, because without them you'll find it difficult to get a job."
(Fieldnotes, 8/5/86, p.717)

5th Former:
"They're always going on about how important it is to work hard and get the best grades, to be on top and therefore have more chance of actually being chosen for a job."
(Fieldnotes, 2/7/86, p.897)

6th Former:
"It's just sort of drummed into you that you need your education. It's so much harder to get jobs nowadays...and if you don't have really good qualifications, then you can't get a job."
(Fieldnotes, 10/4/86, p.569)

Students were able to penetrate the teachers' discourse about credentialism in a number of ways. They first of all knew that qualifications often referred more to attitudes rather than

specific abilities. As an All Girls' High sixth former said, *"an employer, sizing up candidates with and without School Certificate, will say: 'This person seems to be trying a lot, and the other person doesn't worry about what she's getting.' So they take the more qualified person." (Fieldnotes, 26/2/86, p.236).* Students therefore considered qualifications as a handy screening device for employers, which were moreover fast losing their worth because changes taking place in School Certificate from a criterion-referenced to a norm-referenced examination meant that more students stood a chance of getting it. As a Co-Ed High student pointed out, *"But then employers will say: 'Oh yeah! Everybody's got that...Nothing wonderful about it!'" (Fieldnotes, 30/7/86, p.1052).* Students also realised that there was a qualification inflation which increasingly diminished the value of certificates. As one sixth form student from All Girls' High said: *"Before you were considered to be really brainy if you got S.C., but now it's just basic." (Fieldnotes, 2/5/86, p.684).* Another said: *"You look at the paper, and everything says "Qualifications needed." ...Even to deliver parcels you need School Cert." (Fieldnotes, 22/9/86, p.1239)*

For these reasons, students were generally observed placing less trust on qualifications as part of the job-getting package than teachers seemed to do. For a good number of them, the decision to follow their teachers' advice and invest in education had to be balanced with taking the first opportunity of employment that came their way. This is reflected in the following excerpt from an interview with three fifth formers from All Boys' College.

Chris: *Before the August holidays I was sort of asked to be a builder by a next-door neighbour, because he's got a firm, and he asked me if I wanted to leave now or after School Certificate. So I had to decide whether to jump at it now, because it mightn't be there!*

Rod: *I'd take the job, personally. I'm in my final year and I've been looking around for a carpenter's job all year now. I've been to managers and asked if there were jobs around...but nah...there's nothing!*
(Fieldnotes, 22/9/86, p.1232)

A further penetration on the students' part was that qualifications no longer guaranteed jobs. Although it has been shown that four teachers gave this message, it was also shown that teachers preferred not to highlight this fact because of the demotivating

effect it would have on students. The latter however contested the teachers' insistent emphasis on qualifications, pointing to various sources of information - including the media and friends and relatives who had been job-hunting - that qualifications might not come up with the returns they promised. As a sixth former from All Girls pointed out:

> *Yes...sure I worry about unemployment, especially when you think of those people who have got School Cert and U.E. and perhaps even a degree, and they still haven't got a job. And at school they often don't touch on that...they just say "Get School Cert...It's important to get your S.Cs.!"*
>
> *(Fieldnotes, 8/10/86, p.1439)*

A fourth former from Co-Ed High compared what he had heard at school with what he heard over the news and on a T.V. commentary: *"From what I could make out, even those who are qualified might find it hard, because what they're qualified for might become oblivia." (Fieldnotes, 17/7/86, p.970).* Students were moreover confused by the fact that messages they received from outside the school contradicted what teachers were saying. Nowhere was this more frustrating for them than in the area of qualifications, especially when they heard from various sources that unemployment could result from being overqualified. A seventh form student from All Girls' High said:

> *Janice:* *It's been a lot in the papers. People can go and get their degrees, and when they come back to what they want to do, they're too highly qualified. Because the employer's got to pay you more money if you've got higher qualifications.*
>
> *(Fieldnotes, 18/3/86, p.428)*

Another group of sixth formers from the same school mentioned another aspect of the overqualification problem, or what Berg (1970) has called "meritocratic inflation" and Dore (1976) "the diploma disease". One student from All Boys' College mentioned that when *"you've got too many qualifications, the employer thinks you'll be bored with the job...so he'll choose someone with lesser qualifications." (Fieldnotes, 25/3/86, p.502).* Such information confused students. As a Co-Ed High fifth former said: *"You don't know where to stop, where you stand. You're not too sure if you want to go to school and get School Certificate and leave, or if you want to stay on, and get more...but then still don't get a job because you're too qualified!" (Fieldnotes, 9/10/86, p.1444).*

For these reasons, students gave more prominence to other aspects of the job-getting package - especially to contacts with employers and to demonstrating that they had the personal qualities valued by employers. Employer contacts will be considered in later sections of this chapter. Students put a lot of emphasis on alternative certificates such as school reports and references from employers for whom they worked after school and on weekends. All Girls fifth formers show to what extent students received and penetrated the often hidden messages in the discourse of credentialism:

Rita: *I reckon school reports are really important, because employers look at what you're like as a person, how nice you are or whatever.*

Fiona: *Personality.*

Rita: *And they go for that...and your reports are really based on your behaviour, and with some employers that's more important than qualifications. They don't look as much at the marks as at the comments.*

Maryanne: *They've got to know if you're going to fit in with their little hierarchy or whatever...if you're going to rock the boat or if you're just gonna' go along with what they say.*

(Fieldnotes, 25/3/86, p.515)

Students therefore believed that school reports - which had information about whether you "hassled" teachers and behaved "badly", of if you *"dressed well, was punctual, did your homework"* - gave employers *"a fair idea of how you would do at work, because school is like an institute, and so is work. I've seen reports like that, saying "Could try harder" and stuff like that. Employers want to know if you're responsible." (Fieldnotes, 4/3/86, p.329).*

[2] Extrinsic Causes.

Extrinsic causes refer to those explanations students offered to account for unemployment in terms of such external factors as the economic crisis, discrimination by employers against young people, women and Maori people, and a generally discriminatory system whereby, at the end of the day, it was personal contacts and networks which secured you a job.

Two propositions will be advanced. First, young people are capable of generating their own explanations from data - data which is frequently anecdotal, but grounded in the everyday experience of

life. They therefore develop a sense of justice which is not acknowledged by teachers (and other adults), and note discriminatory practices which are mystified by schooling (and society generally). A second proposition states that young people's awareness of injustices is not developed further by the school through the communication of knowledge about macro-issues in society. This lack of political knowledge among young people leads to their adoption of a blame-the-victim mentality, even when this is directed against themselves. They are unable to link the personal and the political in their, and others' lives.

[d] The Economic Crisis.

While the majority of students emphasised intrinsic factors as leading to people becoming unemployed, there were a few who mentioned both intrinsic and extrinsic factors, and fewer still who located the problem outside the individual and in external factors. The latter were generally influenced by what teachers had said in the classroom. Students mentioned three teachers who had challenged them to think differently about the unemployed. One of these was Ms Woods at All Girls' High. Students told the researcher that *"Most teachers blame the unemployed and say they are lazy. Ms Woods told us that it's not their fault they are unemployed, but the economy." (Fieldnotes, 2/7/86, p.897).* Another teacher, Ms Marks, taught English at the same school, while a third, Ms Dewe, taught Social Studies at Co-Ed High.

All three teachers had addressed the topic directly and with the specific intention of making students think critically about the community's prejudices. A student from Ms Marks' class wrote the following feedback on her exercise book: *"People tend to think that unemployed people don't want to work because it is easier for them to go on the dole, which I found I developed some different opinions about." (Fieldnotes, 22/7/86, p.986).* At Co-Ed High, fourth form students referred to a video on unemployment which Ms Dewe had shown them in the Social Studies unit on "Work" and one of them said: *"It showed you that if you go on the dole, it's not because you're a dole bludger, and that it need not be degrading if you're on the dole...it's because there are not enough jobs to go around." (Fieldnotes, 23/9/86, p.1260).*

The "economic crisis" was rarely presented by students as the primary cause of unemployment, and references to it were vague. For most students interviewed, with the exception of those few who took the economics option, the financial squeeze was a mysterious phenomenon. At best, students attempting to explain what caused unemployment referred to *"the economy...people don't have the money to start new businesses." (Fieldnotes, 1/10/86, p.1353)* or *"New Zealand is not really big enough to provide jobs." (Fieldnotes, 6/10/86, p.1397).* The crisis which hit members of their family, friends and acquaintances was an impersonal enemy without a face - unemployment, like the plague, just happened. Two fifth formers from All Boys' College said:

Chris: *My sister's been laid off twice...the first job they couldn't afford to pay her, the second she was a waitress and the bar had to close.*

Alex: *Where I come from, heaps of shops are going under...they can't afford it. A mate of mine was making spa baths, and he started laying off workers...and now he's closed down because he can't afford to keep on going. I don't know...prices keep going up or something.*

(Fieldnotes, 22/9/86, p.1231)

Students blamed "the government" (Fieldnotes, 29/9/86, p.1329) for allowing the economy to go bad, as well as for allowing migrant Polynesian workers to inflate the number of unemployed: *"look at Auckland...all the Bananas and Coconuts there! (Fieldnotes, 9/10/86, p.1455).* There were eight references to unemployment caused by trade unions - if workers were made redundant, it was their own fault for wanting too many increases and for letting themselves be ruled by unions (Fieldnotes, 20/8/86, p.1165). Sixth formers from All Boys said:

People are going to go to the bosses' side...people who are outside the job like us, we'll say: "Oh those union members just want more money...they're always asking for money.

(Fieldnotes, 29/9/86, p.1318)

By far the most frequent factor referred to by students when considering the economy as an extrinsic factor causing unemployment was modern technology. This they referred to loosely as "computers" and "robots", which were seen to cause redundancies and lay-offs. A Maori sixth form student from All Girls' said: *"My brother was on an oil rig off the coast, and they were laid off for*

a while...They have some new machinery or something." (Fieldnotes, 10/4/86, p.584). "Computers" and "robots" were a cover-all reason to explain away a process which students felt powerless to understand, let alone affect or control. Students interviewed with the exception of some who did economics, referred to technology as a *fait accompli*, not something to be examined and questioned, but to be coped with. Students therefore said: *"It's all becoming mechanical..." (Fieldnotes 29/9/86, p.1316)* and *"Heaps of robots are coming in now and taking over jobs." (Fieldnotes, 17/7/86, p.976).* They heard information which affected their lives radically, and which they had absolutely no control over. One Co-Ed fifth former said anxiously:

> *Most people say now that most of the jobs are being taken over by computers and they reckon by the year 1990 they'll have to teach all the students how to use their spare time...It was on the news.*
> *(Fieldnotes, 17/7/86, p.969)*

Fifth form students from All Girls' High, with the same sort of information in mind, made the following comments to the researcher:

> *Raylene: I think we're being taught to accept technology...that it's something that's going to come. But really, we don't have to accept it. Teachers haven't said that there's an alternative. They're just kind of going along with it.*
>
> *Nathalie: Yeah...Education mainly is teaching us how to cope, I think...*
> *(Fieldnotes, 25/9/86, p.1291)*

The only ones who discussed alternatives came from economics options, and there were two such references - one came from Ms Woods' students, and the other from a Co-Ed High fifth former who said:

> *Technology is stealing all the jobs...We talked about that in economics. That's what's wrong with New Zealand. When they bring in computers, to take the place of the person, they don't actually make another job, or they don't find another job.*
> *(Fieldnotes, 2/10/86, p.1362)*

[e] Discrimination against young people.

Another group of extrinsic factors which students considered caused people to become unemployed were qualities like being "too young", "having no work experience" or "references". That young people were mostly at risk of unemployment was a known fact by students

who referred to various sources for their knowledge. They heard it from teachers and on the media: *"You're always hearing about unemployment on T.V. Yesterday they were saying that a large percentage of the unemployed is under twenty five years old! Mr Roach told us the same thing." (Fieldnotes, 17/7/86, p.952).* They also knew it through their own and their friends' experience, since those who had initially left school intending to get a job were returning the following year to do sixth form or a transition course, creating the phenomenon of an expanding sixth form and the new vocabulary of the "reluctant returner". These students said: *"I've had to come back [to school] because it's difficult to find a job, especially if you're fifteen. I've tried getting myself a job, but they just sort of say: 'Oh yes...I'll ring you back.' But they never do." (Fieldnotes, 2/5/86, p.682).*

Students often referred to the "work experience trap" as a particularly frustrating cause of unemployment among youth. A seventh form All Girls' student expressed well the paradoxical situation facing young people:

> *To get a job, you've just about got to have work experience. They all want to see how you've got on in previous jobs...but how can you get work experience if they don't employ you in the first place?!*
>
> *(Fieldnotes, 18/3/86, p.440)*

Students felt that young people could not compete with older workers to get into the diminishing pool of labour. Fifth formers from All Boys' explained:

> *Bob:* *Young people never had experience in jobs, and yet..the older people, before unemployment started...they didn't have experience either.*
>
> *Greg:* *Yeah! It's always "Experience Needed"...and you've come straight out of school, and you've got no experience, but the guy who's thirty odd had done something with someone.*
>
> *(Fieldnotes, 22/9/86, p.1240)*

Frustration and anger were common among young people, especially those who were disenchanted with school. They had tried to leave school but had been forced to return - they had experienced first hand that when it came to competing with older workers for a job, the odds were staked high against them. These "reluctant returners" said: *"Employers want older guys...They would be more responsible and experienced...They'd be bigger and stronger too." (Fieldnotes,22/9/86, p.1233); "As young people we don't have the*

workskills, or the experience, or maybe we don't have the qualifications." (Fieldnotes, 23/9/86, p.1251). It has been shown that in the face of increasing youth unemployment, teachers generally exhorted students to invest in credentials, in increasing their skills, and to stay on at school. Students however were more ready to talk about youth unemployment as a form of discrimination against them. As transition students from All Girls said angrily:

Cherie: *It's because all the old hags are hanging on to their jobs, and then the young people can't get a job.*

Denise: *Yeah...they can get their pensioner's benefit, and they don't need as much as we do...They're hanging on to their jobs because they're stingy old arse holes!*

Cherie: *And they're all saying: "Young people are terrible nowadays, and haven't got jobs and they don't work." That's because they're all hanging to their jobs and so there's no jobs for us to have...because there's only so many new jobs you can create in a place!*
(Fieldnotes, 2/5/86, p.709)

[f] Discrimination based on Gender.

Student analysis of the structural position of females in unemployment was found to be very rudimentary. An exception to this were students from All Girls' High who received the message teachers gave them about the increasing redundancies in traditionally female occupations. Students at this school were generally able to connect the school's campaigning with the problems of unemployment.

R.S.: *Do you think it's just a fashion here to push you to do traditionally male jobs?*

Fiona: *I think it's because of unemployment...because all girls can't be secretaries or teachers, and there's more of a chance of getting a job if you do something different.*
(Fieldnotes 25/3/86, p.504)

Structural explanations of why women were another group who were highly represented in unemployment figures often stopped there, however. There were occasional references to the fact that women had access to a narrower range of jobs: *"There's more male jobs than female jobs really, unless you're a real tom boy." (Fieldnotes, 9/10/86, p.1461)*, and to the fact that housework tied women indoors, and they were therefore the hidden unemployed. Two

Maori Co-Ed students for instance said: "their husbands want them to stay at home and be housewives...stay at home and look after the kids." (Fieldnotes, 20/8/86, p.1169). A frequent response at all three schools was that female unemployment was exacerbated by the fact that employers discriminated against women on the grounds that they couldn't be relied on to hold a steady job. Women went off and *"got preggie...a bun in the oven."(Fieldnotes, 29/9/86, p.1318); "Employers probably just think that they'll lose women when they get married, and can't be relied on." (Fieldnotes, 9/10/86,* p.1461). This was considered to be especially true for Maori females who got *"pregnant all the time!" (Fieldnotes, 20/8/86, p.1169).*

[g] Discrimination based on Ethnicity.

Another form of discrimination seen as an extrinsic factor in determining employment chances was based on ethnicity. Teachers had mentioned this possibility in their private interviews with the researcher, but none had mentioned it in the classroom. Students however mentioned this factor frequently. Fifth formers from All Boys' College said:

Paul: *Lots of Maoris are on the dole.*

R.S.: *Why?*

Paul: *Because they don't try.*

Kevin: *They're into drugs, and everybody is against Maoris. And say, if I went for a job, and a Maori went for a job, I would get that job, not the Maori, because most people think that a Maori is a bad person.*

Rees: *Depends on what sort of qualifications you've got, and how you dress. Because you've got a lot of Maoris like bloody Rastas with Teacosies on their heads...*

Paul: *Even if they dress well though...Say there's a Pakeha, and he goes for a job in a suit and tie, and there's a Maori, also in a suit and tie...the Pakeha still has got a better chance to get that job..just because he's got a white skin and yellow hair...it's racialist.*

Kevin: *It's like South Africa...it's the same here, but on a smaller scale.*

(Fieldnotes, 15/4/86, p.606)

Pakeha students from all three schools said they knew that

employers discriminated against Maori candidates. Some even referred to their own parents who owned businesses and who therefore had to select employees. A Co-Ed High fourth former said his father would never employ a Maori because:

> *...he isn't racist or anything, but because it would ruin his reputation of work...which is true, because people think of Maoris as scruffy, tough, rugged...And people would say: "There's a Maori working for him." That could ruin his reputation...not his reputation, but the firms's reputation. There's the stereotype that they can't work, that they ruin society, that we should put them on an island and have them all shot and everything.*
>
> *(Fieldnotes, 17/7/86, p.948)*

Two seventh formers from All Boys' College noted that their fathers did not employ Maoris in their factories: *"lots of these Maori guys have really wicked family backgrounds...gangs and stuff. There's not a single Maori working in the factory."(Fieldnotes, 1/10/86, p.1347).*

Students often speculated about what goes on in an employer's head on seeing a Maori applicant. The following Co-Ed fifth formers are an example:

R.S.: *Why do you think Maoris are unemployed?*

Peter: *Discrimination I reckon. The employer would think they're lazy...and they're lying around all the time. It's a reputation they've got, a stereotype that they cause all the trouble and stuff like that.*
(Fieldnotes, 23/9/86, p.1252)

[h] Lack of Contacts and Networks.

An even more predominant extrinsic factor as an explanation for unemployment was the fact that what counted in getting a job was not the number of qualifications you had, but rather the number of contacts and networks which you or your family (or your school) had. As the students put it so frequently: *"It's not what you know, but who you know." (Fieldnotes, 25/3/86, p.510).* As we have shown, this factor was acknowledged by teachers in private, but was only rarely mentioned to students. To the latter, teachers' insistence on qualifications was justified only for professional jobs like doctors, lawyers and teachers, though even here, some students suspected that an old-boy network in New Zealand was

particularly effective for *"posh schools like King's College which landed students in upper class jobs." (Fieldnotes, 8/10/86, p.1439).*

Students recounted anecdotes from their own lives to show that contacts rather than qualifications mattered. One fifth former said: *" In this day and age when hundreds of people are lining up for the one job, I mean...if you know the boss, or his son is in your class, or you know his wife's cousin, you've practically got the job. That's how my dad got his job." (Fieldnotes, 8/10/86, p.1440).*

Three Maori students from All Girls' High insisted that contacts were invaluable:

> *I got my job at a supermarket because my mother works there, and there was such a big waiting list. But I got in before the others, and my brother got his apprenticeship because my uncle has some friends. It's cheating really...teachers go on about not mucking around...But dumb students get jobs dead easy too!...It's contacts, it's who you know, not what you know.*
>
> *(Fieldnotes, 1/7/86, p.887)*

Students considered this to be discrimination and illegitimate, and often expressed more clearly than their teachers that there was something unjust about such a system. One fifth former recounted how two of her acquaintances missed out on apprenticeships even though they were better qualified that their competitors.

> *That's really upsetting because I know that the same job those two guys got, there were two other guys who had School Cert., one in six subjects and one in five...and they didn't get it because the others knew the employer.*
>
> *(Fieldnotes, 25/3/86, p.510)*

All Boys' College students frequently referred to school-based contacts as effective networks for job-getting. Students knew that a lot of jobs were phoned in to the Career Adviser's office. They also mentioned that staff had, on various occasions, assured them of jobs. In a feedback session, fourth form social studies students said:

Tim: *Teachers say we often get first choice for a jobs.*

Jason: *Yeah...One said that there hasn't been a person that's left school who went on the dole.*

Karl: *There's always some boss...If you tell them what school you go to, they give you a job just because*

you go to that school. And All Boys' College is one of them because of all the rich doolins [Catholics].

Toni: *The Marist club!*

(Fieldnotes, 29/9/86, p.1315)

Senior students said confidently *"Employers think that guys coming out here have respect and self-discipline. That's why they ring here first...to get a "good Catholic" with manners. And there's heaps of inter-relationships out of the school...ex-Marists ring up. It's a sort of network, sort of a Mafia." (Fieldnotes, 1/10/86, p.1343).*

Students from All Girls and Co-Ed High also emphasised networks in the formula for job-getting, but these networks depended more on personal and family efforts than on the school connections. They knew however that *"Some people come back to All Girls' High at the start of the year and they'll stay at school till they find a job and then leave, because a lot of jobs come through the school." (Fieldnotes, 18/3/86, p.433).* The acceptance of this sort of procedure as "natural" was developed to such an extent that a sixth former from Co-Ed High said:

Kylie: *That's the way a lot of people get jobs...If you know someone, you've got a better chance. In fact I'd tell people not to -feel put down if they're not chosen for a job, because the person who got the job did so probably because he knows the boss. They have that extra little thing which puts them ahead of you.*

(Fieldnotes, 4/11/86, p.1588)

SUMMARY.

The data presented therefore shows that students too have constructed their own formula for beating unemployment and getting a job. They make use of messages given by teachers, but also appropriate other messages they discern in their environment, messages given by family, friends, the media, and those embedded in their own personal experiences in part-time and casual work as well as in job-seeking. It appears that the students' formula for job-getting is more sophisticated than that presented by teachers, and perhaps more "realistic" in terms of how the labour market and hiring practices operate. Their formula however does not integrate

an understanding of the macro issues of the causes of unemployment, or why young people, and particularly Polynesians, are peripheralised in the structure of the New Zealand labour force.

The following is a list of the propositions advanced in this chapter, and which have been found to be saturated in data.

[1] Unemployment has potential for destabilising the established order in schools - teachers fear that the loss of job opportunity for an increasing number of students will lead to loss of motivation for learning and achieving, and of the school's legitimacy.

[2] Teachers act as censors of the kinds of knowledge they decide to pass on to students. This censorship is founded not on educational values, but on the need to ensure the smooth functioning of the system - namely the established order of the school and the classroom. Students are therefore to be kept motivated, whatever the educational cost.

[3] In times of a delegitimation crisis, schools feel the pressure to accept their students' instrumental approach to education as a way of heightening motivation for learning and order in the classroom - the world of work is emphasised, and the needs of industry become primary.

[4] Teachers use unemployment as a means to strengthen their control over students and to legitimise the exchange of schoolwork for qualifications.

[5] A critical ideology, such as that provided by feminism, sharpens and enhances the possibilities of transformative messages being given in the school. When this ideology is shared by a community of teachers, the transformative potential of critical education is, to some extent, realised.

[6] Pakeha teachers are ill-equipped to address issues of racial inequality and injustice in New Zealand. Their awareness of this inadequacy results in avoidance of issues which make them uncomfortable.

[7] This avoidance results in the direct reproduction of circumstances which lead to further inequalities and injustices suffered by Maori students.

[8] Messages about unemployment are given with different emphasis to different groups of students identifiable by their level of achievement.

[9] Different groups of students, identifiable by their class, ethnicity and level of achievement, react differently to messages about unemployment.

[10] Students are capable of penetrating the discourse of credentialism fostered at school. They weigh their chances of

translating symbolic capital into real capital by the securing of a job, and accordingly invest in or detach themselves from schooling.

[11] Teachers adopt psychological models rather than sociological ones in the explanation of social phenomena like unemployment. This has definite implications both for their ideology and their pedagogy.

[12] On the one hand micro issues are the focus, so that an appreciation and communication of messages about the structuring influence of macro phenomena is absent. On the other, the pedagogy mirrors the ideological focus, so that social skills teaching rather than a critical grasp and decoding of social forces is imparted.

[13] Ideology and pedagogy such as have been described blind rather than empower students to address the *status quo*. Students are enjoined to accept and cope with the changes demanded by economic restructuring.

[14] Schooling encourages qualities in students which are functional to a specific location in the labour market, namely the secondary sector where obedience and compliance rather than creativity and initiative are the characteristics required of workers.

[15] Students accept the formulation of unemployment as a problem produced primarily by the individual, and therefore to be solved by the individual. They therefore absorb the implied message given by teachers (and the community) about the unemployed, based as it is on a blame-the-victim model.

[16] Students are capable of penetrating much of the teacher discourse about credentialism. They resist messages of the primacy of qualifications as a key factor in the job-getting package, and actively construct their own understanding of what elements will secure them employment.

[17] Increasingly students are being forced to trade individualism and creativity for the personal qualities required by employers, and which they recognise to be the vital elements in the job-getting formula.

[18] Young people are capable of generating their own explanations from data - data which is frequently anecdotal, but grounded in the everyday experience of life. They therefore develop a sense of justice which is not acknowledged by teachers (and other adults), and note discriminatory practices which are mystified by schooling (and society generally).

[19] Young people's awareness of injustices is not developed by the school in the form of knowledge about macro-issues in society. This lack of political knowledge among young people leads to their adoption of a blame-the-victim mentality, even when this is directed against themselves. They are unable to link the personal and the political in their, and others' lives.

CHAPTER 7.

MESSAGES REGARDING THE PROCESS OF OCCUPATIONAL CHOICE.

This chapter describes the process of occupational choice as approached by teachers and students in the schools in this study. It is shown that teachers generally use a liberal model which does not take into account the realities of gender, class and ethnicity which limit and constrain "choice". An exception to this are the efforts made at All Girls' High to widen the occupational choices made by females, and to a lesser extent at Co-Ed High where Maori students are urged to aim at higher level occupations. Data however show that such attempts are not successful, and that teachers are not entirely aware of the problematic and complexities involved in the process of occupational "choice".

INTRODUCTION.

The major category "messages about the process of occupational choice" is discussed in terms of the following properties:
[1] Main messages given by teachers about the process of choice and
[2] Messages to modify the process of choice.

As in Chapters 5 and 6, these two properties are explored in terms of teachers' intended and actual messages, and the students' reception, acceptance and contestation of these messages. Where significant inter- and intra-school differences were noted, they are described to highlight the contested terrain in which messages and meanings are forged.

7.1. TEACHERS' INTENDED MESSAGES.

Two propositions are advanced in this section. First, a liberal model of occupational choice informs the approach taken by the majority of teachers. This model does not take into consideration the influence of various factors which constrain and limit "choice". Second, while some teachers are aware of factors which

limit and constrain choice, they have little access to alternative models of occupational choice. The liberal model therefore remains in use.

Inter-School Similarities.

All three schools had two major goals in their approach to the area of occupational choice as expressed in terms of two messages:
[a] Be aware of the choices that are available to you and
[b] Be realistic. These intended goals are described in detail in turn.

[a] "Be aware of choices".

Messages regarding occupational choice were observed being given mainly to students at the fourth form level. At this stage, students had to make decisions about the subjects they wished to study during the following year. On this decision depended not only the subjects they eventually studied at School Certificate level in form five, but ultimately the occupations they could aim or train for. All three schools gave this unit great importance in the hope that students would make informed and appropriate choices. Social Studies and form teachers were entrusted with the exercise and were helped by the Careers Advisers to formulate their goals and intentions, and to deliver the appropriate messages. As noted earlier, teachers who talked about work in subjects other than Social Studies also had the intention of helping students make wise occupational decisions. The following All Girls' High English teacher is a case in point:

R.S.: *What makes you want to do a unit on "work" in English?*

Ms Berne: *Well, I do understand that it's pretty terrifying for kids. They go through school and get to the end of it and they have no idea where they're going or what they're doing. They need to know what sort of choices are available, and what they can do, and they need to have a reasonable idea of what their capabilities are, and be able to put that against their parents' expectations and what they would like to do.*

(Fieldnotes, 18/9/86, p.1196)

Careers Advisers intended to make students aware of the range of occupations available in New Zealand, so that their consideration of future work would be a comprehensive one. As the All Girls Counsellor said, *"even senior students will only mention the careers they know...so we think it's better to have a checklist with all the jobs...and then they just tick them off." (Fieldnotes, 18/2/86, p.204).*

The similarity of the intended messages in the three schools in this respect stemmed from the fact that all the Social Studies teachers observed made use of the same resource material (the Department of Labour's *Looking Ahead* series of four booklets) to plan and deliver their messages.

[b] "Be realistic".

A second intention mentioned by practically all the teachers interviewed was that of urging students to be realistic in their occupational decision-making. Such realism referred to concepts of both over- and under-reaching in the context of personal qualities and abilities. Within this discourse, it was not "realistic" for academically slow students to aim for occupations which required high academic input, nor was it realistic for a student with poor eyesight to aspire to become an airline pilot.

The term "realistic" was also used with reference to a decreasing range of choice as a result of labour market contraction. Indeed, one persistent message which various teachers mentioned as an important goal for their unit on "Work" was that students would *"not put all their eggs in one basket." (Fieldnotes, 28/7/86, p.1027).* In a planning meeting with a group of All Girls' Social Studies teachers, the school Counsellor urged: *"Students mustn't think of just one career, because that career might not be available for her once she finished training. Even if this specific career were to be a perfect fit for the kind of person she is, it is still a danger to put one's sights on only one thing." (Fieldnotes, 9/7/86, p.925).*

Such "realisitic" messages were intended for particular groups of students. The All Girls Careers Adviser said for example that *"We*

can show those people who are not doing so well at school that perhaps they can take the first job that comes up...many of them have unreal expectations...it's normal...a careers fantasy stage." (Fieldnotes, 9/7/86, p.934)

Inter- and Intra-School Differences.

There were a number of differences observed. Teachers, guided either by their personal ideology or by that embodied in their school's ethos, departed from the two main intentions described above. These differences will be described first in general terms, and then with reference to gender, ethnicity and class. The former, general consideration refers to a Social Studies teacher at All Girls and constitutes an intra-school difference. Ms Woods criticised the occupational choice model because *"the Labour Department booklets constrain the students to think of jobs within the structure presented." (Fieldnotes, 31/7/86, p.1059).* She felt that that structure was irrelevant to a large number of her students and therefore intended to emphasise "practicality". This term meant that rather than focusing on the matching of ability and personality with jobs, she would urge students to go for occupations which were least likely to shed labour. Secure livelihood rather than "self-fulfilment" characterised Ms Woods intentions.

An inter-school difference refers to the intended messages regarding the factor of gender in the process of occupational choice. While Co-Ed High teachers expressed the intention to encourage female students to look at traditionally male occupational options, this goal was given maximum importance by All Girls' High teachers generally. It was not identified as a goal by All Boys' teachers during 1986. While teachers at Co-Ed High mentioned an intention to inform female students about the advisability of choosing traditionally male occupations, at All Girls the intention was to transform attitudes and choices which were considered to make young women more vulnerable to unemployment. On separate occasions, five All Girls teachers expressed their intention to contest messages which their students brought with them from home, and which tended to entrench them in traditionally female occupational roles. One Social Studies teacher said for instance:

Ms Hirst: *They are influenced by their parents in what they aim for. In past years I've found that they are interested in all the traditional female jobs like nursing, teaching, child care, and secretarial work. That concerns me because some of those areas are very badly paid or are contracting. They're going to find that their chances of being made redundant are quite high. And there are new areas opening up...ehm...areas like food technology that they just never seem to consider. So I try to display a big range of choices.*

(Fieldnotes, 3/10/86, pp.1377)

The message "be aware of choices" was therefore expanded at All Girls' High to encourage female students to look beyond traditional choices and not to be constrained by parental and societal expectations based on gender. While Ms Hirst's concerns were shared by all the teachers observed at All Girls' High, it is important to note that the Careers Adviser expressed an opposite intention. Her frequent contact with employers led her to believe that the school's campaign to encourage girls to choose traditionally male occupations was misdirected. She said:

Ms Tyler: *I see it as a problem because there are many traditional jobs that are still available, and there are not many opportunities in the non-traditional areas.*

(Fieldnotes, 26/11/86, p.1724)

Another inter-school difference is related to ethnicity and class in the process of occupational choice. Three Pakeha teachers from All Girls and four from Co-Ed expressed an awareness that Maori students were aiming at a very restricted group of occupations. They also felt that "something" ought to be done at school to encourage Maori students to aim at a wider range and a higher level of occupations. The following observation by a Pakeha teacher is typical:

I think some racial groups and some socio-economic groups tend to have very limited ideas of where they can go. I've never come across a Maori girl who would choose a job that involved university qualifications, and I've been doing that career unit for years now! The highest they will aspire to is technical institute, but even that is unusual.

(Fieldnotes, 3/10/86, p.1375)

None of the seven Pakeha teachers said they intended to give specific messages regarding occupational choice to Maori students or to those coming from low socio-economic groups. Awareness, in the case of Pakeha teachers, did not extend to a plan to address

the perceived problem. Various reasons were given to explain this lack of intention. A teacher from Co-Ed High felt that by addressing messages specifically to Maori students, she might be considered to be racist (Fieldnotes, 7/10/86, p.1422). An All Girls teacher felt that she found it difficult to address the issue because as a Pakeha, she had very little understanding of Maori culture, values and priorities. She also felt reluctant because the only messages she could give were ones which further disheartened her Maori students. To make them aware of the fact that the roots of inequality lay in a monolithic and dominating system which had little likelihood of changing meant that any glimmer of hope would be extinguished:

Ms Berne: *Because of cultural imperialism, Maori girls have to be twice as good as any other woman and four times as good as any man to get there, and that's not an easy thing to do. [...] There is one Maori girl in my fifth form who wants to become a primary school teacher, and at least in her case I could say: "You're a very valuable person...school needs a person like you." But I couldn't say that to a Maori girl who wanted to be a secretary, because industry doesn't work that way...they don't want to know. Look at the number of Maoris as bank tellers! That speaks for itself, doesn't it? Or the number of advertisements with Maori or Pacific Islanders. I can't just say to Maori girls: "Go out there and do it" because the hurdles are enormous. I mean, I'd like to say "Go out there and do it because that's what you need to do!"...which is true. But I'd need to say "This is what you're going to come up against"...And I don't feel I want to discourage them from at least trying.*

(Fieldnotes, 18/9/86, pp.1202-3)

Teachers like Ms Berne were on the horns of a very uncomfortable dilemma - on the one hand they recognised the need to address the fact that Maori students aimed at a restricted range of occupations which were poorly paid; on the other they did not have either the resources or the belief that anything they could do would change the situation. Only Maori teachers at All Girls and Co-Ed High actually gave specific messages in this area. Since they were not observed teaching, and hence were not asked what their intended messages were, what they said will be considered within the "actual messages" sections below.

Neither was socio-economic status referred to as a factor influencing intended messages regarding occupational choice. As

noted in an earlier and different context, only one Social Studies teacher referred to the issue in the pre-lesson interviews. This was Mr Roach at Co-Ed High, who said he would talk about the way class determined occupations in the past (Fieldnotes, 26/5/86, p.727).

Summary.

It has been shown that all the teachers observed in this study intended to use a liberal model of occupational choice based on encouraging an awareness of jobs available, coupled with "realism". While some teachers were aware of the problematic involved with this model, it has been shown that they had little knowledge of alternative models. This meant that they could not envisage alternative messages to give to their students. An exception to this was the ideological position adopted by teachers at All Girls' High who recognised the importance of modifying the reproductive tendencies of the liberal model. They therefore intended to give messages which set out to transform the subordinate position of women in the distribution of occupations.

7.2. ACTUAL MESSAGES.

The teachers' intentions to address or avoid specific issues relating to occupational choice carried through to their actions. The messages they actually transmitted to their students are described in this section under the following two headings:

[1] Main messages: [a] self-appraisal and [b] job-appraisal (Section 7.2.1.).

[2] Modification of main messages because of: [a] unemployment, [b] gender, [c] class and [d] ethnicity (Section 7.2.2.).

Inter- and intra-school differences and similarities will be highlighted.

7.2.1. MAIN MESSAGES.

Two propositions will be explored in this section. First, a liberal model of occupational choice constructs a particular view of the world and specifically of the segmented labour market. This view justifies the differential rewards and conditions of work offered by various sectors of the labour market by implying that individuals choose to occupy some positions and not others. Second, by emphasising choice, the liberal model used by teachers does not expose social pressures on groups of students identifiable by their class, gender and ethnicity. The potential of schooling to foster occupational mobility is therefore stunted.

Inter-School Similarities.

The intended messages explored above - "be aware of the choices available" and "be realistic" - were given in a series of steps. These steps were common to all three schools in this study and included [a] the maintenance of a balance between a knowledge of self (self-appraisal) and [b] a knowledge of occupations available in the labour market (job-appraisal) as well as a more detailed knowledge of specific jobs.

[a] Self-Appraisal.

Following the model in the *Looking Ahead* series of booklets, all the teachers observed spoke of occupational planning and choice in terms of matching personal traits with jobs available in the labour market. They made use of the mass of materials produced by the Department of Labour, in which occupations were organised within eight major "families" which included the "artistic", "clerical/sales", "computational", "literary", "practical", "scientific", "social service", and "natural" groups of occupations. Posters showing these occupational groups were in all three school libraries, and files with leaflets and information about individual jobs within each group were also available in the libraries so that students could, theoretically, look up any occupational information they required.

The model described above stems from one developed by Holland (1973), and depends on two basic steps. The first step taken by teachers was to help students know themselves better, to identify characteristics regarding their physical qualities (e.g. eyesight, hearing, allergies, illnesses, physical handicaps) and personal qualities (including character, personality, values). Students were thus required to place themselves on a continuum of contrasting qualities, such as "Quiet" and "Talkative", "Leader" and "Follower" (see *Looking Ahead*: v.1, 1986, p.2). Students were also required to identify those qualities they could change, and those they could not, so that their occupational goals were clarified and became "realistic." The second step was to match the personal qualities identified with particular occupations.

The first step can be illustrated by a number of messages teachers gave their students in all three schools. One Social Studies teacher from Co-Ed High told her fourth form class during a unit on "Work":

Ms Dewe: *Now, let's see how well we know ourselves. We are trying to look objectively at ourselves, as if a third person was looking at us. Make this an honest attempt...It's you right now. There are some things you can change, others you can't change. Make a list please of the things you can change, and things you can't change.*

(Fieldnotes, 29/7/86, p.1043)

Even when teachers used more elaborate teaching techniques such as fantasy exercises, questionaires, or interest-blanks, the message was fundamentally the same. One All Girls teacher encouraged her students to identify positive things about themselves. When they found it *"difficult to look objectively"* at themselves, and felt that it was *"skiting"* (boasting) to write good things about themselves, the teacher argued:

Ms Berne: *When you go to jobs, you need to be able to sell yourself. What's wrong with saying "I'm good at..."?...Now, give each other a compliment. Let's imagine that every group of you is in a lifeboat, and you're short of food. Somebody has to be chucked overboard. Each will say: "I'm going overboard" but the rest of the group has to persuade her to stay, and gives reasons to show why she shouldn't, complimenting her on her qualities.*

(Fieldnotes, 5/8/86, p.1091)

The All Boys' Careers adviser developed his own inventory of careers interests in the form of a questionnaire to help students

identify those areas which they could look forward to for satisfaction in an occupation. Mr Tate gave this to all his fourth form Social Studies classes as well as to students who approached him individually for vocational guidance. Constructs in the questionnaire included working *"inside or outdoors"*, *"with your hands"*, *"alone or in groups"* and *"being a leader or a follower"*.

Senior students in all three schools were generally exposed to the same model of occupational choice. At Co-Ed High, the Careers adviser ran a general studies unit for sixth formers entitled "Employment Seeking Skills". He introduced the unit by writing on the blackboard: *"If you don't know where you're going, you will probably end up somewhere else." (Fieldnotes, 4/3/86, p.360)*. He then proceeded to help them discover possibile areas for occupational futures by looking at interests:

> *Mr Haigh: Things you've actually done, or tried, both inside and outside the classroom can tell you something about yourself. Values and attitudes can be important for some in terms of values relating to life style. For instance, you want to keep up with certain activites, which means that you want your weekends free. You wouldn't take a job which can tie you up then, or which requires you to go away from the city where your activities take place.*
> *(Fieldnotes, 4/3/86, p.361)*

Mr Haigh felt that a model of vocational guidance based on choice was useful, and felt that for a large number of students, despite unemployment in the city and nationwide, there were still sufficient opportunities available for them to have to choose. (Fieldnotes, 4/3/86, p. 358)

[b] Job-Appraisal.

Once students had identified what one of the Careers Advisers actually called their "marketable qualities" (Fieldnotes, 9/7/86, p.927) the next step was to match these qualities with occupations. To make this easier, a typology was presented to students in all three schools whereby various jobs were organised within "career families" as described above, so that rather than aiming too specifically and narrowly at one particular job, students could first identify a whole area of interest, for example "artistic careers", and choose from the jobs within that category according to their academic and other abilities.

Teachers justified this step on a number of counts. One Co-Ed teacher told his fourth form Social Studies class:

> *Mr Roach:* *Once you determine the area or career family you're interested in, you'll realise that some jobs within that family require university...and you might say that that's not for me. So you go to another job in the same area, requiring similar skills. You don't think about just one job. Unfortunately, you're not going to have the same choice as people had ten years ago. So you've got to look at different jobs which might require the same skills.*
>
> *(Fieldnotes, 26/6/86, p.870)*

Looking at a group of related jobs was therefore encouraged for two reasons: so that students could gauge the level at which they could perform in a particular occupation, and in order to have flexibility of movement in a contracting market. As one teacher warned his students: *"what happens if you only have one goal, and you can't get that choice? You'll be shattered!" (Fieldnotes, 28/7/86, p.1027).*

The "job-appraisal" exercise also required students to explore closely a specific job within the career family of their choice. Students were provided with leaflets printed by the Department of Labour in which each particular job title was described in detail, with the required level of training, salary, conditions of work, and so on so that each student could get as clear a picture of the job as possible. One such set of leaflets, used by All Girls' High and Co-Ed High teachers, but not by All Boys' College, depicted women describing their jobs in traditionally male areas. A booklet in the *Looking Ahead* series entitled *Training Guide* was also used in all the three schools - it contained a comprehensive list of New Zealand certificates, and the educational establishments which awarded them.

Once tentative choices were made, students were encouraged to confirm their choices either by talking about them with people who actually worked in the particular occupations they were interested in or, better still, by trying to get first hand experience of them. As one visiting Vocational Guidance Officer from the Department of Labour told a group of All Boys' school leavers:

> *Go and look at the kind of work you're interested in. Many drop out because they didn't look at the reality of working in that job. They feel attracted by the words used to describe the job. Better still, try to get a week's work experience in the*

> *job, even if you are working without pay, because it's difficult to get summer jobs. Go and have a look for yourself and see if you like it.*
> *(Fieldnotes, 28/7/86, p.1029)*

Such work exploration sessions were organised for senior students at All Girls' and Co-Ed High as part of "General" or "Recreation" studies, and in all three schools for transition students.

Summary.

The matching model adopted by teachers makes a number of assumptions. The model suggests that personal interests and abilities are the main guides to decisions taken regarding occupational futures. The model also gives little consideration to the power of social forces to contain and define one's interests and abilities. It suggests too that persons choose occupations with low incomes, which generate little interest, put them in unhealthy environments, and give them little opportunity for variety, promotion or satisfaction. This construction of "choice" is important because it justifies the different experiences and forms of livelihood a segmented labour market offers. Individuals are shown to choose to go to one sector rather than to another - it therefore follows that it is their fault if somehow they chose those occupations which offer less than others.

7.2.2. MODIFYING THE PROCESS OF OCCUPATIONAL CHOICE.

While the steps described above were common to all three schools and were given primary importance in informing messages about the occupational choice process, various other messages were given to modify the process of matching interests and abilities with jobs.

Three propositions are explored. First, teachers and careers advisers make private and public judgements about the appropriateness or otherwise of occupational decisions made by particular students. Second, what teachers refer to as "realistic" or "appropriate" has no absolute value. Realism is assessed "in the light of criteria pertaining to our world - on the assumption that any right-thinking person would see as we do." (Roberts, 1980, p.166). Third, teachers' opinions of occupational ambitions as "unrealistic" and "inappropriate" are strongly influenced by the

variables of academic achievement, class, race, and gender. In this way they abet a process which reproduces specific positions in a segmented labour market. While the variables are treated separately, they often came together to influence particular decisions made by students and particular judgements made by teachers.

These propositions are explored in four areas where teachers were observed modifying their liberal model of occupational choice, namely with reference to [a] labour market contraction [b] gender [c] class and [d] ethnicity.

[a] Labour Market Contraction.

The message regarding job-appraisal was modified at Co-Ed and All Girls' High by an awareness of the fact that increasing labour market contraction was making "choice" problematic. It was interesting that such a modification of the message was not given the same emphasis at All Boys' College. There teachers told students that they could aim for anything they wanted, *"even the aerospace industry". (Fieldnotes, 22/10/86, p.1549).* Various teachers who broached the subject of "work" were observed in the other two schools urging students to be "realistic". Such a message had been suggested by an official from the Department of Labour, who had told Careers Advisers from the region at a week-long in-service course:

> *We have to take the problem of unemployment into the school programmes. We were not supposed to talk about unemployment five or six years ago. Now it's acknowledged and it must be part of our strategy. We can't go on talking with students about careers as if the world was their oyster.*
>
> *(Fieldnotes, 10/3/86, p.383)*

The official had also suggested that teachers had to reduce their preoccupation with jobs, and *"the idea of slotting people into jobs."* She encouraged the Careers Advisers:

> *Tell your students that we really don't know what's going to happen. What we can suggest is that they accept the idea of broadening rather than narrowing their choices...that they build up skills and look at everything that is available.*
>
> *(Fieldnotes, 10/3/86, p.384)*

Teachers at Co-Ed and All Girls' High used some of these ideas to modify to various degrees the main approach to occupational choice

described earlier. At All Girls' High, the Counsellor told a group of sixth formers during a unit in recreation studies called "Choices and Decision-Making" that while the best career decisions were made by *"matching ourselves with what is out there, it is also a question of what comes along."* She therefore advised them:

> *We have to be realistic. Sometimes you take what comes even if it satisfies one aspect of what you want...And then you satisfy your other wishes from clubs and in your spare time. What are the dangers of being set on only one thing? You might be let down, or you might not be fitted for it, or you find you can't get in. Some people I know were absolutely demolished because they were not flexible. You must have a range of things...You have to be prepared to look at alternatives, so you're not dumped and left in a vacuum.*
>
> *(Fieldnotes, 7/8/86, p.1101)*

At Co-Ed High, the Careers Adviser gave similar messages using Bolles' (1977) concept of "transferable skills" to help senior students in widening their job horizons. He explained that increasing unemployment meant that students had to be more flexible in their choice of jobs and wrote down a list of skills (e.g. supervising, public relations, budget management) which could be transferred to various occupational contexts. He said:

> *Mr Haigh: People tend to think of their skills in one context only, but if you think of these "Ten Hottest Transferable Skills", you can widen your horizons. Comb past experience for evidence of them. Believe it or not they are also present in your school work.*
>
> *(Fieldnotes, 4/3/86, p.363)*

[b] Gender and the process of occupational choice.

Inter-School Similarities and Differences.

Messages about the relationship between gender and occupational choice were given by teachers at both All Girls' and Co-Ed High. No importance was observed being given to the subject at All Boys' College during 1986. There was a difference in emphasis in the attention given at All Girls' High to encourage and motivate students to move away from traditionally female occupations, widen their occupational choices and to extend themselves into previously male domains. There was also a widespread awareness and concern among teachers that girls were receiving messages from their family and social environment which contradicted the messages being given in the classroom. The All Girls' Counsellor quoted research

carried out in New Zealand which showed that parents were the most influential people in determining choices made by students. The head of the Social Studies department at the same school said:

> *Last year we realised that it wasn't the school which mattered with regard to jobs and information...it was parents. They're the ones who count. So, we decided to work with parents more. We get them here. We duplicate sheets and give work which has to be worked out with the parents at home. Some, of course, have another expectation of their daughters. They see her only in terms of having kids and being a housewife. We try to present alternatives to the parents as well as to the girls.*
> *(Fieldnotes, 5/2/86, p.52)*

Teachers at All Girls' High also attacked opposing messages coming from the media. One teacher told her Social Studies class about the conditioning they were receiving through: *"the Lady Di image of, you know, nice sweet marriage and so on and the images of "Happy Days" and rubbish like that you watch on T.V., and the indoctrination that comes from that area." (Fieldnotes, 3/10/86, p.1383).* Another Social Studies teacher from the same school made reference to the media and magazines the students read, and referred to peer groups where:

> *the pressure is on to be attractive to the opposite sex, and I think a lot of that means things like, if you have dirty hands, if your fingernails are always grimy because you've got that sort of job...nobody's going to like you.*
> *(Fieldnotes, 3/10/86, p.1375)*

While lessons observed at Co-Ed High as a rule made reference to the necessity of girls considering wider options, the issue was the subject of a concerted and thoroughly planned strategy at All Girls' High.

Teachers at this school used various ways to bring the process of "choice" to the level of conscious awareness, and hoped that in so doing, they would challenge the students to extend their occupational horizons. A video entitled *Rosie the Riveter* was shown to practically all the school to explain how women were able to do "male" jobs when a situation such as the outbreak of a war warranted it. Senior students were invited to attend a day-long workshop organised by the Department of Labour entitled "Women in Unusual Occupations." Role models for the students were also provided by getting female employers and employees to talk to

students during a Careers afternoon organised by the school Counsellor and Careers Adviser. Reference has been made in other contexts to the constant and consistent messages given about the subject by the principal at Assemblies, Parents' Evenings, in the School Bullettin, and by teachers in the classrooms. Posters, stickers, and other literature abounded to reinforce the message daily to the students. One of the teachers observed showed a video entitled *Free to be You* to her fifth form English class. A series of messages was given here, including one that challenged sex-stereotyping. The teacher later commented:

Ms Berne: *I think because it's a fairly consistent message, they are accepting it...[i.e.looking at wider occupational options]...But whether they are accepting it for themselves individually or not is another story...ehm...a lot of them are responding to it and are looking much wider, but even when we were talking in the class there were some who only saw themselves in the traditional range of jobs...as you saw yourself...That's why I showed them the video about choices.*

(Fieldnotes, 18/9/86, p.1197)

Inter-School Differences.

Similar messages were given by individual teachers at Co-Ed High, but with much less emphasis. Moreover, lessons observed there manifested different classroom dynamics which obstructed the transformative messages intended by the teacher. A case in point would be the Social Studies teacher who was discussing with his fourth form class the fact that in the past, occupational choice was determined by societal expectations dependent on the individual's class and gender. He asked:

Mr Roach: *What examples do we have today of a group of people in our society trying to break expectations?*

Brenda: *Women.*

Mr Roach: *Yes...the "Girls can do Anything" campaign. People had their minds set on what girls could and could not do.*

Conrad: *But girls can't do anything!*

Sylvana: *Yeah...Men too can't do anything! They can't have babies.*

Conrad: *Within a few years men will be able to be pregnant too.*

The class roars with laughter.

Mr Roach: *Settle down!...We can discuss this if you want to, but in an orderly way.*

Scott: *Women can't be in the "All Blacks"...and they can't box either.*

Patricia: *Yes we can! And what about the softball team?*

Tony: *Why can't girls stay in the kitchen?!*

Brenda: *Why can't men do that?*

Scott: *People are getting sick of hearing about the campaign so much...otherwise it would be O.K.*

Conrad: *Can't we have a conclusion that girls can't do anything, and boys can't do anything?*

Mr Roach: *You're getting to a point that is important...males and females should be allowed to try out and work at any occupation. No occupation should be exclusively male or female. That's what should be, not the way it is.*

Scott: *(to Brenda) If you can do anything, why not prove it? In the old days, women were quite happy staying at home.*

Brenda: *Women have been locked up in the house, and now that's starting to change, everybody's complaining!*
(Fieldnotes, 30/5/86, pp.778-79)

Even if such opposition to the message was occasionally made by the boys in jest, the fact remains that traditional prejudices against females surfaced more regularly and consistently in co-educational settings rather than in an all-girls' classroom.

Intra-School Differences.

Despite the strength of the feminist ethos at All Girls' High and to a lesser extent at Co-Ed High, some teachers gave a different message to female students in this regard. The Careers Adviser at the former school was not convinced of the message that "Girls can do Anything" (see page 272). Opposition to such messages was also noted at Co-Ed High, where on two different occasions technical teachers expressed their opinion to the researcher that the place of women was in the home. Male teachers occasionally gave a different message which set out to reinforce gender stereotypes. Such messages were reported by students rather than actually observed by the researcher. One Co-Ed fifth former said for instance:

Sheila: *One of my teachers thinks that women shouldn't be in the workforce...he's really sexist, and he just thinks women shouldn't be there. One day he said*

to the guys: "When you go out to work, the worst disadvantage is when the wife goes out to work too." And I said to him: "Your wife might feel the same." He got really shitty about it...he didn't like that.
(Fieldnotes, 2/10/86, p.1357)

[c] Class and the process of occupational choice.

There was only one direct reference in the classrooms observed, or textual material analysed, where the notion of "class" as a limiting factor on occupational choice was addressed. In this particular instance the Co-Ed High teacher told his fourth form Social Studies students that the limitation of class was no longer applicable to modern times. Anybody could aim for anything at all, and the model implied was therefore meritocratic. The teacher had given a handout to the students, with passages about *The Rural Labourer* to show how people from different classes lived in nineteenth century England.

Mr Roach: *What things influenced the jobs people got a hundred a fifty years ago? What factors pushed people into particular occupations or jobs?*

Jim: *If they're high up toffee nose or low-gutter snipes.*

Conrad: *That's social class.*

Mr Roach writes *SOCIAL CLASS* on the blackboard, and all the subsequent suggestions the students make.

Edwin: *"Parents" should be another heading, because there's a lot of average people, and some get high class jobs. So "Parents" is different from "Class". Some people can work their way up, even if their parents are poor.*

Conrad: *Poor people were really poor in the past, and rich people really rich...That's no longer true today...(looks at the teacher)...Or is it?*

Mr Roach doesn't answer the question. He looks at the blackboard, and having written *CLASS*, *EDUCATION* and *PARENTS* in three columns, said:

Mr Roach: *If we go back to 1836, that is a hundred and fifty years ago, we find that social class really determined your job.*

Conrad: *You couldn't be a lawyer if you came from the gutter.*

Mr Roach: *Yes. In 1836, social class did determine where you went. If you were from a particular social class, you were expected to take up certain jobs, your*

> *parents were expecting it from you, and other people expected it. These expectations made people think that they could only go into certain directions. But Edwin is right in that there were opportunities to advance. This very often depended on the parents, because often the parents got on a little better in their own class to give opportunities to their children...get them into a trade, such as shoe-making...and then moved from there to actually owning a shop, and expanding into that direction.*
>
> *(Fieldnotes, 30/5/86, pp.777-8)*

The predominant message given by Mr Roach was informed by a meritocratic model, where effort unlocks opportunity to move out of one's class. There was no analysis of class, or any questioning of why some jobs are "high" class and others "low". There is moreover an implication that class-boundaries no longer apply to the process of occupational choice. Despite these comments however, Mr Roach remains the only teacher to attempt to look at the class constraints.

Teachers from the other schools talked about class constraints outside the classroom, but generally the model was again meritocratic. One example is the All Girls' High Careers Adviser's approach:

> *R.S.: You were saying earlier that you had a case of a girl who's mother is a machinist, and that the girl will probably be a machinist herself. That sort of sounds like working class kids get working class jobs...Does that affect you in any way?*
>
> *Ms Tyler: Yes! Tremendously! I want to fight it as hard as I possibly can with every weapon at my command, and tell them: "You mustn't...Your life pattern is <u>your</u> life pattern, and you mustn't model it on someone else!" I tell them that they <u>can</u> achieve, but they have to work at school to achieve.*
>
> *(Fieldnotes, 26/11/86, p.1730)*

Ms Woods was aware that social class played an important part in defining and limiting "choice" of occupation. She noted that every year, a large number of her students aspired to jobs which were unskilled when they had the ability to get into occupational areas which were better paid and had better conditions of work. She noted that only one girl in the class the researcher was observing aimed at a high status career - and that girl came from a family where the father was a lawyer and where it was expected of her to go to University. She was not observed addressing the issue directly in class, though she spoke about it with the researcher during an interview, looking at a confluence of gender and class in the determination of occupational choice.

Ms Woods: *True, she is one of the more able students...at the same time there are other girls in that class who were quite able and they were picking jobs that were pretty mundane and ordinary,and they are actually capable of doing more difficult jobs...But they were opting for relatively a low choice. It seems that parents only expect of their children as much as they themselves have achieved in life. They don't seem to realise that their own children can do better than them. It was the same in my family. I was not expected to get School Cert, and when I got it, my grandmother, who was very working class, slapped my mother on the knees when she told her, and said: "Don't be ridiculous!"...And that was like: "You don't move outside your class."*
(Fieldnotes, 3/10/86, pp.1387-88)

[d] Ethnicity and the process of occupational choice.

All the teachers observed and/or interviewed were aware of the fact that Maori students aimed at a very restricted group of occupations. It has been shown, however, that Pakeha teachers, for various reasons, did not intend to give overt messages to their students about this issue - and data show that they carried their intention into the classroom. The resultant lacunae are not neutral - the absence of specific efforts to address the problem meant that racial stereotypes and prejudices were passively reinforced. Indeed, on various separate occasions at All Girls' High such prejudices were actively transmitted to students. One teacher told a Maori student that none of her race could do Maths (Fieldnotes, 10/4/86, p.576); another communicated surprise to a Maori student who said she wanted to go to University to study Archaeology (Fieldnotes, 17/7/86, p.979). At Co-Ed High, one could construe the school's efforts to create a bicultural atmosphere as a way of helping Maori students achieve, and therefore get into occupations of higher status.

Intra-School Differences.

Maori teachers, ethnicity and occupational choice.

Maori teachers at All Girls' and Co-Ed High, on the other hand, addressed the issue head-on. At All Girls' High for instance, the Maori teacher explained how Maori students seemed to be interested only in those occupations which their immediate family were associated with and that:

> *...they're kind of nervous to go outside of these areas. So, we could perhaps give them the opportunity to spend a day or days in different occupations in the community in an observing role so that they can have some idea of what these jobs are about...This during their normal schooling.*
> *(Fieldnotes, 21/10/86, p.1528)*

At Co-Ed High, both Ms Hine and Mr Ratu were concerned that Maori students "drifted" into unskilled work and unemployment, and were often attracted by short-term goals. They therefore endeavoured to encourage these students to aim for work which was more *"rewarding and permanent as some of the more skilled jobs tend to be." (Fieldnotes, 18/11/86, p.1699).* Maori teachers suggested various reasons why Maori students did not choose high-status jobs, among them the lack of role models, stereotyping, and a disadvantaged family background. As noted in a different context, Maori teachers were more ready than Pakeha teachers to move from a deficit model where Maori students were seen to be lacking motivation and aspiration. They therefore identified Pakeha structures - such as the labour market and the school - which operated against the interests of Maori students. One of the teachers suggested that Maori students did not to compete for better positions for cultural reasons - co-operation rather than competition is valued in Maoridom. He also suggested that the students didn't:

> *...want to put themselves in the position of attempting to go for a particular position knowing full well that in the long-run they could perhaps be refused, or some reason given for them not being accepted in that kind of job...So, rather than being put in the embarassing position like that they'd rather not set out aiming for anything that is not for them...So why bother.*
> *(Fieldnotes, 18/11/86, p.1700)*

Maori teachers were moreover more aware of the class location of many of the Maori students which acted as a constraint on the type of occupations they aimed for. One Co-Ed High Maori teacher felt that it was unrealistic to expect students whose parents were in unskilled jobs to aspire to become doctors or lawyers. She said:

> *Ms Hine: If you aren't there to say to your children: "Hey! I would like you to be such and such and I'll help you"...and all the money that needs to feed them and clothe them to send them to school...it's a battle. Those children might not know anything else, and to reach those standards, those levels, to be in that category of those sorts of jobs, it's beyond them.*
> *(Fieldnotes, 10/11/86, p.1646)*

Maori teachers explained their unceasing efforts to encourage Maori students to stay longer at school, and aim higher. One of these teachers explained that her greatest battle when it came to the occupational choice of Maori pupils was their low self-esteem. Unlike most of the comments made by Pakeha teachers however, she did not identify psychological factors which led to lack of self-esteem - rather she attributed it to the fact that:

> *They feel that they'll never make it anyway - whatever efforts they put into it. They need a lot of building and building and building, and it's very hard. So, it's a really long, hard grind...I feel that tomorrow is not going to fix it, you know. It's going to be a long process, a long thing...It's cruel.*
>
> *(Fieldnotes, 10/11/86, p.1643)*

Desite the daunting nature of the task at hand, Maori teachers at both All Girls' and Co-Ed High kept pushing and encouraging the Maori students and devised ways for helping them aim at a wider range, and a higher level of occupation. At Co-Ed High for instance, four Maori people from the Technical Institute were invited to speak to Maori students about apprenticeship openings. Mr Ratu said:

> *Mr Ratu:* *We've brought people from the outside world to speak to them and to tell them not to be satisfied with any job that comes up, but rather to aim their sights a bit higher, to get them into areas of occupation that's worth pursuing.*
>
> *(Fieldnotes, 18/11/86, p.1700)*

Summary.

It has been shown that teachers generally use a liberal model of occupational choice which does not adequately take into account in the realities of gender, class and ethnicity which limit and constrain "choice". It has been seen that it is only All Girls' High which attempts, in an organised and co-ordinated way, to transform prejudices and stereotypes held, and to intervene in a process where students experience a pattern of material and social constraints which precipitated their choices towards certain locations in the labour market. Little was seen to be done in any of the three schools studied to deal with similar processes with Maori students. Even less appeared to be done for students generally coming from low socio-economic groups. Students belonging to these ethnic and class cultures therefore continue to

experience job preference as a process of individual choices, even when it is through wider structural processes and the living meanings they are given that they take their places in the division of labour.

The following sections present data about students' reception, acceptance and contestation of messages given by teachers regarding occupational choice. Wider structural processes regulating this choice are highlighted.

7.3. STUDENTS AND THE PROCESS OF OCCUPATIONAL CHOICE.

INTRODUCTION.

This third major section presents data which show the sort of reception students gave their schools' and their teachers' messages about the process of occupational choice. Data again show that students are active participants in the negotiation of messages and meanings. They integrate different and contrasting messages from other sources and environments to construct their own ways of taking a place in specific sectors of a segmented labour market. Students were observed accepting, modifying and contesting messages they received at school, taking into account experiences which teachers rarely identified, let alone acknowledged and utilised in their pedagogical encounters. Such experiences had to do with the students' membership of groups identified by their class, gender and ethnicity.

The presentation of data is organised under the following headings:
[1] Students and the discourse of choice (Section 7.3.1.) and
[11] Students' reception, acceptance and contestation of messages (Section 7.3.2.).

7.3.1. STUDENTS AND THE DISCOURSE OF CHOICE.

Three propositions are explored. First, students construct their own model of occupational choice, a model which differs in various important details from the one presented generally by teachers. Second, the factors which influence students in their occupational

decision-making take into account the realities of labour market positions in a way which teachers fail to do. Third, by not taking into account the problematic nature of the concept "occupational choice", teachers (and a liberal model of occupational choice) passively reinforce a view that different positions in a segmented labour market - positions characterised by unequal rewards and conditions of work - are the result of individual choice rather than the result of wider structural processes. These propositions are explored and grounded in data in the following sections.

This first section looks at some of the factors which students identified as being important in their consideration of their occupational futures. These factors are presented in sequence, and it becomes apparent that [a] "personal liking" and "interest" is only one of the dimensions students take into account when considering jobs. Students were observed giving more importance to what are referred to here as: [b] "conditions of work", [c] "the opportunity structure", and [d] "experiences in the school". While this particular section shows that students emphasise aspects of occupational choice differently from teachers, and are thus modifying the latters' messages, later sections will deal with the variables of class, ethnicity and gender to demonstrate how these factors are experienced by students as interventions in targeting different places in a segmented labour market.

[a] Personal Liking.

Data show that students generally received and accepted their teachers' messages about thinking of jobs in terms of personal interest and liking. This was true across age, class, race, and gender. A non-academic fifth form student from All Boys' College said, for example, that he preferred to put up with school, even though he disliked it, so that his occupational options would remain open. (Fieldnotes, 15/4/86, p.609). Similarly, three Maori students from Co-Ed High said they preferred to return to school because the jobs they had found were boring. (Fieldnotes, 3/3/86, p.273). Students also referred directly to the steps in the process of occupational decision-making which teachers had suggested in their lessons. This was true both for academic and non-academic students. The following academic students from All

Girls' High recalled their Social Studies teacher's messages on "Work":

Renee: *We were told: "Pick those jobs you are really interested in doing"...and they [teachers] would talk to you about them.*

Nathalie: *In careers, we had this big thing about what we liked, what we enjoyed doing...and actually the emphasis in that was to do what you enjoy doing, what you're going to like, because it's no use doing a job you don't like. So I guess that's got something to do with it.*

(Fieldnotes, 25/9/86, p.1287)

Closely related to "personal interest" were "boredom" or fear of "routine". A sixth form student from Co-Ed High said she wanted to: *"do something that keeps my brain alert, you know...Instead of doing everyday chores, I'd rather do something that's got variation. I wouldn't want routine." (Fieldnotes, 4/11/86,* p.1589). A seventh former from the same school referred to her experience in a summer job which she hated: *"I took it because it came my way...It was so monotonous and mundane...so dreary! I'd hate to have a boring job!" (Fieldnotes, 28/2/86, p.263).*

Non-achieving students - who felt that they stood little chance of finding employment, and who were ready to grab any opportunity that came their way - also mentioned the importance of an element of interest and excitement in a job. One transition student from All Girls said: *"I wouldn't accept something really terrible, something I absolutely hated doing, like cleaning garbage off the street, or working in a factory. It's so boring! That would really annoy me." (Fieldnotes, 2/5/86, p.706).*

[b] **Conditions of Work.**

Data show that rather than choosing specific jobs related to personality, ability, or even interest, students looked for specific conditions of work in a job. "Security" was frequently referred to by students. Shawn, a fifth former from Co-Ed High, wanted a "structured job" which offered security for the future (Fieldnotes, 3/3/86, p.726). Melanie, a sixth former from All Girls, wanted a *"decent job...one that's permanent, not just...you come in today but not tomorrow." (Fieldnotes, 10/4/86, p.570).* Seventh form students from All Girls' High said they would not

leave school until they found a permanent job, a "career" - this was different from any other job:

Maryanne: *A career is something you've got to train for, and it sort of carries you through your life. But a job, you can go from job to job. You do different things and you don't need many qualifications. There's no security in temporary jobs.*
(Fieldnotes, 25/3/86, p.503)

[c] The Opportunity Structure.

The data show that students - whether they were high or low achievers at school - were not involved as much in making occupational choices as taking those jobs with which the opportunity structure presented them. Various students in all three schools spoke about occupational decisions within this framework saying that they would accept *"what comes up. Nowadays you'd be very lucky if you've got a job you like doing besides making money out of it." (Fieldnotes, 25/3/86, p.509).* A Co-Ed fourth former described how he had been offered a job he did not really like, but *"It's there, so you grab it." (Fieldnotes, 4/7/86, p.918).* A sixth former from All Girls' spoke of her own experience to illustrate how occupational futures depended more on opportunity than "choice":

This job came along with the bank, and it sounded like a good job. It took a lot of thinking about. I thought that if I was to leave school now and get the job at the bank then - rather than wait till the end of the year and then try to scratch around for a job and maybe ending up with just, say, a secretarial job or something - that if I took a job at the bank now, then it could give me a good head start.
(Fieldnotes, 26/2/86, p.231)

Similarly, a fifth former from All Boys' College spoke about an offer for a job he had from a work experience placement with an aviation firm.

R.S.: *Before you went there, had you thought of doing things like that as a job?*

Kevin: *No...It's quite pathetic really. I went there because it's quite close to my house, and I just didn't want to go right into the city. So I went there just to see what it's like, because it's nice and close and I could bike...and then this apprenticeship with them came up. So you grab it.*
(Fieldnotes, 21/3/86, p.485)

[d] Experiences at school.

It has been shown throughout this study that different students, identified by their class, gender and ethnicity, experienced schooling in different ways. These sorts of experiences were found to be an important factor in influencing students in their occupational decision-making. This extended the semantic field of "choice" much further than teachers were generally aware of. Such experiences made particular students feel attracted to the kinds of occupations which bore a resemblance to the activities carried out at school. Other groups of students were however repulsed. A case in point is a transition student from All Boys' College whose experience of "failure" at school led him to keep away from various occupations:

Paul: *Some people want to work in a bank, and I couldn't handle that...office jobs and all that. It's too much like school...when you leave school you want to do something that's really not like school...like having to write on paper, typing and all that. I want to do things with my hands. You see, most of us are not very good at school, but when we go out on work experience it's completely different.*
(Fieldnotes, 4/3/86, p.340)

In this case, a strong dislike towards something determined or channelled particular students towards certain jobs and away from others. Another feature relevant to the personal experience of schooling was the area of student relationships with particular teachers. A group of sixth and seventh formers from All Girls' High spoke at length about the influence of specific teachers. One said:

Katie: *School influences you a lot. You see, I'm good at science, and I wasn't sure whether I wanted to be an accountant or a scientist, and last year in accounting, my teacher was absolutely the worst thing that could have happened to my accounting. She couldn't relate to us and I couldn't relate to her. So because of that, my accounting just went downhill, and I just don't like it any more. My future job will probably have to do more with science than with accounting.*
(Fieldnotes, 15/4/86, p.617)

Summary.

Various factors have been identified to demonstrate the limitations of the liberal model of occupational choice utilised by teachers in guiding their students to different sectors of the labour market. Students have been shown to be capable of identifying various other elements neglected by teachers.

7.3.2. STUDENT RECEPTION, ACCEPTANCE AND CONTESTATION OF MESSAGES.

It has earlier been shown that teachers modified their liberal model of occupational choice to take account of a number of factors. These included the need for realism because of a student's perceived academic ability and because of decreasing opportunities due to a contracting labour market. Teachers also modified the liberal model to take account of - with different degrees of emphasis between schools - gender, ethnicity and very rarely class as factors in influencing choice. This section presents data which shows to what degree students' received, accepted and contested teachers' messages about occupational choice, particularly with reference to:
[a] the imperative of "realism" [b] gender [c] class and
[d] ethnicity.

Five propositions are explored in the following sections. First, students engage in forms of resistance to safeguard their perception of their own abilities, and to contest teachers' definitions of the appropriate. They therefore manifest a high degree of personal agency within a situation which has often been described in deterministic terms. Second, students are able to differentiate between, on the one hand a democratic discourse at school which urges young women to break free of occupational stereotypes and, on the other the intractability of the labour market in following principles of equality and justice. This differentiation leads them to accept - at an intellectual level - school discourse regarding equality of the sexes, and to reject it at the practical level of occupational decision-making. A third proposition follows from this, and states that the transformative potential of education is constrained and limited by the structural

inequalities and injustices perceived by students to be embedded in the economic base. Fourth, schools and teachers are largely unaware of the influence of class and ethnicity in structuring students' precipitation towards certain locations in the labour market. Fifth, Maori students suffer "hidden" injuries as they engage in the process of schooling - injuries which bear a resemblance to those suffered by Pakeha working class students, but which also go beyond them. They therefore carry a double burden (and in the case of Maori females, the triple burden of gender, class and ethnicity) which to a very large degree affects the "choices" they make at school.

[a] "Realism" and occupational choice.

Students often referred to the model of occupational choice they were presented with at school, and identified the sequence suggested by teachers as useful for decision-making. The fourth form Social Studies unit was recalled not only by fourth formers, but by students in all senior classes. They also generally remembered the emphasis teachers had placed on the need for "realism". The following excerpt from an interview with four academic fifth formers from All Girls' High is typical of many others in all three schools, but especially so at All Girls and Co-Ed High:

Raylene: *I've always been encouraged to do what I want to do, but teachers always say we've got to be realistic in our plans, not to set goals beyond our limits or below our limits.*

Kristen: *Yeah...Know yourself before. That's why when we had this big careers thing, we had a few pamphlets we had to fill out, and we had to describe things about ourselves...And so we really got to know ourselves. You know your limit, so you don't go beyond or below.*

(Fieldnotes, 25/9/86, p.1284)

There were fifteen cases where individual students disagreed vehemently with teacher defintions of the "realistic" and the "appropriate", and contested the messages given at school. Two sixth formers from All Girls expressed well the distrust of teachers as helpers in the consideration of future occupations. They said:

Val: *It's sort of like a challenge. Teachers come up to you and say: "Oh! What are you going to do when you leave school?...Oh! Are you?! You think you're going to be a teacher! Oh! Ha! Ha!" That's what they think. My sister was here a few years ago. She said she wanted to go to University, and they sort of discouraged her. "Oh! You're not going to be able to do that! Oh no!" And now they're sort of biting their tongues! "Where's Eileen?" "Second year University." "Oh...well... She's lucky." She thought: "Well, stuff them, I'm going to do it!" Any kid who listens to teachers!*

Haupiri: *In one subject I told the teacher what I wanted to do, and she looked at me as if to say: "You must be out of your mind!" I don't think she actually thinks much of me, and that made me feel so stink! I said I wanted to go to University and do a degree, and after that I said to myself: "I'll never be able to go"...And now I think to myself: "Well, stuff what she said! I'm going to do what I want!"*

Val: *Every time a teacher asks me what I want to be, I never tell them. I go: "I don't know yet" because I know I'll probably get the same reactions.*
(Fieldnotes, 6/10/86, pp.1409-10)

Further evidence of both acceptance and contestation of such teacher definitions of realism will be discussed in detail in the consideration of ethnicity and the process of occupational choice in later sections of this chapter.

[b] Gender and occupational choice.

Reception and Acceptance.

It has been shown that messages given at school regarding the influence of gender on the "choice" of occupations were predominantly of the type that encouraged females to aim outside and beyond the traditional female jobs. Such messages were stronger and more consistent at All Girls than at Co-Ed High, but both schools worked to transform attitudes which students absorbed from other environments. Students consistently reported their schools' efforts, and were able to single out and criticise any teacher who gave contradictory messages regarding choice of jobs for females (Fieldnotes, 2/10/86, p.1357). Students even protested about curriculum subjects which they felt reinforced traditional roles. On one occasion, a Social Studies teacher was presenting

the different subject options available for fourth formers at All Girls' High. When the teacher mentioned a home economics type subject entitled "Design for Living", one student shouted out *"It shows you how to be a good housewife. That's so anti-feminism!" (Fieldnotes, 7/8/86, p.1097).*

Most students were observed accepting the messages given by schools in this regard, an acceptance which became more pronounced among senior students at both Co-Ed and All Girls' High - an indication that the schools' messages had affected change. Students were able to penetrate the discourse of "choice" and to argue that sex-stereotyping rather than individual decisions led women to gravitate towards specific sorts of occupations. They contrasted the messages they received at school with those they received at home and in other environments, and often opted for the former. They felt that while people they knew outside the school *"put them down"* when they expressed a wish to *"join the army or do things which guys usually do"*, teachers offered them a lot of encouragement (Fieldnotes, 15/4/86, p.614). Students felt that teachers' messages had *"changed my attitudes a bit, in how women can be abused in some sorts of jobs, and not being able to get into certain jobs...It's made me sort of more independent rather than say: 'Oh! I'll be a housewife and nothing else'". (Fieldnotes, 24/7/86, p.1007). The following comments by senior students from All Girls are typical of many others:*

Renee: *A lot of the time teachers are encouraging us to do more way out things. They really tell us about jobs that aren't traditional, and the main point of it is that some girls might be afraid to ask about them or don't actually realise that they'd like that job because they never thought they could do something like that.*

Raylene: *Yeah...They've been sort of opening new doors, saying "So what if guys have traditionally done this?! You are capable of it too. If you want to do it, go ahead and do it!"*

(Fieldnotes,25/9/86, p.1285)

Students mentioned that their parents had felt encouraged by the school to stand by them when they made decisions which led them towards traditionally male jobs:

> *My parents went to see Ms Wyatt because they were concerned that I wanted to do accountancy, and she said that was really good because I was breaking*

> *into a male-dominated area. So, they were reassured.*
>
> *(Fieldnotes, 25/3/86, p.503)*

Contestation.

There were two sorts of contestation observed on the part of female students of messages about liberation from gender stereotypes. The first was related to a decision on the part of some students - generally junior ones - to adhere to a traditional image of womanhood. After a series of lessons by an All Girls' High English teacher - lessons characterised by a strong challenge to the traditional roles forced on women by society - one fifth former leaned over in the classroom and told the researcher seated next to her:

> *I don't like it when she tries to force us and put so much pressure on us to make us give up traditional roles. I think women should care for their kids instead of leaving them at day-care centres. I wrote that down. She probably won't like that, but I don't care!*
>
> *(Fieldnotes, 17/7/86, p.942)*

Similarly, fifth form students from the same school felt that their teachers were *"always on about how women can do men's jobs nowadays...sometimes it's stupid. They go on and on about it. They just thrash it!" (Fieldnotes, 20/8/86, p.1162).* A second type of contestation was dependent on a variety of factors which are considered in the following section. All of them are related to a common theme, namely the perception by students that an intellectual adherence to democratic and progressive ideals does not necessarily change discrimination against women in the society.

Variables intervening in the reception of messages.

A number of factors were identified acting as variables intervening between the transformative messages given by teachers at All Girls and Co-Ed High, and the eventual reception given to those messages by students. These variables are explored here under the headings of [i] parents [ii] general social environment [iii] experiences at work [iv] students' perceptions of openings in non-traditional areas and [v] confluence of gender, ethnicity and class. Once

these intervening variables have been described, students' actual reception of teachers' transformative messages is explored in terms of the final decisions they make as young women in aiming for particular places in the labour market.

[i] Parents.

Students reported various cases where parents intervened directly to curtail occupational choices. A fifth form working-class student at Co-Ed High said for instance:

Paula: *I wanted to be a truck-driver, but dad said no because it's too rough. But I don't believe that's right! Though women are not as strong physically, they're stronger mentally. I reckon a woman would be a better mechanic than a man.*

(Fieldnotes, 2/10/86, p.1364)

Parents' interventions took the form of both direct and indirect messages. Academic fifth formers from All Girls for instance reveal the way fathers tend to constrain females in the household to traditional roles, even when overtly they might be giving non-sexist messages.

Judy: *My dad for example...It's fine for his daughter to aim for whatever career she wants to get, and he says "Go for it!" But, like with mum, especially when she started working, he did not want her to work at all. It's just because they needed the money...deep down he doesn't like the idea of mum working. But he's sort of overcome it and swallowed his pride, you know. Mum's happier than she's been for ages.*

(Fieldnotes, 24/9/86, p.1275)

Mothers too constrained "choice" for their daughters in other ways. A fifth form student from All Girls' High spoke of the way her mother was not happy when she studied hard. She said:

Tania: *My mother says I study too much. She says I'll become a social reject...She's afraid I'm spending too much time with books, though I don't think I am.*

(Fieldnotes, 24/9/86, p.1277)

Although this was a solitary example, it is not inconceivable that parental expectations of how much study was appropriate differed according to the gender of their children. In other words, the demands of being sociable, a prerequisite for meeting boys and marrying, might be considered to be more pressing for girls than for boys by their parents.

[ii] General social environment.

This variable encompasses various different factors including media and peer pressure which combine together to reinforce traditionally female occupational choices among students. These factors therefore contradict and limit the transformative messages given by the school. Fifth form All Girls' students spoke of their own experience of male peer pressure, and one of them said:

Judy: *A lot of guys I know, they'll claim not to be sexist, but really, when it comes down to it, they wouldn't like to see their wives doing better than them, or getting better marks...Or even if you're just the girlfriend, they don't like the thought of you being brighter than them. My ex-boyfriend told me: "Oh! I could never marry a genius like you!" I don't see myself as a genius, but I really think he would get touchy seeing a woman doing better than him. It's a bit of the old ego there, and I've got friends who wouldn't perhaps mind their girlfriends doing better, but once they got married, they would want their wife to stay at home and look after them...So their job, once they're married, is to stay in that home.*

(Fieldnotes, 24/9/86, p.1275)

While, as will be shown later on, the extent of such social pressures depended on a confluence of a number of factors which included class and ethnicity, female students who came from different socio-economic and ethnic groups experienced similar obstacles to constrain their "choice" of occupations. In other words, gender structured experiences to an extent which went beyond class and ethnicity. The following interview with fifth form students - one from a working class and the other from a middle class background and both from All Girls' High - reveals some of the obstacles encountered by both:

Judy: *Other people's thinking acts as a sort of obstacle... like some say: "Oh!...You wouldn't be very good at that!"...or: "That wouldn't suit you!" That can often be an obstruction. Parents say that sometimes.*

Vicky: *For me, what put me off was the fact that there were so few women doing what I wanted to do. I wanted to become an accountant, but it turned out there was a very small percentage of females as accountants, and that really shocked me. So I thought, I naturally like accounting, so that would be a good job, and I didn't think of any setbacks like being female or anything like that would hold me back.*

(Fieldnotes, 24/9/86, p.1274)

Female students often expressed an anxiety about moving into non-traditional areas. They were aware of the extent of chauvinism they would have to put up with, and mentioned this as a specific factor which affected their occupational decision-making. Academic fifth formers from All Girls' High described such anxieties:

Renee: *I think one thing which will always hassle us is male chauvinism. Wherever we go there's always going to be a hint of it, if not as strong as it used to be, it will always be there. I know because I'd really like to be a lawyer, and I know that if I did that, then there'll definitely be chauvinism in that, and with clients...You decide to be a barrister and you go to court and maybe you have to represent someone who's convicted of being a rapist, and you'll get hassled.*

R.S.: *Would the males you know socially put obstacles in your occupational choices then?*

Raylene: *It depends on their background. If you've been brought up in a home where the man is the head of the house, and the female does the housework...bla bla bla...and it also depends on how stable their job is, because a lot of the time if one feels anxious about the job...*

Renee: *As long as the male has got the stable job, then the female can have a job for her own personal development and stuff...otherwise it's sort of a bit of a threat to his ego. Guys have this ego thing eh!*

(Fieldnotes, 25/9/86, pp.1283-4)

Some of this male chauvinism was reflected in the school. Female students often described their experience of male pressure in co-educational settings especially when, as if rehearsing possible occupational choices, they took technical subjects, a traditionally male scholastic domain. Males were reported by female students to influence them heavily in dropping out of these technical options. The following excerpt from an interview with fifth form Co-Ed students is typical of others.

Mandy: *Oh! I've done woodwork and metalwork. We've done a bit of those, and now that I've tried it, I know that I don't like it.*

Tracie: *When you did something better than the boys, they wouldn't say anything, but when you mucked it up, they'd be laughing at us like anything, saying "Typical females!"*

(Fieldnotes, 9/10/86, p.1462)

[iii] Experiences at work.

Another form of social pressure which intervened in the acceptance of messages given by the school concerned female students' experience of sex-stereotyping in their weekend, casual and part-time work. These experiences served as a powerful reminder of the female's stereotyped role in society, and particularly at work. One All Girls' fifth former spoke of her experiences as a "check-out" girl at a supermarket and said:

> *Most of the guys are at the rear of the store, packing shelves and bringing trolleys in, and the girls are usually at the front, at the check-out controls. There are two guys being trained as checkout operators though, but all the guys think it's ultra cissy to become a checkout operator. There's two at the moment and they get their hassles.*
>
> *(Fieldnotes, 9/10/86, p.1458)*

Another group of fifth and sixth formers from the same school spoke at length about their experience of a sexist workplace, this time at another supermarket. The excerpt which follows picks up the interview at the point where they are describing their jobs as checkout operators. While some of their comments arise out of their status as part time workers, others are directly relevant to the variable of gender and the subordinate position of women at work.

Janice: *When you're a checkout operator, you end up on your toes all the time and it's really easy to make a mistake. You end up so dizzy.*

Sandra: *It would be good if you could move around and do different things.*

Ruth: *Yeah...It would be good to circulate...It's not as boring if you sometimes go to the meat section or the produce, or putting the stuff on the shelves so you can price them.*

Meg: *I reckon the boys should get trained at checkouts, and so everybody has a turn.*

Janice: *The males get an easy job when you think about it!*

Therese: *You reckon! I am jealous!*

Janice: *As I said to Molly last night: "Do the trolleys need doing?" And she said "Oh yes, they do." And I said: "Can I go and do them?" And she says "No. I'll get one of the boys to do that."*

R.S.: *Boys seem to get the best jobs then?...*

Rudy: *That's because they don't have to deal with the customers. They're doing the physical jobs.*

Ruth: *They get the real easy jobs like getting the bags and bringing in the trolleys, and a lot of people would think: "Oh! They're terrible jobs...I would hate to do that!"*

Meg: *Before the boys came, Mavis let me do the trolleys and carry the bags.*

Sandra: *They think you're sort of fragile little things, like we can't carry things.*

Rudy: *Perhaps we're at the checkout because they know we're hard workers...*

Meg: *But they should give us a chance to do something else because it is so boring! You're stuck inside all day long, and you can't even get some fresh air! And the hours just drag!*

(Fieldnotes, 31/10/86, pp.1579-80)

[iv] Students' perceptions of openings in the non-traditional areas.

This was identified as an important intervening variable in that the young women's experiences in the labour market showed them that while sex-stereoyping might be challenged at school, the labour market was less tractable. This realisation was higlighted by students during various different interviews, and was dramatically brought home to both students and researcher on one particular occasion. A large group of students from All Girls' High were taken by the Counsellor and the Careers Adviser for a fieldtrip to a "Skillympics" fieldshow. The management had advertised the fieldshow with schools, promoting it as an opportunity for students to watch various apprentices at work and to ask questions about the various apprenticeships available. A marquee was also set up with a Department of Labour official distributing stickers and information regarding the "Women can do Anything" campaign. As the project seemed to reinforce the ethos of the school, the principal encouraged students to attend, paying for the bus fees from school funds. However, the disappointment of the students and teachers accompanying them was great when they discovered that practically all the apprentices in the various marquees were male. When various groups of the students present were interviewed, they expressed their dismay:

Helen: *They're all males! You get all those stickers "Girls can do Anything", and yet wherever you go it's males.*

Frieda: *Yeah...and the only girls you find are apprentices in kitchens and with sewing machines...the usual stereotypes.*

R.S.: *How do you feel about that?*

Frieda: *Well, I feel left out and quite angry really!*

(Fieldnotes, 7/3/86, p.377)

A group of them actually went to protest in the Manager's office, who apologised and agreed that their complaint was justified. The incident shows that while the messages the girls were receiving at school had been accepted, there were other powerful messages in the way the labour force was structured which in many ways defeated the transformative potential of the school. Girls realised that while they might agree with the idea of widening their occupational options, society was there to limit and constrain those choices, and finally reproduce the stereotypes.

[v] Confluence of gender, ethnicity and class.

In thinking about occupational choices and futures, girls were seen to be influenced by a confluence of factors which included their own gender, race and class. Working class females, and especially those who were Maori, frequently mentioned occupational futures as controlled and defined by a male partner's wishes. In the following interview, a group of Pakeha Co-Ed High girls consider themselves and their future jobs as secondary to male demands:

Mandy: *I'd like to be able to go on working after I've had my children. There's a teacher at this school whose husband stays at home and looks after the baby.*

Joanne: *It depends what husband you marry though. If he's a real brute!...*

Elaine: *Or he might not be the kind cut out to stay at home.*

Joanne: *It's what you expect. You go to school, you leave, you get a job, you get married, you have your kids, and you stop work.*

(Fieldnotes, 9/10/86, p.1460)

A life and a career defined by a male seemed to be especially real for Maori females. In this case, ethnic and class cultures reinforced each other to place women in a position subordinate to males. A fifth form Maori girl from Co-Ed High said:

April: *I'd like to go into the Army. I want to do a man's job. I can't stand female jobs, sitting in the house all day. I want to get out and try to achieve something...like my brother, be a mechanic. I've always been a tom-boy. And I play basket-ball too, and my family thinks that's too posh. They go: "Oh! Boys are supposed to play that game!" I play rugby too, boys' games, and they go: "Oh! You can't hack it!"...And we do hack it.*

Roimata: *Maori males can be so sexist! They just want us to work for them! They want their tea to be prepared when they come back...a big feed ready for them!*
(Fieldnotes, 2/10/86, p.1370)

Another fifth form Maori girl from the same school expressed anxieties which, once again, were not observed in Pakeha working class girls. In this case, the student almost felt guilty for being attracted to traditionally-male roles:

Te Huia: *I like pulling things apart and then trying to put them together again. It's like a hobby kind of...But I wouldn't want to do it as a job. It's kind of we're taking all the guys' jobs and then they're the ones who have to support the family.*
(Fieldnotes, 29/9/86, p.1331)

What girls finally choose as occupations.

Despite the strength of the messages given consistently by two of the schools in this study, All Girls' High particularly, the intervening variables as noted above were ultimately effective in persuading girls to "choose" traditionally female occupations. The principal complained that while students chose traditionally male subjects at school, their final choice of occupation was consistently in the traditionally female areas (Fieldnotes, 8/10/86, p.1432). The difference in decisions regarding subjects and occupations indicates an important distinction students made between school life and working life - the former promoted the rights of women, while in the latter principles other than fairness and democracy regulated its hiring practices. Even students who chose traditionally male technical subjects at All Girls' High did so because they thought of the subjects as "interesting" and "fun". An interview with fifth form girls in the workshop technology class revealed that there was not a single student who was aiming to take up carpentry or metalwork as an occupation (Fieldnotes, 2/7/86, p.895).

Males and occupational choice.

A group which has been conspicuously absent in this discussion about the influence of gender on occupational choice are males. While a number of messages were observed being given to female students at both Co-Ed and All Girls' High to challenge traditional stereotypes, practically none were given to male students at either Co-Ed High or All Boys' College. This omission in itself constitutes a powerful message, and both teachers and students from All Girls' High made comment to the effect that boys were being left behind in this area: *"they are not being challenged about the things that are happening around them. They are going to be bewildered, and they're feeling so threatened they are retreating instead of facing the issue." (Fieldnotes, 18/9/86, p.1199).* Male students interviewed often expressed attitudes which were much less flexible in considering non-traditional work. The following comments are typical of many others. A fifth former from All Boys' College felt that: *"Most men tend to think that they've got to get a hard job, like brick-laying or concrete, and the women should be a secretary or in a shop. Those are women's jobs, and I wouldn't stand doing that!" (Fieldnotes, 2/10/86, p.1364).* Another fifth form student from Co-Ed High said: *"You'd feel funny if you took a girl's job...you'd just feel funny, because you're like a girl. Like this fellow was sewing, and everybody was laughing and they were going: "You're a poufta man! You're a poufta!" (Fieldnotes, 29/9/86, p.1331).*

[c] Class and occupational choice.

Students did not identify any messages coming from the school which made the link between class and occupational choice. They did however point out to the researcher on various occasions that class was a structuring influence. In point of fact, students did not use the word "class" or the term "socio-economic background" but rather referred to "family background" and "parents". A seventh former from Co-Ed High said: *"My parents have influenced me a lot, and in subtle ways. You see, my father is a lecturer at University, and it was always expected I would go to University. They didn't force me...it's just sort of natural that I would go to*

University. (Fieldnotes, 28/2/86, p.264). A sixth former from All Boys' College said: *"My sister is doing law, my uncle is a lawyer and the family knows all about it really. We want to start a firm for ourselves...so I have decided to become a lawyer too." (Fieldnotes, 3/3/86, p.320).*

Students referred to various ways in which parental background acted as a shaper of occupational choice. Working class students expressed a desire to move away from the sorts of "boring" jobs their parents had. One Maori girl said: *"I've been influenced by my parents in looking at jobs I might want to do...but I've been influenced in a sort of opposite way. I want to be what they are not. I don't want to be what they are." (Fieldnotes, 10/4/86, p.579).* However, in their attempt to move away from the labour market locations they saw their parents struggling in, working class students described a process of alienation which was not experienced by other students, and which was not recognised or addressed by any of the teachers observed. A female seventh former from Co-Ed High expressed well the sorts of problems working class students face:

> *I come from an area where a person who goes to University...my goodness! He's a freak! I mean, that just doesn't happen. I mean, everybody leaves school, they get a job, they get married, they have kids, full stop! If they're lucky they get a job!...I get really scared sometimes, because I think by going to University, doing what I really want to do, I'm alienating myself from the people I really want to be with...ehm...my family just doesn't understand me and my ambitions. I don't know...They think differently, and all my friends don't understand my ambitions either...you know...I've got all these ideas about what I'd like to be, what I'd like to do, and yet I'm scared that even if I start on the track of doing it, I'm just not going to be able to communicate with them. Even now I'm having problems. I'm just alienating myself from them. I'm not sure I want that at all.*
>
> *(Fieldnotes, 10/10/86, p.1475)*

Data show that there were other factors related to class which imposed barriers or opened doors to influence occupational choice. An important one refers to the pressure exerted by parents from lower socio-economic backgrounds on their children to leave school and make a financial contribution to the family income. This was often to the detriment of further education and hence of occupational futures. There were over fifteen references to this

sort of pressure on students, and most of them came from Co-Ed and All Girls' High. Any notion of "choice" of occupations as presented by teachers in their lessons was, for these students, totally irrelevant.

[d] Ethnicity and the process of occupational choice.

Various factors were seen to influence the precipitation of Maori students towards specific areas within (and outside) a segmented labour market. There is ample evidence to show that these students did not use the liberal model offered by teachers, and did not make choices by trying to match their interests and abilities with jobs available. The various factors influencing Maori students are described under the following two headings:

[i] Structural and macro determinants.

[ii] Classroom and school processes: i.e. low expectations from Maori students on the part of Pakeha teachers, Pakeha students, and Maori students themselves.

A distinction needs to be drawn between ethno-cultural features influencing choice - that is the fact of "being Maori" - as opposed to "being seen to be Maori". In this particular section consideration of the data relevant to the latter is explored. Reference is made to Chapter 5 above however, where data suggested that Maori students have a different approach to work (see page 234). Maori students were generally found to give a lower priority to work than their Pakeha school mates, and they also did not share the latter's conception of the hierarchical status of different jobs. Such attitudes stemming from cultural beliefs have the potential for affecting occupational choice, in that values other than ambition, money-making and self-fulfilment motivate the particular direction Maori students take. Maori teachers for instance often mentioned the fact that their students preferred to go for jobs where work was on a co-operative rather than competitive basis (Fieldnotes, 18/11/86, p.1699) and where they would be working with predominantly Maori co-workers (Fieldnotes, 7/10/86, p.1422). "Being Maori" often also meant "being working class", and the same constraints described for working class students above therefore applied to many of the Maori students interviewed. However, while it is true that a confluence of

factors explains more explictly how Maori students made their "choices", it is also true that ethnicity, by itself, accounted for a number of important factors influencing the particular "choices" Maori students made. In other words, the psychological injuries suffered by students from ethnic groups were in some ways similar to, but were greater than those suffered by working class students in schools. The causes of some of these injuries are explored below.

[i] Structural and macro determinants.

Willis (1977) showed us a decade ago how "working class kids get working class jobs." He skilfully portrayed a process whereby the "Lads'" resistance to the school culture finally reproduced the very attitudes which located them firmly in their class positions in manual labour. That process also applies to Maori students as they experienced monocultural schooling as described in this study. The counter-culture they created bears a resemblance to the sort of resistance to schooling Willis described, and data show that occupational "choice" was delimited by these sub-cultural experiences in the school.

The following excerpts taken from an interview with Maori fifth and sixth form students in their culture room, are typical of many others recorded throughout 1986. They suggest some explanations why Maori students "fall by the wayside" at school, with subsequent damage to their occupational and life opportunities. It also shows how students experience school life differently, and these experiences, in a very real sense, determine futures. While occasionally this determination is experienced in the form of a personal choice, there is also a "penetration" at more than a "partial" level (Willis, 1977) of the forms of structural and symbolic violence perpetrated by the system. In this regard, as in others, Maori student resistance is different from that of Willis' working class "Lads". There is an ethnic-consciousness if not a class-consiousness which unites Maori students together - a unity which, because of the lack of class-consiousness in New Zealand, cannot be shared and articulated in the same way by Pakeha working class students. Only the salient passages have been highlighted from a two-hour long discussion.

Alice: *In class, it's the Pakeha culture which is the stronger.*

Tara: *Yeah...They know more about their culture than we probably would, and I would say that the majority of Maori students are slower than European students. So, you're taking longer to learn...yeah...it's true, because the teachers address their teaching more to those who are bright up here* (touches her forehead) *while you've got a lot of your Maori students suffering down here.*

(Fieldnotes, 30/5/86, p.759)

Alice: *Being Maori, we get a lot of racist comments. Sure, we call each other "Blacks" and "Nig nogs" and stuff like that, but we just mean it in a joking way. But you might be sitting there and somebody goes: "Oh! Maoris are just thick!" and stuff like that, and so you reply: "And you're just a maggot from the pot."* (They laugh). *And the way they look at you eh! They give you dirty looks...and the way they talk behind your back and you can hear them.*

Tara: *I think Maoris are much more cheerful, and quite caring, and when you see your friend you go and have a long yak with her. We know we'll get nowhere, but it's just the way we like to yak, tell each other our problems and keep it in the family sort of thing.*

Alice: *Like me...I've got to get up and have a roam around the class...I can't really sit down for long...be Maori.* (They laugh).

Tara: *Yeah...If the class were a bit more carefree, we would do better I reckon. We'd do some learning, we'd buckle down. Like swearing...a lot of girls were brought up to swear and teachers go really angry. It's a part of the language I reckon, so you should be able to speak it!* (They laugh). *It's the only way to express yourself sometimes, and teachers just think that you're saying it to be cool and to be heard, but you're not. You're really angry and you feel frustrated, and that's the way to express myself!*

Alice: *To them it's disgusting language, and for us it's a normal way of expression...of expressing anger.*

Tara: *When you get told off, you let it all out, you let every little thing out, and you can get really stuck into that teacher if you get told off for something.*

Alice: *Like last year...we had good fun, locking the teacher in the room.* (They roar with laughter). *Poor thing! She nearly had a heart attack! That was really funny. We were all standing up on the benches laughing our heads off!*

(Fieldnotes, 30/5/86, p.766)

One girl mentioned "Maori talk":

R.S.: *What's "Maori talk"?*

Alice: *Oh! Talking ruggedly...Talking not real.* (She makes a guttural sound)*...You know, people say that's a Maori way of talking..."Hey! Come here you bloody nigger!"* (They laugh)*...Like if you go to the Marae you get: "You bloody kids! I'll boot your ass out of here!" That's how we're talked to and you talk naturally like that. But if you use that in class, you're out! Like we say "Shit!" not "I beg your pardon?"* (Everybody laughs). *And not "May I go to the toilet?"...we go "May I go to the bog Miss?" During Maths the teacher said "No!" and I said "If you don't let me go I'll piss in my pants!"* (They roar).

(Fieldnotes, 30/5/86, p.772)

They did get on with some Pakeha students, often those who shared similar socio-economic backgrounds.

Tara: *But then you get some who are really toe rags!* (They laugh). *They have competitions against Maoris flapping rich things in front of your face, and then you pinch it to beat them!* (They roar). *You don't buy it...Like in the third form there was this girl who had a really flash pen and I wanted it, so I went and pinched one* (they roar again)*...because your parents aren't going to give you $60 to buy a little pen. So, you go to the shop and pinch it.*

Alice: *Yeah!* (laughing). *Like I pinched these tights. We steal the most crazy, silly, little things. It's quite fun, till you get caught!*

(Fieldnotes, 30/5/86, p.770)

They also found a way to work the system in their favour:

Tara: *If I don't like class, I find an excuse to go and see one of our deans, and just tell her a load of lies, saying: "Oh! I heard so and so is going to do this..." just to get out of class. Or I go and lie to teachers so that I don't have to go to a class, and when it comes to the point where you have to explain where you are, you just say: "Oh!...So and so," and they don't check up, so that's allright!*

(Fieldnotes, 30/5/86, p.771)

This sort of sub-culture created its own bonds and loyalties, so that Pakeha students often noted peer pressure among Maori students not to invest in school work: *"...for them it's not macho to do well in class. They say: 'Hey man! You've done your homework! You're stupid! You're square!' There is a lot of peer pressure." (Fieldnotes, 2/7/86, p.898).*

Against this backdrop of cultural and class difference, it is not surprising that these Maori students produced a counter-culture to assert themselves against the school system, which they saw as alien and "Pakehafied". Their resistance strategies, assertive and

vibrant, are certainly not reminiscent of the passive kind which usually characterises accounts of female student resistance (see *inter alia* Measor, 1984). This culture production might be seen to be pathological, delinquent even, but such definitions simply miss the realities of students as lived out in an environment where their own meanings and experiences are neither recognised nor appropriated in the pedagogical encounter.

On the other hand, it is easy to appreciate how these forms of resistance often work, in the long run, against Maori students' "best" interest (if we accept that success in a Pakeha system is indeed an ideal goal). This anti-school culture - a way to affirm class and ethnic identity in the face of a monolithic, monocultural establishment - contains not only elements of strength and power, but also, at a deeper level, an element of self-damnation. In their rejection of intellectual labour, these students *"in the end, do the work of bringing about the future that others have mapped out for them." (Willis, 1977, p.198).* As the students themselves said about their reactions to schooling:

Tara: *But that gets us nowhere I reckon eh!*

Alice: *While on the streets we'll go: "Remember school? The laughs we had in our school days, the young days?!"*

(Fieldnotes, 30/5/86, p.766)

[ii] Classroom/school processes determining occupational choices.

Various processes were observed inside and outside the classrooms which led Maori students to consider only a certain range of occupational options as appropriate or possible for themselves. These processes concern the low expectations Pakeha teachers and students had of Maori students. The latter were observed generally assimilating such expectations as appropriate for themselves.

Teachers' low expectations.

Data show that teachers consistently expected Maori students to achieve less than Pakeha students did - whether this achievement was at school or in the workforce. Such expectations were moreover transmitted in various ways to students. At All Girls' High for instance, a group of sixth form Maori girls spoke about how they

received - and accepted as well as contested - Pakeha teachers' and students' low expectations of Maori students in terms of occupational futures. They said:

Rose: *Our teacher was having a talk with us about what we'd like to do when we grow up, and I was the only Maori in my class, and when the teacher asked me I said I wanted to do Management and Accounting, or perhaps Archaeology...And she looked at me as if to say, you know: "You guys don't do that sort of stuff!" And all the class just stared at me and asked: "Hey Rose! Do you really want to do that? Maoris don't do that!" And I just got really wild and I said "Up yours!"*

Melanie: *I think that's what makes Maori teenagers want to drop school, not be what they want...because people just keep putting them down all the time.*

R.S.: *How does that affect you? Do you work less or more?*

Rose: *I want to prove to them that I can be what I want to be...But then they just rub it in all the time. I just get so hacked off with it...just can't be stuffed.*

R.S.: *Do you give up?*

Therese: *Yeah...*

Rose: *I give up, but not totally. I still want...I just get sick of them, so I stuff them and enter into my own world. I just do what I want, how I want.*

R.S.: *So, if you don't become an Accountant or an Archeologist, would you fault them or youself?*

Rose: *I think a bit of both...I want to be, so I am able.*

R.S.: *What about you others?*

Therese: *You'll probably laugh, but ever since I was little, I always had this strong desire to be a criminal defence lawyer. I always wanted to do it.*

R.S.: *Why should I laugh?*

Therese: *Because, you know, Maoris are considered to be pretty dumb, you know. It's a pretty high class job!*

R.S.: *And Maoris and high class don't go together?*

Therese: *Not really!*

R.S.: *Would Maori and low class go together?*

Therese: *Seems to be these days.*

R.S.: *What's low class?*

Therese: *Just...They seem to all be city council workers, cleaners and all that.*

(Fieldnotes, 10/4/86, pp.576-8)

This excerpt reveals a number of themes regarding the influences bearing on the occupational choice of Maori students. The latter are aware and sensitive to the limits powerful people like teachers set on them. They are also aware that they have very few Maori role models who can act as an encouragement to them to reach higher. Moreover, there are moments where resistance to school definitions of student futures hovers on the brink of reproduction or transformation, as is evident in Rose's account above. Such incidents came up eleven times in interviews, with students - both Pakeha and Maori - saying that

> *Some teachers are really surprised when a Maori says something like: "I want to be a lawyer." And kids crack up laughing too, and say "Ha! Ha! A Maori become a lawyer!" Lots of people around them put them down all the time...even at school...There was a calculator stolen the other day, and the teacher looked first in the bags of the Maori students!"*
>
> *(Fieldnotes, 20/8/86, p.1178)*

A fifth form Maori girl from the same school said: *"If we had to say to a teacher: 'I want to be a doctor'...They'd die of shock! They wouldn't believe a word of it. They'd be stunned. They couldn't imagine it." (Fieldnotes, 30/5/86, p.764).* Such incidents were not confined to All Girls' High. Despite the bicultural emphasis at Co-Ed High, similar processes were seen at work there. A group of Pakeha and Maori fourth formers described how a teacher had said, looking at a group of Maoris, that they were not going to pass Maths at the School Certificate level. One of the students contested the teacher's message:

Hariaka: *I said to her: "How do you know? It depends on how well I study and all that." And then she goes: "You might as well just forget about it now." And I turn to look at the class and I see that almost all of them were Maoris. My form teacher heard about it and he actually talked to her and said: "You've got no right to come and talk in class and tell my kids what's going to happen to them when they get older!" And he said to her: "That's why they have no hope in the world. That's why there's so much trouble at school, because nobody understands them."*

(Fieldnotes, 17/7/86, p.979)

Low expectations from Pakeha students.

Various classroom and interview interactions support the proposition that occupational choices made by Maori students were often defined by expectation not only of Pakeha teachers, but also of Pakeha students. Indeed, in many of the excerpts quoted above, Pakeha teachers and students seem to collaborate in discouraging Maori students from aspiring to certain careers. The following interview with a group of fifth formers from Co-Ed High illustrates other processes where Pakeha students defined what was "appropriate" for Maori students. Brendan is Maori, the rest are Pakeha students:

R.S.: *I was talking to a group of Maori students, and one of them said she wanted to be a lawyer or a doctor...*

Brendan whistles in amazement.

R.S.: *Why are you so surprised?*

Brendan: *Oh...if a mate of yours said that, you'd laugh, because I've never seen a Maori doctor.*

Andrea: *(laughing aloud) That would be quite funny actually!*

Kylie: *The only time I saw a Maori doctor was on* "Country G.P." *on T.V.*

R.S.: *Could a Maori become a doctor?*

Kylie: *Oh yeah! I suppose they get put down so much that they end up not trying...Though if they thought about it, anybody can do anything if they set their mind to it.*

R.S.: *Why don't they think about it?*

Kylie: *I don't know...perhaps nobody in their family has done it before, or their friends put them down. They crack up laughing because it's so unusual.*

Brendan: *But if I said I wanted to be a butcher or on the city council, they would be accepted.*

(Fieldnotes, 4/11/86, pp.1585-6)

Similar dynamics became evident in the classroom, where the self-image of Maori students matched, and was influenced by, the low expectations of the teacher and of the students. During a unit on "Work" in Social Studies, a Co-Ed High teacher asked the fourth form class to form groups and practice job interviews. The two

Maori students in the class acted out a rugged, tough image associated with Maoris, even though their usual behaviour in class was different. This comes out clearly in the following classroom observation notes:

> Kori is next, and everybody laughs before he starts, as if in anticipation of what is to come. He swaggers in, sits astride the interview chair, acts "rugged" and uses an exaggerated form of "Maori talk", or a Maori register of standard New Zealand English:

Employer: *Do you have any qualifications?*

Kori: *Nah!*

Employer: *What do you want from this job?*

Kori: *I want a cah!*

Employer: *Any previous jobs?*

Kori: *Murderin'!*

(Fieldnotes, 17/6/86, pp.839-40)

Later, after the lesson, the researcher approached three Pakeha boys from the same class who were friends with Kori and asked for feedback about the lesson.

R.S.: *Any one of the five role-plays you did remained in your mind?*

Scott: *Kori.*

R.S. *Why?*

Scott: *Oh! He acted really scruffy, and typical.* (They laugh).

R.S.: *Typical of what?*

Scott: *Oh...Of Maoris.*

R.S.: *Was he doing that on purpose?*

Scott: *Yeah...to have fun...he's not like that...the whole class expected him to act like that.*

Brian: *Yeah...that he act rugged, you know...like in Billy T. James!* (They laugh).

(Fieldnotes, 17/7/86, p.945)

Moreover, later on in the same unit, a further dynamic was observed in the classroom to suggest how low expectations of Maori students are expressed by their Pakeha classmates. The teacher was helping his students to look at different occupational families, and asked

them to take a pamphlet about a job he or she was interested in and copy down the necessary information. The following are classroom observation notes:

> All the students take more than one pamphlet and read some of the information. A few boys take job pamphlets and laugh at the title, such as "Funeral Director". One boy takes a pamphlet and tries to give it to Kori, laughing. I realise that the title is "Slaughter Person".
>
> Kori playfully pushes the boy away. Another boy asks Kori: *"What sort of job do you want?"* Kori shows the pamphlet he has chosen from the pile. It is entitled "Land Surveying". The other boy answers: *"But you need two years at University at least to do that! Why don't you join the Army?"*
>
> Later on in the period, another boy points another pamphlet at Kori and says: *"You want to be a bus driver?"*
>
> (Fieldnotes, 26/6/86, pp.869-70)

Such expectations act as powerful pressures in defining to a Maori what particular jobs he or she can aspire to, and which jobs are "beyond reach". Occasionally, Pakeha students spoke directly about a sort of job apartheid in New Zealand, making comparisons to South Africa and saying that *"Maoris are put down because of their black hair and black skin...They get all the dumb jobs...the rubbish jobs." (Fieldnotes, 15/4/86, p.608).* Some of these "rubbish jobs" were identified, as in the following excerpt from an interview with fifth form Co-Ed High students, in a context where the researcher was trying to get to the hierarchical values attributed to different jobs.

R.S.: *Freezing workers seem to have a bad name here. Why?*

Pete: *They're all Maoris! (Laughs). If you're a drop out you go for a job there, because they do the same thing all day. They cut a piece of meat from here...They do the same thing all day.*

(Fieldnotes, 9/10/86, p.1455)

Aspects of this "job apartheid" were also reflected in the propensity of Maori students, male and female, to be attracted by a career with the Army. Though causal links are always dangerous to make, it would seem that Maori students saw in army life the offer of status and respect they could not get anywhere else in New Zealand society. One Maori student for instance mentioned the fact that people who join the army were *"well respected...it gives you a sense of discipline. You don't end up on the heap with drugs and booze." (Fieldnotes, 10/11/86, p. 1638).*

It is important to note that Maori students were able to articulate their experience of oppression and externalise the reasons for their likely positions within or outside of the labour market. The following excerpt from an interview with a fifth former is an example of the depth of political and historical understanding shown by Maori students:

R.S.: *Why is it that Maoris don't aim for jobs like doctors, or lawyers?*

Jonathan: *I think that it's just one of those things that's happened as the Pakehas came into the country. They tried to make out they were head figures and all that...so they tried to make the Maoris seem like they were dumb, so that's what they've done over the years. That's why there's not many Maoris wanting to become doctors and that.*

It's pretty racist here in New Zealand...if you look around properly, it's very racist. In the past the Pakeha stole our land, and it's still carried on eh! It's still out of hand...That's why a lot of Maoris have turned away from the Pakeha system and tried to build their own system for the Maoris, because the Pakehas they've got everything, they've taken over our country. We were here before them, you know...and they think they've got a right to our country when it's supposed to be for both of us, you know.

You've got to be here and mix with people like I do, and you'll find out how racist it is...They kind of look at you as if you were an imbecile or something! They think we're just criminals, thieves...Like this girl said to me: "I'd really like to go to University." She's Maori, and we were with Pakeha mates, and they laughed! They thought it was funny! But she will get there because she is bright and she's ready to work bloody hard to get there! But others, when they're put down, they stay down...But I think that after a while, when the Maoris, you know, have been kicked in the guts so much, you know, they just stay down after a while, and they see how they do...they play cool, they rebel against the system, they tell teachers where to go and all that kind of thing you know...That's why they give most teachers a hard time, because teachers think they are good for nothing.

(Fieldnotes, 10/11/86, pp.1636-38)

Occupational choice limited by an ordeal-by-schooling.

Jonathan's disaffection with schooling introduces another process which explains how Maori students make particular occupational choices, sometimes giving up the struggle. The following interview

with a group of fifth and sixth formers from All Girls' High, held in the Maori culture room, indicates how the way to "good" jobs is seen through an ordeal-by-schooling. For many this signifies the compromising of the deepest and most important values which give their life meaning and worth, namely their own culture. For many too, such a compromise is too high a price to pay for whatever the Pakeha system can offer in return:

R.S.: *If you could wave a magic wand, what would you like to do in the future?*

Tina: *I want to be a social worker.*

Tara: *But you'll need the sixth form certicate, and that's hard!*

Tina: *Yeah? Why? You don't need that!*

Tara: *Yeah! That's the problem! You don't need qualifications! Half those stupid bloody qualifications, half the things you learn at school aren't going to help you or a kid from getting off the street!*

R.S.: *Will you get qualifications do you think?*

Tara: *No! You just get a job...any job.*

R.S.: *Any job will do?*

Tara: *Looks like it these days. You just take the first job that offers you a bit of money. Most of the girls leaving this school are sewers.*

R.S.: *Do you think about the jobs that you'd like to do?*

Alice: *Yeah! But there's no way you can get all those qualifications, so it's just a dream really.*
(Fieldnotes, 30/5/86, p.767)

This experience of school united Maori students, so that they sought each other out in subject options. This constituted another aspect of the process of occupational "choice" since the selection of particular subjects led to some careers and not to others. Woods (1984) has shown that the notion of "subject choice" is based on an assumption of "fairness", "equal start", and "same information to all". As in the case of gender, where certain subjects are seen to be "male" or "female" and therefore beyond the process of choice, Maori students spoke of subjects which were or were not "Maori". As one fifth former said:

> *Last year, when me and my mates were choosing subjects, they said: "Do this with me and we'll be together in the same class." They wanted to take*

Regional Science [instead of S.C. Science] because they know they'll stick all the Maoris together there.

(Fieldnotes, 10/11/86, p.1639)

The students therefore saw themselves as making choices, often creative ones, designed to resolve dilemmas that arose for them out of the organisation of schooling and the organisation of the outside world. Their assumption of responsibility for course choice is important because it leads them to accept responsibility for the restricted options they face later. Maori students were observed developing what Becker (1961) calls "group perspectives" or modes of thought and action developed by a group which faces the same problematic situation. Maori students, as a group, expressed similar reactions to given situations, reactions which appeared to them to be the natural and legitimate ones. In other words, Maori students learned to know "their place", having internalised Pakeha teacher and student definitions of what was "appropriate" for them.

Some however succeeded in resisting such definitions, but the loss of "group perspectives" also signified the loss of group membership, and a life at school which often became lonely and miserable. This can be observed in the following interview with one of the few Maori seventh form students at All Girls' High.

Tess: *I am a Maori, but because in the seventh form there aren't many Maoris...I've got to fit in...I've got to live here twenty five hours a week. So I've got to have friends who are Pakeha. So I see in the Junior school there are lots of Maoris and they sit together, and they say: "Oh look! She doesn't sit with us!...She's with Pakehas...She's one of those!" And because I hang out with Europeans, they say "She's not a Maori...She doesn't do things like us...She doesn't swear." They stereotype me, so I'm in a position where I feel like, sort of in between, and I just don't fit anywhere...Well...I don't fit in either way. It's dreadful! I hate this school! I feel I don't fit in here, but I try to buck it off, because it's my bursary I'm after. I don't care about the rest, so I just forget about it.*

R.S.: *The way you're talking about your experience reminds me of something I heard...that the few Maoris who get to seventh form do so at the cost of their own culture.*

Tess: *That's something dreadful to say, because it's so true! But then you've got to exist, you've got to sacrifice a lot of things to get there. That's a sacrifice you've got to make. Either you go one way or the other. It's hard because you've got to make*

so many choices, and the choices might not be the right ones. But then, education is not always there...You're not going to be seventeen or eighteen all the time...you can pick it [Maoriness] later on.
(Fieldnotes, 25/9/86, p.1293)

She also described how she had to overcome and dismiss stereotyped expectations of her as a Maori. To this end, she had to use stealth, hide her true ambitions and feelings, and go along quietly with the system while holding fast to her dreams.

R.S.: *Why do you think a lot of Maori students end up in what some would call "rubbish jobs"? You don't seem to be heading in that direction...*

Tess: *Well, there definitely is a cultural difference, and education is not based for everyone. But that's not an excuse. If you immediately put yourself at a disadvantage saying "I can't do it", "I can't do Science", then you're definitely not going to do it. If Europeans say you can't do it, then they think: "Oh well! I can't do it." And society is saying that...that they can't do it...Well, everyone is saying to them "You can't do it, you can't do it!" And either you block it off, or you accept it.*

R.S.: *And you blocked it off...*

Tess: *I had to, didn't I? I can see how those expectations can affect them, definitely. And when teachers asked me what I want to do, I think: "Ah!...Shall I tell them really what I want to do, or shall I just say something that's acceptable?" You know?...In the fourth form especially I took everything in, and I just gave out what was acceptable. I still had my own beliefs and everything, but I gave what was acceptable, just to keep the peace. But I have a core, and that's my strength. [...] All my Maori friends at school wanted to do clothing, but I chose quietly to do Latin, and Technical Drawing. And that was hard because I lost a lot of sharing.*
(Fieldnotes, 25/9/86, pp.1295-6)

Summary.

The data presented above strongly support the notion that schools and teachers were not aware of the real cultural and material conditions of their students. The messages given by teachers regarding occupational choice have been shown to frequently fall far short of the everyday realities as lived and experienced by students. The latter are vitally aware of the powerful definitions wielded by society, and know for instance that realistic chances of actually getting a job depend on their making the choices expected

from persons of their gender and ethnicity. They are also aware that while progressive schooling might change ideas, it does not necessarily change labour market realities.

The data presented above lead to a clearer perception of the way students experience a pattern of material and social constraints which, when articulated to their wider experiences of class, ethnic and gender cultures, precipitated them to move towards certain locations in the labour market. Experienced as a set of individual choices, it is through wider structural processes and the living meanings they are given that young people take their places in the division of labour. Students are moreover not unconscious of the processes within and outside of school which structure their experiences, and therefore not only accept them but also participate in contestation of them and counter-culture production.

The data also suggest that schools should abandon a psychological approach to occupational decision-making in favour of a sociological approach. Here, elements beyond the individual's control (environment, cultural expectations, social class, gender, ethnicity, and other factors) are seen to exert a major influence on the course of one's entire life, including one's educational and vocational decisions (Osipow, 1983).

The following is a list of the propositions advanced in this chapter, explored and grounded in data:

[1] A liberal model of occupational choice informs the approach taken by the majority of teachers. This model does not take into consideration the influence of various factors which constrain and limit "choice".

[2] While some teachers are aware of factors which limit and constrain choice, they have little access to alternative models of occupational choice. The liberal model therefore remains in use.

[3] A liberal model of occupational choice constructs a particular view of the world and specifically of the segmented labour market. This view justifies the differential rewards and conditions of work offered by various sectors of the labour market by implying that individuals choose to occupy some positions and not others.

[4] By emphasising choice, the liberal model used by teachers does not expose social pressures on groups of students identifiable by their class, gender and ethnicity. The potential of schooling to aid occupational mobility is therefore stunted.

[5] Teachers and careers advisers make private and public judgements about the appropriateness or otherwise of occupational decisions made by particular students.

[6] What teachers refer to as "realistic" or "appropriate" has no absolute value but refers to a particular world view. This view discriminates against specific groups of students identifiable by their class, gender and ethnicity.

[7] Through this discrimination, teachers abet a process which reproduces specific positions in a segmented labour market.

[8] Students construct their own model of occupational choice, a model which differs in various important details from the one presented generally by teachers.

[9] The factors which influence students in their occupational decision-making take into account the realities of labour market positions in a way which teachers fail to do.

[10] Students engage in forms of resistance to safeguard the perception of their own abilities, and contest teachers' definitions of the "appropriate". They therefore manifest a high degree of personal agency within a situation which has often been described in deterministic terms.

[11] Students are able to differentiate between on the one hand a democratic discourse at school which urges young women to break free of occupational stereotypes and on the other the intractability of the labour market in following principles of equality and justice. This differentiation leads them to accept - at an intellectual level - school discourse regarding equality of the sexes, and to reject it at the practical level of occupational decision-making.

[12] The transformative potential of education is constrained and limited by the structural inequalities and injustices perceived by students to be embedded in the economic base.

[13] Schools and teachers are largely unaware of the influence of class and ethnicity in structuring students' precipitation towards certain locations in the labour market.

[14] Maori students suffer "hidden" injuries as they engage in the process of schooling - injuries which bear a resemblance to those suffered by Pakeha working class students, but which also are deeper. They therefore carry a double burden (and in the case of Maori females, the triple burden of gender, class and ethnicity) which to a very large degree affects the "choices" they make at school.

CHAPTER 8.

MESSAGES ABOUT WORK GIVEN IN TRANSITION PROGRAMMES.

The data presented in the three chapters above has referred to messages about work given to students within mainstream schooling. This chapter focuses on a recent development in New Zealand secondary education, namely special programmes set up to meet the needs of students considered to be "at risk" in making the transition from school to the adult and working life. The messages about work and the preparation for work within these micro-structures are presented as a last effort to school disaffected students into the compliancy required of them in the peripheral and insecure positions of the labour market which they are likely to occupy.

INTRODUCTION.

The major category "transition programmes" is discussed in terms of the following properties:
[1] Form [2] Content and [3] Pedagogy.

As in the previous three chapters, the properties are explored in terms of teachers' intended and actual messages, and the students' reception, acceptance and contestation of these messages. In this particular chapter, special attention is given to those messages communicated specifically to transition students through the structure of the courses organised, the curricular content, the nature of the tasks required, and the pedagogy used. Where significant inter- and intra-school differences were noted, they are described to highlight the contested terrain in which messages and meanings are forged. Some of the themes and propositions distinguished in the previous three chapters will appear again in this context. They are revisited briefly for the sake of comparing and contrasting the messages and preparation for work which different groups of students were observed receiving. This comparative dimension between mainstream and other students is valuable for a number of reasons - the exercise not only demonstrates how the "new vocationalism" expresses itself in

various areas in the school, but also sharpens the possibility of identifying the extent to which class membership leads to different sorts of educational experiences. Transition programmes were found to be particularly useful in exploring the latter theme because practically all the transition students observed came from working class backgrounds.

8.1. TRANSITION TEACHERS' INTENDED MESSAGES.

Four propositions are advanced in this section. First, a liberal and humanistic discourse informs the intentions of transition teachers. This discourse construes specific groups of young people - identifiable by their class and ethnicity - to be deficient in cognitive and social skills. Second, this deficit model in itself brings the problem of unemployment to the individual level, and encourages a blame-the-victim approach. In other words, while transition education sets out to be enabling, its very discourse is disabling in the way it views youth. Third, the discourse which guides the intentions of transition education also guides the kinds of questions it raises and the sorts of solutions it envisages. The problems groups of students experience at school and in securing employment are considered personal and pathological, rather than political. Transition therefore sets out to place a solution to the problems in society and in schooling in the boundary between them. It is not society and schooling which require critical inquiry - and transformation - but the student. Fourth, transition education sets out in an explicit manner to act as a holding-pen for students who are considered to be "at risk" of unemployment. Teachers do not seem to experience any conflict between their calling as educators and their new role - one funded by the state - as agents of control.

These propositions are explored in data under two major headings: [a] the intended overall goals for the programmes in the three schools in this study and [b] the intended goals for work exploration, which constitute an integral part of transition programmes. The intentions regarding the properties of form, content and pedagogy are described together in the following section.

[a] Intended overall goals of Transition Programmes.

Inter-School Similarities and Differences.

All three schools had four major intentions in setting up transition programmes:

[1] To identify the "at risk" students.

[2] To give them more pre-employment and life skills.

[3] To help them experience success in work exploration projects: this will give them self esteem.

[4] Better equipped with knowledge, experience and confidence they will be able to find good and secure employment and fulfilment in life.

These goals are explored in data relevant to each school in turn.

Co-Ed High Transition Programmes.

The programmes observed at Co-Ed High had their roots in an initiative taken in 1979 by Ms Trilby, who since then had created a Department of Transition with one full-time and one part-time teacher as her assistants. She had earlier been in charge of home-room classes for "non-achievers", and out of concern for them, and since they were not getting much out of schooling anyway, had started sending them out of school on work experience. By providing them with opportunities where they could be successful, she felt that these students would gain the self-esteem which schooling had made them lose. *"Even then,"* reflected Ms Trilby, *"when there was no real problem of getting a job, so many were leaving with such a low self-esteem." (Fieldnotes, 29/5/86, p.750).*

At Co-Ed High, this endeavour expanded over the years to include more than "slow-learners", and with increasing unemployment affecting the region, other and more varied programmes were organised within the school. The initial curriculum concentrated mainly on providing work experience and various pre-employment skills. However, a continually contracting labour market led to transition teachers facing a paradox of preparing students for jobs which did not exist. Hence, the focus shifted from vocational preparation to a concern for personal development, with the pre-employment aspects of the paracurriculum becoming less important -

at least in the intentional discourse of the transition teachers. This shift was often mentioned by Ms Trilby. On one occasion, during a meeting organised by the regional officer for transition education, she introduced her programmes to other transition teachers from other schools in the following way:

> *For us at Co-Ed High, "transition" refers to transition to adult life...it is more than just getting a job. We're not a job-finding agency, although youngsters and parents tend to think of it like that. We want our transition programmes to help students find their strengths. Actually, it is for their own good and for the sake of the community that they come to transition.*
>
> *(Fieldnotes, 3/4/86, p.536)*

At Co-Ed High therefore, the earlier name of "Pre-Employment Programmes" was dropped in favour of "Transition Programmes", so that declared goals and intended messages would encompass a wider definition of "transition". The official curriculum was communicated to the researcher over a number of formal and informal interviews. Ms Trilby said that there was a "do-it-yourself mentality" in transition curriculum planning, and they had plenty of scope to exercise their autonomy as teachers (Fieldnotes, 16/4/86, p.636). The intended goals of all three transition teachers are revealed in discussion of the programmes with them. First they set out to develop skills - variously called "coping skills" and "life skills" - which they believed to be useful in the work place and in life generally. Such skills and information were organised around the notion of "relevancy" - the mainstream curriculum had been found irrelevant by students, and the transition teachers' answer was the provision of knowledge, information and skills which would prove to be directly applicable to the students' lives. In the attempt to provide a "relevant curriculum", transition teachers said that they tried to *"organise the curriculum around the students' needs." (Fieldnotes, 7/10/86, p.1417).* The pedagogy would reflect these intentions - relationships between teachers and students were to be more relaxed and informal. Referring back to previous years, Ms Trilby said that she often visited her students at home to see how they were doing, and sometimes they visited her to discuss problems they had.

By 1986, Transition Education had grown to include three programmes. The first and most extensive was a "terminal" programme for students beyond the school-leaving age who had no job

to go to and who did not want to do academic courses at the sixth and seventh form level. Ms Trilby explained some of the intended goals for this programme:

> *Say you were in the fifth form...you can't really perform at the School Certificate level...you hate school, right? And it could be that your mother said to you: "You can't leave school until you've got a job." Or you might be such a ruddy nuisance in everybody's class that you're on your last day...so usually they refer them to me, and you know, I say: "I lay the rules down." But we've had kids who have been very naughty, but once you start putting them into a less threatening situation, they do perform.*
> *(Fieldnotes, 10/2/86, p.113)*

Students on this programme spent Mondays and Fridays at school doing a varied course of studies involving life and vocational skills. Tuesdays to Thursdays were spent at work exploration sites - the intended goals for work exploration are considered in detail in the following section. During 1986, 41 students took part in this transition class and Ms Bowie and Ms Trilby, who visited them regularly on their work exploration placements, were their main teachers. Ms Jones, a part-time transition teacher, took the students for two hours a week.

All three teachers contributed to two other transition programmes which were observed throughout 1986. One of these programmes was called "Employment Skills Programme", and this was a six-month option offered to fifth formers who wanted to get information about work and also wished to have an extended period of work experience. The other programme was for fourth formers, and called "Lifeskills". Again, it was a six-month option available to those who, as Ms Bowie said on the first day of one such course, wanted *"a chance of finding out about the community before moving into it." (Fieldnotes, 30/6/86, p.879).* Topics to be addressed in the course included knowing your car, your bike, the road code, the tax system, banking, credit cards and so on. Students in the fifth form transition classes generally felt that they were repeating what they had already done in the fourth form Lifeskills Programme.

Ms Bowie saw the Lifeskills class as a preliminary to transition in that it was a way of getting to know potential candidates for the "terminal" course and of giving important information and knowledge to students who were disillusioned with school. She told the

researcher about the two major intentions for this programme. The first intention related to educational goals:

> *Lifeskills started at Co-Ed High five years ago...it was a good way to get the non-academic to the senior programmes in school...you see, they would leave school before they hit the fifth form, and things like sex and contraception are not dealt with till then. It's also a good way to teach them about life in general.*
>
> *(Fieldnotes, 27/3/86, p.525)*

The second intention was to identify "at risk" students and recruit them for the full year transition programme before they *"hit fifteen, dropped out of school, and got themselves into mischief" (Fieldnotes, 29/5/86, p.751).* Ms Bowie described the control function of transition programmes:

> *Unless they know that transition education exists and what it is all about, they will have no alternative but to stay out there...so we get a lot of kids back by passing the word amongst the community wherever we go. So, rather than hanging around and causing mischief, they come on transition, and after a few weeks, they've already got a job...it's something positive to do.*
>
> *(Fieldnotes, 7/10/86, p.1426)*

Other input by transition teachers was in a sixth form general studies unit called "Employment-Seeking Skills". This was led by Ms Trilby, who placed senior students in work experience for a total of six weeks. An attempt to start a transition course leading to a Sixth Form Certificate was abandoned because only one student applied to join.

Transition programmes at Co-Ed High were considered by the Principal to reflect the school's concern to be responsive to the different needs of students and to bridge the gap between school and community. The school's liberal and humanistic ethos is apparent in a summary of the overt, intended goals for the transition education programmes. These were written as a scheme of work the Head of Department had prepared over the years:

Our aims are:

1. *That the individual develops a clear sense of identity and self-worth.*
2. *That the student develops a sense of usefulness and success in relating to the community.*
3. *That the student learns to adapt to and face a life-long succession of changes.*
4. *That the student develops a range of knowledge and capabilities to cope with and manage their lives after school.*

5. *That the course will show the relevance of school life to working life. That it should expand upon areas of the curriculum according to needs.*
6. *To develop the essential ablility to make good decisions, working on the facts.*
7. *To help develop good personal relationships.*
8. *To help develop an awareness of all those different attitudes and abilities and ideas of others.*

(Scheme of work for Transition Programmes, Co-Ed High)

It is important to note that none of the covert intentions are mentioned in this summary. The hidden intentions, expressed during interviews and observed throughout the year, had more to do with expediency and control than with educational goals. As to expediency, the Careers Adviser at the school admitted to the researcher that one of the values of having transition programmes was to keep the school rolls high - potential drop-outs were retained, and more students represented a better access to resources for the mainstream students. As to control, some of the excerpts quoted above already illustrate this theme. Students who were considered to be "at risk" of causing problems in society were to be reformed. As Ms Trilby said, *"transition sets out to be preventative rather than curative" (Fieldnotes, 3/4/86, p.540).* A debate developed between Ms Trilby and Ms Bowie half-way through the year over this intention. The former was ready to accept students who misbehaved very badly in the mainstream. She often said she was ready to "take risks" with students, believing that once they got a chance to be trusted and to succeed at something, they would change their behaviour (Fieldnotes, 3/4/86, p.536). Ms Bowie however felt that in the future, they ought to avoid accepting students who caused problems. She referred to a transition programme run in a rural school outside the city and said:

> *There they have to wait to be called on, they don't just take anybody. Not like here, where we don't get them until they've really reached rock-bottom, and when they're on the receiving end of the boot.*
> *(Fieldnotes, 16/4/86, p.635)*

Ms Jones expressed agreement with Ms Bowie on this issue, and therefore the intended audience for transition education was observed to be in the process of reconsideration during 1986. By the end of the year, Ms Trilby tended to agree with her colleagues, but felt that:

> *there is no other alternative for some of the other kids to be placed...and when you see the unhappiness*

> *that kids are receiving in the general stream, you feel you have to do something about it.*
> *(Fieldnotes, 5/11/86, p.1614)*

As they stood, Co-Ed High programmes represented the most developed attempts of the three schools studied, and were the only ones to be grouped together as a department. Transition therefore had official status in the school and was frequently referred to both during staff meetings and in meetings with mainstream students. Although the programmes at All Girls' High and All Boys' College were similar to those at Co-Ed High in terms of goals and intentions, there were also some significant differences.

All Girls' High Transition Programme.

The transition programme at All Girls' High was founded in 1982 by the then careers adviser. The researcher was given access to all the records and files relevant to the courses organised since then, and found that the transition programme had been advertised in local newspapers, offering work exploration opportunities to *"girls who wished to concentrate on the skills required in the transition to the workforce"*. The intended goals expressed in 1986 were similar, and they were therefore more strictly vocational than at Co-Ed High. The transition programmes were specifically aimed at students over fifteen years of age who had left school and who had been unsuccessful in securing employment.

The person in charge of the course during 1986, Ms Kirk, opted to have three identical programmes, one for each school term. It was hoped that after three months, transition students would have found employment. If this was not the case, they had the option to register again for a second term and more work exploration, or leave school altogether. While transition students at Co-Ed High were kept on the school roll, those at All Girls' had to complete school-leaving procedures, and register with the Department of Labour. The reason for this was to give the students the opportunity to be offered jobs through that government department, even though they did not receive the unemployment benefit like other "registered unemployed". As with Co-Ed High, two days of the week were spent at school, with a curriculum programme emphasising "pre-employment training" and "life skills", and the other three days were spent on work exploration sites. Ms Kirk was the main

tutor, and she took the transition students for most of the day on Monday and Friday, focusing on experiences and problems which arose out of the students' work exploration placements. Ms Kirk also visited the students on their work exploration sites during the rest of the week. The school's Careers Adviser and a Social Studies teacher each led an hour-long session on the days when the students were at school. The former coached the students on pre-employment skills, and the latter strove to build their self-confidence through the use of developmental group work.

Ms Kirk described her goals for the course in terms which were similar to those of transition teachers at Co-Ed High:

> *The main aim of the course as I see it is to increase the self-respect of the girls, to give them self-confidence. Most of them have opted out and experienced a sense of failure, so that is one of the most important areas. Naturally, another area is trying to provide them with skills that they can use in making the transition from the school situation to the workforce...like interview skills, getting out into the community, going to all sorts of facilities in the community which they had never availed themselves of.*
>
> *(Fieldnotes, 11/4/86, p.592)*

In all, the course reached a total of seventeen students throughout 1986. Unlike at Co-Ed High, the course was not given a high profile either among staff or mainstream students, and the latter generally knew little about it. This reflected the ethos of All Girls' High which has been shown to emphasise the academic curriculum. Teachers who had been asked to teach sessions with these transition students complained that they had no clear goals for what they were doing. One said:

> *I only did one hour with our transition group last year. I got dumped with it, not knowing why it was happening. I had no philosophy for what I was doing with them.*
>
> *(Fieldnotes, 3/4/86, p.538)*

No intentions were expressed by transition teachers to sharpen the curriculum or to give the programmes a better status among staff and students at the school.

All Boys' College Transition Programme.

The course at All Boys' College was not officially referred to as a "transition programme" and was organised differently from the ones in the other two schools. However, it had basically the same aims and intentions and was supervised by the same regional officer for transition education. All Boys' transition students were selected from the third form utilising a series of reading and psychological tests and identified as "low-achievers" or "slow learners". The course ran from the third to the fifth form, with the vocational input coming into effect during the fourth and especially the fifth form, when students went into work experience for one and a half days every ten days. During the last term of 1986, fourth form students were given odd jobs to do in the school grounds for one day a week. They were to help the janitor, and this was meant to help them gain *"work habits and maturity"* in preparation for the following year's work exploration in the community. The co-ordinator of the course, Ms Grant - who had been in charge of the programme since its inception five years earlier - explained that she did not like labelling the students as *"slow learners"*, but felt that it was true that most of the boys in her programme usually required special assistance to cope with the school's demands. Ms Grant had another teacher to help her, and together they catered for twenty two students from the third to fifth form. As the research focus is concerned with the vocational aspects of the course, references will be limited to Ms Grant and the eleven fifth form students who formed the senior transition class.

At the fifth form level, most of the transition students took some subjects with mainstream students, but met as a class for specific subjects like English and Religious Education, which were both taught by Ms Grant. During the third term however, Ms Grant withdrew the fifth form transition class completely from the mainstream to provide a more "relevant" curriculum for them. As with the transition teachers in the other two schools, Ms Grant defined her aims and intentions in the form of increasing the students' personal skills, goals which she also said she saw as directly functional in securing employment:

> *I try to sort of adjust them socially, to get them to realise their own academic level of achievement and to get them to that level, and also to...ehm...adjust them so that when they leave school, they can go out, they can be competitive in the workforce, they can be employed, they can have a job, a choice of jobs as anyone else. And because of their academic level, they're more reliant on their social development and their social graces. So I concentrate on those a lot, to compensate for the lack of academic achievement.*
>
> *(Fieldnotes, 20/10/86,p.1500)*

[b] Intended goals for work exploration.

Inter School Similarities.

In all three schools, work exploration constituted a central feature of the transition programmes and an important vehicle for messages about work. The modules had previously been called "work experience" - the change of name to "work exploration" was intended to emphasise the educational nature behind the projects. Two educational goals were identified by all transition teachers in the schools studied. The first referred to the usefulness of work exploration in helping students discover what jobs they really wanted to do. One All Girls' High transition teacher said for instance:

> *Some say "I want to be such and such", so they get the opportunity to experience that kind of work, and then they say: "No way do I want to do that. I want to do something else." So, that's the advantage of the transition-to-work course. They've only got that job for four or six weeks, and then they can change.*
>
> *(Fieldnotes, 14/3/86, p.399)*

Students were therefore generally encouraged to change their work placement every six weeks, and this was to ensure that the exploratory goal of the project was achieved. Attempts were made to accomodate the wishes of every student, and at the end of six weeks, a meeting was to be held with each transition class to discuss preferred sites for work exploration. Another educational goal was that, since transition students had experienced only failure at school, they could regain a degree of self-confidence by taking part in activities where they could achieve success. This was the value of work exploration, as Ms Grant pointed out:

> *My main aim for the boys on work experience is that they develop themselves. They develop social skills and self-confidence. For instance, they go to the employer on their own and tell him: "I'm from All*

> *Boys' College." That prepares them for eventual interviews. They don't just sit back.*
>
> *(Fieldnotes, 19/3/86, p.462)*

All transition teachers had an extensive list of employers who were ready to accept students for a period of six weeks and give them, at least ideally, work which the students were interested in trying out. The students were not to be paid, a point which was insisted upon by trade unions who were anxious lest such schemes would reduce job vacancies for adult workers.[1] Employers were obliged to provide the necessary protective clothing when required, and were asked to fill in a report as a reference about the student's work attitudes and abilities at the end of the placement. Students were very keen to have such reports, and Ms Trilby commented:

> *Look at all the employers' reports on their work experience. All the comments are "good" and "very good". That helps their self-esteem. They're succeeding at something, perhaps for the first time in their life.*
>
> *(Fieldnotes, 24/3/86, p.497)*

Students were expected to learn about the *"reality of the world of work"*. At All Boys', transition students were meant to keep a notebook about their work exploration sessions - they were to write lessons learned and observations made. A transition teacher from All Girls' pointed out that the way the programme was organised was itself meant to make the students face the real conditions of work:

> *We wanted the three days out at work in the middle of the week to achieve continuity. It is important for the kids to be at work at eight o'clock in the morning, to realise what it means to get up at six thirty and bike half an hour to get to your work place.*
>
> *(Fieldnotes, 14/3/86, p.404)*

The work exploration component was not meant to teach students technical skills. The emphasis was on social skills in the work

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1. A Factories and Commercial Premises Act was passed in February 1982 covering student (unpaid) employment in such places as factories, shops, offices, warehouses and garages. Section 2(a) of the Act specifically *"incorporates recognition of school pupils in employment (unpaid) as part of a work experience or work exploration scheme."* Further,*"there was no longer a requirement to obtain a Certificate of Fitness from the Department of Labour for pupils between the ages of 15 and 16 placed in factories."* In addition, whilst the Act recognised that *"it is illegal for persons under the age of 15 to be placed in an undertaking defined as a factory"*, the legislation *"allowed work exploration and work experience in shops and offices" for those under 15 years of age."* (see Khan, 1987, p. 26.)

place and on self-development, although incidental learning did of course take place, especially with those who remained on the same work site for more than the usual six weeks.

Transition teachers were generally aware of the possibility of exploitation on work exploration projects, with employers using transition students as a ready source of free labour.[2] Some employers actually felt that the whole situation was unjust, but transition teachers countered that with their own views about the matter. Ms Bowie thus explained:

> *We have the odd employer who says "I won't take them under those circumstances...that's exploiting them." And I say "You won't find the children have got that attitude...and we certainly don't have that attitude. You'll find very valuable things to give to the children. Knowing about the workplace is extremely important, and you can't learn about it from the classroom. You have to go out and do it yourself. If you pay them, all the things between the trade unions come into play, and they often can't go into places they need to go in...It's a lot less fair not to have a job at all...and that's what happens to people who don't have work experience before they out out into a job."*
>
> *(Fieldnotes, 7/10/86, p.1425)*

The above excerpt also reveals another intention for work exploration which applied in all three schools. This was the hope that through contacts with employers, and the references these gave, transition students would eventually secure employment. As Ms Bowie pointed out: *"When people ask why students go to work without getting paid for it, I reply that they do get something out of it. The report by their employer will turn out to be very handy when you apply for a job."(Fieldnotes, 24/2/86, p.218).*

Summary.

Transition programmes in all three schools have been shown to be based on a humanistic model. Within this discourse, individual teachers took initiatives to help those students for whom schooling had been, and was likely to remain, a negative experience. Such students were considered by their teachers to be "at risk". Key

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2. Khan (1987) quotes Walker (1984), the Secretary of the New Zealand Trades Council who said that work experience and exploration schemes were used *"by many employers to organise free labour for their business."*

words indicating the philosophy and intentions underlying the courses and used by transition programme co-ordinators included "self-confidence", "self-esteem", "motivation", "lifeskills" and "coping skills". While the initial premise for many of the transition teachers was that schooling had failed the youngsters on their programmes, the eventual remedy was not seen to be a challenging of the system which had done the failing, but the provision of special measures for the students who had "failed". For various reasons - and often not for purely educational ones - the school administration and mainstream teachers were shown to support such endeavours to speed the transition of groups of students out of school.

8.2. ACTUAL MESSAGES.

This section examines the extent to which the transition teachers' intentions were carried through into action. It will be shown that there were a number of contradictions between expressed aims and philosophy for transition and what was actually observed happening. The exploration of the gap between intentions and reality will be organised around the messages given in the following three areas: [1] the form (Section 8.2.1.) [2] the content (Section 8.2.2.) and [3] the pedagogy (Section 8.2.3.) of transition.

8.2.1. THE FORM OF TRANSITION EDUCATION.

Four propositions are explored in this section. First, transition education leads to the promotion of the separate school. The groups who are separated from mainstream schooling are recognised by their membership of ethnic and class groups. Second, the humanistic ideals of transition education are appropriated by mainstream schooling for goals which are neither humanitarian nor educational. Third, the form of transition education as separate from mainstream schooling helps to promote and reproduce the lower status of non-academic and non-achieving students at school. This fact foils the declared intentions of increasing the self-esteem and confidence of transition students. Fourth, the provision of transition education helps to maintain the *status quo* of mainstream

schooling by funnelling off those students who are most likely to question the legitimacy of schooling in the context of increasing unemployment.

The messages implied in the form of transition-to-work programmes are described first in terms of the actual recipients of transition education, and then in terms of the separate school.

[a] The actual recipients of "Transition Education".

A study of who actually followed transition programmes reveals an important reality in the construction of meanings within schools as institutions. In all three schools, but especially at Co-Ed High, the intended target group for transition education was referred to as the "at risk" group - there was no specific categorisation of who these "at risk" would be, nor was there ever discussed the problematic that the "at risk" might consistently emerge from identifiable sectors of the school's population. In the intentional discourse then, transition students would be characterised by a variety of socio-economic classes, abilities and races. However, a close analysis of statistics and observations made throughout 1986 shows that over ninety percent of transition students in all three schools could be identified by a number of characteristics. They were students who showed behaviour problems because of their disillusionment with mainstream schooling. They were generally eager to enter into employment. As one Co-Ed High transition teacher said: *"They're the sort of kids who would have left school had they found a job." (Fieldnotes, 13/2/86, p.157).* Practically all the transition students came from low socio-economic backgrounds. Those who did not, as in the case of three from All Boys' College, generally came from broken families. In all, there were three wards of the state, and twelve had joined to accelerate the process of finding work in order to avoid being a financial burden on their families. One female transition student was kept at school by her mother to ensure the continued reception of the domestic purposes benefit; with her last child out of school, the mother would have otherwise had to apply for the unemployment benefit - which represented a lower income. Five transition students were arrested by police during the year for converting cars, or for shop-lifting. One had a history of

kleptomania. Two dropped out of the transition course at Co-Ed High and joined the city's street kids. Ms Bowie explained:

> *A lot of them are having a lot of pressure from home to have a job...in a lot of cases it's felt that the children need to be out of the home and earning money because money is very hard to get. A lot of them are with solo parents, and the crunch comes, and the children are expected to come into the area of saving the family's financial position. And a lot of the children we have on transition are in that category, and therefore they're not really interested about the job. They're really interested in getting some money. They would certainly generally be from lower socio-economic backgrounds.*
> *(Fieldnotes, 7/10/86,p.1417)*

Another characteristic was the high proportion of Maori and Pacific Island students. Of the seventeen students at All Girls', six were Maori and three Samoan. Of the forty-one transition students at Co-Ed High, fourteen were Maori and one was Samoan. When these figures are compared to the percentage of Maori and Pacific Island students of the total school population, the predominance of students from ethnic minorities in the programmes becomes even more apparent. The All Girls' programme therefore had fifty three percent of its students who were either Maori or Pacific Islanders, and the Co-Ed High programmes had thirty seven percent. In the latter school, a Maori student in the mainstream commented *"It's mainly Maoris who are on pre-employment!" (Fieldnotes, 20/8/86, p.1172)*. There were no Maori students on the All Boys' transition programme.

[b] <u>The separate school.</u>-

The form of transition programmes encouraged segregation and separation in other ways. This was recognised by a number of people, including transition teachers, parents and mainstream and transtion students themselves. The first two are considered in this section, and the latter two in later sections in this chapter, which deal with the reception of messages by students. Transition teachers in all three schools expressed frustration that the intended goals of their programmes were not being met, and that the very fact of <u>providing</u> alternative programmes meant that what <u>they</u> perceived to be humanistic intentions were appropriated for different ends. At Co-Ed High for instance, transition teachers complained on various occasions to the researcher that their

programmes were being used as a "dumping ground" for misbehaving students. Ms Bowie noticed that as transition teachers, she and her colleagues had marginal status to members of staff who taught in the mainstream. Moreover,

> *...the only people in the school who seem to appreciate what we're doing are the deans - and in some ways we're doing them a service because we take away students who don't fit into the general school, and give them an option. We're often used as a dumping ground.*
>
> *(Fieldnotes, 7/10/86, p.1423)*

First for the school, and then for society, transition functioned as a "holding pen". School misfits were channelled into it to give teachers in the mainstream a respite from the more serious behavioural problems in their classrooms. They were also kept from spilling onto the streets and joining the counter-culture groups of disillusioned and unemployed youth increasing in numbers in the city. This was a danger which transition teachers at Co-Ed High mentioned constantly, especially ater two of the Maori students on the course during 1986 actually joined the city's street kids that year. The Counsellor at that school explained why she often referred students to Transition:

> *At least we have a lot of alternative courses and options for students who are not academically minded. But we're still losing students. I am so aware and concerned for those fourth formers who are disillusioned with the system, and who are falling through and becoming street kids...that's why I refer students on to transition.*
>
> *(Fieldnotes, 16/4/86, p.640)*

At All Girls' High, parents were observed penetrating the teachers' intentional discourse in order to interpret a hidden message, namely that "transition" was a way of streaming unachieving and reluctant students into the separate school - a space which had less status and which therefore deserved less respect. There were three cases observed at All Girls' High - and a total of nine in all three schools - where parents were reluctant to accept their children's referral to the transition programme. On one occasion, the researcher overheard a dean talking on the phone, attempting to persuade a reluctant Pacific Island parent that her two daughters should go on transition. The dean explained to the parent that the girls were not attending classes, and that *"It's better if they're helped to get good employment, because they're not learning much here."* The dean later told the researcher *"They don't want their daughter on transition...But what else can we do with them?! They*

wag all the time, and when they come, they misbehave." (Fieldnotes, 3/4/86, p.530).

At All Boys too, both parents and the transition teacher herself felt that the expressed intentions of the course were not being achieved. Ms Grant frequently mentioned the fact that while she was attempting to raise the self-esteem of her students, the low status the latter had with other staff and mainstream students brought about the opposite effect. The form of transition as a separate school contradicted and foiled her intentions. This became evident in various ways. First of all, the administration used the transition class as a convenient flexible element in organising timetables to accomodate the needs of mainstream students. The result was that Ms Grant could not see her students on the day following work exploration, which would have been ideal to discuss how things had gone. She complained:

> *They've shoved them wherever they could as long as they did not get into their hair. They've even given them three religion lessons a week when they should have had only two. And that's been a great stress to me, meeting them for that extra hour!*
> *(Fieldnotes, 17/6/86, p.833)*

The staff's low opinion of transition students became obvious in other ways too. Mention of the transition class in the staffroom was often accompanied by laughter and comments. On one occasion, a teacher told two boys washing teacups in the staffroom: *"I've got the transition class now...I'm really lucky eh!" (Fieldnotes, 22/4/86, p.649).* On two other occasions, teachers expressed their opinion to the researcher that *"too much manpower is invested on too few that don't appreciate it."* The only advantage they saw in having transition at school had nothing to do with the intended goals as described by the transition teachers. One teacher said:

> *You get staffing assistance because of that special class, and if you scrap that class, you wouldn't be able to allocate that staff elsewhere. Also, the kids you get in that class are often downright rude...which means that by putting them in transition, you're helping the normal streams because the unacademic students aren't there.*
> *(Fieldnotes, 20/10/86,p.1513)*

At one point, Ms Grant told the researcher that at least five of the eleven fifth form transition students ought to have been integrated with the mainstream - their referral to her class had been motivated by the fact that they misbehaved in class. She

therefore felt that for 1986, the transition class was not functioning the way it had been set up to function five years earlier, in that she was not reaching the target group of "low-achievers" and "slow learners". Parents too recognised the hidden intentions of transition at this school. One teacher actually commented on a Teachers' Only day:

> *Parents try their utmost to pull their son from the [Transition] class. In one case, they rang up all the schools in the city, and finally placed their boy at Norton High in the mainstream.*
> *(Fieldnotes, 24/11/86, p.1720)*

The form of transition education as a separate school led to transition students being construed as of less importance and worthy of less status than students in the mainstream. The significance of this increases when, as has been shown, it is realised that transition students belong to the subordinate groups of society. It will be shown later that transition and mainstream students were aware of their location in the school's hierarchy of status.

8.2.2. THE CONTENT OF TRANSITION EDUCATION.

The description of the content of transition programmes will follow the insights developed in Chapter- 5. The data suggested that in addressing the world of work, mainstream schooling promoted that world as "normal" and "natural". Students were observed being taught not about the world of work, but for it. This sort of "education" was observed taking place within the transition programmes with even more emphasis on the maintaining of the established order. A number of propositions are therefore developed and explored in data in this section.

First, transition education puts an even stronger emphasis on inculcating attitudes and skills functional to society. Transition students are to be moulded into compliant citizens - this docility is required both in the employment sector they are likely to inhabit if they get a job, and also in the "quiet unemployed" if they do not. Second, the job-getting imperative which rules over transition education leads to the jettisoning of any vestige of education for democracy in terms of the promotion of personal rights. Third, the "relevant curriculum" - developed to tie school

life more securely to adult and working life - functions primarily as an instrument of control within the classroom and within the school generally. Fourth, the constant emphasis on "preparation for adult life" construes students' lives as somehow not real or relevant - it precedes "real life" and is different from it. Young people's experiences in the work force are therefore ignored, and when they are recognised, it is to reinforce *status quo* themes. Fifth, since transition students are defined as ignorant about what life is really all about, they therefore need to be taught about life. To do so it is justifiable to delay them from entry into adult life. Sixth, work exploration channels students to the secondary sector of the labour market, which is considered to be appropriate and realistic for transition students by their teachers. Seventh, it is also used by teachers as a pedagogical tool to reinforce the work ethic and the attitudes employers appreciate in a specific sector of the labour market.

These propositions are explored first in data which applied to the students' classroom sessions, and then to their work exploration projects.

[1] Classroom sessions.

Two themes are used to describe the content of the classroom sessions. These are "relevancy" and "compliancy".

[a] The "relevant" curriculum.

One of the intentions of transition education has been shown to be the provision of a "relevant" curriculum. Transition students in "terminal" programmes generally had no traditional academic subjects to study, and their teachers justified this saying among other things that *"academic subjects are really important and useful in the traditonal sense of schooling, and that's only one kind of intelligence." (Fieldnotes, 17/6/86, p.833).* "Relevance" was therefore the hallmark of the discourse of transition teachers in all three schools - it was used as the advertising slogan to attract students from the mainstream to join transition rather than go out "on the streets". A poster displayed prominently in the transition class at Co-Ed High said: *"I've had it up to here with*

school!" As Ms Trilby said to her transition class at the start of the year:

> *It's not very often...it's not really very often in school that you get a chance to do something that is just purely, really, for out of school. This is an opportunity for you. Don't waste it.*
>
> *(Fieldnotes, 12/2/86, p.137)*

It is however necessary to unpack the meanings and assumptions relating to the word "relevant curriculum", first to get to the messages actually communicated to transition students, and second to verify the elements of knowledge which were considered to be "relevant" in all three schools. The focus on the world of adults became apparent, for instance, in the frequent reference to anecdotes and experiences from the teachers' own lives, and from the lives of other adults. Transition teachers laid a claim to *"know more about work than the other teachers, because we meet so many employers and go to so many work places." (Fieldnotes, 19/9/86, p.1209).* They often referred to the experience they accumulated over the years as transition teachers, and frequently came up with anecdotes and stories in the classroom to illustrate the adult experience of life. They moreover distinguished themselves from other teachers by bringing newspapers and magazines rather than textbooks into the classroom, and used them as resources for their educational encounters. These resources, which also included the road code, and tax and bank forms belonged to the "real" and "adult" world. They therefore offered a form of remote preparation for the world that lay ahead of these students.

Transition teachers also attempted to meet the personal needs of students. As one teacher said:

> *Ms Bowie: I like to teach to the area of what they perceive as needs...for me personally it's a question of having a good enough relationship with them, so they can ask and discuss with me what they need and how they're going about getting it.*
>
> *(Fieldnotes, 7/10/86, p.1417)*

While on the surface this might appear to contradict the point made above, a deeper analysis of data reveals that they actually complement each other. Aspects of the lives of students were brought into the classroom to make them accord more with the way "ideal" adults lived their lives - and especially so in the workforce. The "relevant" curriculum therefore taught students how

to get information or advice, handle money, develop a familiarity with essential services in the community, find jobs, secure accomodation and cook cheap, nutritional meals. It tackled subjects like hygiene, sexuality and leisure education. Students were taught interview and telephone techniques, and literacy skills were related directly to the demands of adult and working life. Students practiced filling in forms such as tax returns, the unemployment benefit and bank accounts. Transition students therefore addressed, or actually performed tasks which were related to - or directly prepared them for - adult life. Adult life was however presented in a reified manner. The idea of a "responsible adult" was one who upheld the *status quo* - he or she was respectful and demonstrated "maturity". A particular notion of education prevailed, one describing the adapted person, the person who is more "fit" for the world.

This leads to a second implication of the "relevant curriculum" as observed in this study. Transition teachers felt that since their students were "under-achievers" at school, they would not be interested in any form of intellectual work. This belief meant that compared to the sorts of lessons observed in the mainstream, the content of transition lessons was characterised by minimal preparation, little co-ordination between the different transition teachers, and a lack of an actual body of knowledge and information communicated to the students. At Co-Ed High for instance, during a meeting for transition teachers, it soon became obvious that they were not aware of which topics each was teaching, even when they were meeting the same classes (Fieldnotes, 26/5/86, p.732). Later in the year, Ms Jones admitted that very often she *"didn't know what I was meant to be doing." (Fieldnotes, 21/10/86, p.1519).* While this point will be picked up again in a later section, it is important to note here that often transition students complained that they heard the same things over and over again. An All Girls' transition student for instance made the following comments about the Monday and Friday sessions at school:

> *You come to school, and they ask you what you did in the weekend...All we do is just sit and talk. They could make it worthwhile! Then we go to the next teacher, and we have to start all over again! It's stupid! You end up answering the same old questions!*
>
> *(Fieldnotes, 2/5/86, p.685)*

[b] Teaching Compliancy.

So far, transition programmes have been shown to create a separate school, and to offer students a curriculum which promised "relevancy" - and which delivered it by emphasising skills to cope and fit. There was no teaching observed of a body of knowledge to help them to critically analyse their own experiences and devise alternatives. The emphasis on *status quo* themes was communicated in other ways too. All but one of the transition teachers observed opted to steer clear of any topics which they termed "political" - on three separate occasions, various transition teachers asserted that they did not want to teach "politically" either in a general way (Fieldnotes, 23/6/86, p.854) or about specific issues. There was no recognition of the fact that this avoidance in itself constituted a set of political messages which upheld and justified the established order of things in society. Since transition education is concerned primarily with the future relationship of young people to the production process, it would seem logical to expect the development of an approach which includes a structural analysis of economic and social change, and the implications of this for the nature and distribution of employment opportunities. This expectation was not, however, borne out in any of the transition programmes observed. A critical analysis of work - even in a curriculum specifically created to "prepare students for adult working life" - was ironically absent.

Teachers were not observed directly addressing socio-political issues in their classroom sessions with students. They avoided teaching about trade unions, the nature and dynamics of industrial conflict, and how students as workers could safeguard their rights in the particular locations of the market they were experiencing and were likely to inhabit. At Co-Ed High, Ms Bowie explained that aspects like trade unions were not emphasised because *"in the back of my mind, there's some sort of problem about, you know, not wanting to teach politically." (Fieldnotes, 7/10/86, p.1418).* Transition teachers also failed to discuss another political issue, that of racism.

There were a number of opportunities to address political issues, and these generally came up when students were telling their

teachers what had happened on their work exploration placements. Thus there were incidents where Maori transition students found it difficult to work in an all-Pakeha environment or vice-versa, or when racism became evident on the shop-floor. But the teachers were generally unable and unwilling to deal with such problems. Rather than making of them a *"conscientising"* (Freire, 1972) session, teachers felt more comfortable denying or glossing over such incidents. Thus, there was the case of Toa, a Pacific Islander who was obviously uncomfortable working in an office where all the staff were Pakeha. Ms Kirk became aware of that, but did not discuss the issue, even when Toa started refusing to turn up for work. Toa insisted that she wanted to work at the Department of Maori Affairs, a clear message about how she felt and where she thought she would be comfortable working. On another occasion, Ms Trilby did not accept a Maori boy's reason for disliking his work placement because he was being called a "nigger" (Fieldnotes, 26/5/86, p.732).

Transition teachers had the possibility of critically addressing aspects of the established order in teaching about unemployment. Their students were considered to be, after all, "at risk" of unemployment. Leaving aside the problematic involved in the task of correctly identifying the "at risk" - and the ethical justification of such an attempt - if transition teachers believed that their target group was heading for such a possibility, then it would also be logical to expect that a certain number of messages would be given about the issue of unemployment, about what caused it and how if affected the lives of people. But here again there was little if any education given. One transition teacher said: *"We emphasise employment and jobs with them. We don't want to discourage them." (Fieldnotes, 13/2/86, p.157).* Such a discouragement would discredit the course among transition students, who had joined the course for the express purpose of getting a job.

Unemployment was brought down to the individual level - the very insistence on skills and attitudes in transition programmes constituted a powerful message which implied that a person was unemployed because he or she failed to develop the required qualities. Teachers were observed reinforcing a belief that jobs

could be guaranteed by a kind of ritual which was repeated every time a transition student was offered a job. The teacher would single him or her out in front of the class, and everybody would cheer. The teacher would then make a little speech, and end up saying: *"If you're careful, the next one might be you!" (Fieldnotes, 28/7/86, p.1017).* Students were therefore to do their utmost to develop the required qualities, and to fit as closely as possible the criteria established by employers. They were also enjoined to be patient and remain well-mannered in the face of unsuccessful attempts. A guidance officer from the Department of Labour was invited to talk to the transition students at Co-Ed High. After extolling such qualities as "responsibility", "trustworthiness", and "stickability", he warned:

> *Expect knockbacks...You can safely expect ten to fifteen interviews, because you have to understand they're shopping for the best...and they're quite right to do so.*
>
> *(Fieldnotes, 26/9/86, p.1299)*

There was little suggestion that these young people have a right to be angry at the lack of life chances the present system of economic arrangements is dealing them. If, after they have learned to speak properly, control their anger, dress neatly, cleaned their fingernails, and comb their hair, they are still without a job, then the only way offered them is-to somehow make the best of their poverty. The preparation and formation of a docile worker goes one step further: it is now the preparation of a docile unemployed. Ms Trilby spoke about her opinion of this:

> *I know that these kids are terrified of not having a job. So, I tell them that work is not the be-all and end-all, that it's part of life...if you happen not to get a job, then you go and have a look at something else...going for part-time courses, or draw the unemployment benefit and then go and see what you can do in a hospital or in a service club...or I'll go down to the beach and enjoy surfing! You're not sitting at home watching T.V. all day, because that's hiding. So, how to handle unemployment has to become very much part of it, what they can do, how they can manage their lives, and their money...to keep oneself busy.*
>
> *(Fieldnotes, 5/11/86, p.1612)*

Inter- and Intra-School Differences.

Although few and far between, and submerged under the weight of overt and covert messages reinforcing docility and compliance, there were a number of messages given within the critical education

mode. These were generally given by Ms Trilby who had a more developed political sensibility and was also active in the City Council. She was in fact the only transition teacher to identify a need for discussion with her students of political issues in the work force. However, this was eventually subordinated to other, more important needs. She referred to the usefulness of work exploration as a way to *"bring back some of those injustices and discuss them and develop their self-awareness and self-confidence to be able to tackle them. We ought to implant in them the questioning and the alternatives." (Fieldnotes, 5/11/86, p.1604).* This was mere intentional language however, for such a discussion was never observed by the researcher or reported by students throughout 1986. The only way her intentions reached the classroom was through her anecdotes. These often had a social content which occasionally led to some very relevant discussions about the community and local government policies, and gave students knowledge which could offer them some power over their lives. She encouraged students not to put up with hassling by the police (Fieldnotes, 17/2/86, p.195) and informed them about what their rights as citizens, flat tenants (Fieldnotes, 2/10/86, p.1360) workers and unemployed (Fieldnotes, 5/11/86, p.1604). She was also exceptional in the fact that she explained clearly that they should not have any guilt feeling about receiving the unemployment benefit because the country owed them a job (Fieldnotes, 5/11/86, p.1608). This was a conscious attempt to remove the sense of stigma, failure, and self-blame attached to the notion of being unemployed. Arman, a Maori transition student, said:

> *If I can't find a job, it's not my fault. People want us to think like that. Ms Trilby said that most people think that if people can't find a job, it's their fault. But it's not, really. That's what she says.*
>
> *(Fieldnotes, 2/10/86, p.1360)*

[2] Work Exploration.

In this section, first, the role of work exploration in directing transition students to specific locations in a segmented labour market is described. Then, the use of work exploration by teachers to school their transition students as compliant workers is considered.

[a] Work Exploration and occupational choice.

As has already been described earlier, one of the main official intentions for work exploration was an educational one. By trying out different jobs, transition students were supposed to find out what sort of occupation they would enjoy doing. The notion of transition students choosing a job was also held because teachers felt that unless students were placed in the sorts of jobs they liked, they would *"play up on the job and give the school a bad reputation with the employers" (Fieldnotes 7/7/86, p.926).* This overt aim was however observed to be secondary to the real agenda of transition, and that was to get the students placed as quickly as possible into jobs. The humanistic and liberal discourse surrounding work exploration was quickly set aside to accomodate the real rather than the intended goals. At All Boys' College for instance, Ms Grant explained that the regional officer for transition programmes had told her not to leave students on the same work placement for more than six weeks, as this could lead to exploitation by employers. While she agreed with him in principle, she knew that *"leaving them at the same place for a long time is the only way one of our boys will get a job if a position comes up." (Fieldnotes, 7/7/86, p.922).*

Students placed little value on the educational objectives of work exploration. They were in a desperate hurry to get employment - both because they wanted to leave school and because they felt themselves to be a financial burden on their parents. For transition students especially, any job was a job as long as it gave them access to a livelihood. Teachers were aware of this, and they too put increasingly more value on the job-getting potential of work explorations. One Co-Ed High transition teacher noted:

> *Ms Bowie: They're fairly uncaring about what job they get really. They don't mind what the job is as long as it's a job. A lot of them are like that... because quite often the phone rings, and an employer says: "We've got a job as a roofer", for instance. They might never have heard of it before, and yet two or three of them would volunteer for the interview and try to get it.*
>
> *(Fieldnotes, 7/10/86, p.1416)*

Students were generally placed in the sorts of occupations they wanted to experience, but these choices, which in the discourse of transition represented free acts of judgement, were mediated by

what teachers considered to be reasonable and "realistic". Thus, although Co-Ed High teachers spoke of encouraging students not to lower their sights, and to go for a "career" rather than "just a job" (Fieldnotes,5/11/86, p.1617) the job-getting imperative made them urge realism on these students, confirming for them their working-class futures. This applied here even more than it did in the case of mainstream students.

An example of transition teachers acting out the role of decision-makers is provided in the following excerpt from a transition lesson at Co-Ed High. Ms Bowie was trying to organise job placements for the following six weeks, and the following exchange took place between her and one of the students:

Stephen: *Miss...I'd like to stay where I am for work experience.*

Ms Bowie: *No you can't. Your six weeks are up. What do you want to do?*

Stephen: *I want to be a cook miss.*

Ms Bowie: *I'll try to get you to work in a coffee lounge.*

Stephen: *I want to be a cook, not a bleedin' coffee lounge waiter!*

Ms Bowie: *Right! I'll talk to you when you are in a better mood.*

Stephen: *Can I go to the cop shop?*

Ms Bowie: *Not with your record!...and besides, they won't have anybody under nineteen.*

(Fieldnotes, 24/3/86, p.496)

The teachers - and students - were aware that any employment that students might gain as a direct result of having attended transition courses would be within the secondary sector of the labour market. Such employment was likely to be unskilled, marginal, poorly paid and insecure. This awareness was never made explicit to the students. Rather, the students were urged, in subtle ways as observed in the passage above, to lower their sights and to be "realistic". As Ms Kirk said:

> *I try to show them they have to be adaptable, and if they're going to sit there set on having this one job, they're very likely not to get that one job. They have to take what they get initially. It doesn't mean that they necessarily have to be content with doing something paid. I suggest that they take any opportunity that comes up, within*

> *reason, in the sense that they've got something to be going on with, and they're establishing work patterns at the same time, and they're gaining more experience in certain areas, and hopefully they can progress from there to something they really like.*
> *(Fieldnotes, 2/10/86, p.1526)*

The criterion for "realism" applied not only to the expectations of low socio-economic and non-achieving students, but also to stereotyped expectations related to gender locations in the labour market. Despite the odd exhortation within the transition programmes at Co-Ed High and All Girls' High about the value of choosing a non-traditional job (Fieldnotes, 30/6/86, p.881), not a single girl was placed in traditionally male domains. Despite the feminist ethos, all of the jobs offered at All Girls' High were not only in the secondary sector, but also in the traditionally female area. These included office-type work, work in textile factories, and work as shop assistants. On one occasion, a transition student expressed a strong desire to work in a garage (Fieldnotes, 2/5/86, p.613). Ms Kirk promised to look into it, but nothing came of it. Although this cannot be attributed to the teacher's negligence as much as to a lack of vacancies for females in traditionally male domains, the educational claims for work exploration can only be sustained if such experiences in the challenging of sex-stereotypes were provided for male and female students on the course.

[b] Work exploration and schooling for compliancy.

Rather than "occupational choice", the securing of employment was observed to be the main goal of the students in transition. This job-getting imperative acted to constrain and limit the declared intentions of transition education and work exploration. Despite the emphasis on "transition to adulthood" rather than "transition to work", the placement of students into work determined the success of the course in the eyes of students, parents and staff generally. [3] Ms Jones gave a clear account of these pressures on her as a transition teacher, pressures which made the securing of

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3. Moreover, the very jobs the transition teachers held - appointed as they were on a discretionary, yearly basis rather than permanently (a concern which emerged as a major one at the first National Conference for Transition Teachers, 1986) - can be considered to be dependent on being seen to place as many students as possible into the workforce.

employment for her students rather than critical education the major preoccupation. She said:

> *I was so anxious to get these kids into the workforce that we tended to stress ways that they can get a job...and that's been our major aim,and perhaps other aims have been diverted...so we say "Right! Make sure you do this, this and that." So, my central messages have been about things like good manners, dress, taking a pride in their appearance, and you tell them that all of us have to do things we don't want to, and that you can't go through life just doing what you want...ehm...that benefits rub off if you give your best, the boss is likely to treat you well. That the way things are in the world today, reliability, punctuality, things like that will get them jobs.*
>
> *(Fieldnotes, 21/10/86, p.1519)*

As Ms Jones' discourse above implies, the employers' perceived criteria and needs dictated which kind of knowledge, information and attitudes became part of the content of the transition curriculum. As Ms Kirk said about her transition programme: *"What's really important is to see what employers are looking for, what qualities they're after, and we try to supply that." (Fieldnotes, 17/2/86, p.198).* The world of the employer informed the curriculum in a number of ways. On the days when students discussed their experiences at their work exploration placements, the emphasis in all three schools was placed on, as Ms Bowie explained, the utilisation of those experiences as valuable "teaching moments":

> *I always have one period a week where we talk about things that come up during work experience. Sometimes we take a lesson about it, but often we talk about it as a group, and discuss: "What should you have done?" and "What does the employer really want? What was he expecting of you?"*
>
> *(Fieldnotes, 7/10/86, p.1421)*

Employers' criteria therefore determined whether a student was "successful" or not as a transition student. All employers were sent evaluation sheets, and the comments which were to be included referred to such things as "attitudes", "dependability", "attendance", "punctuality", "sense of responsibility", and "ability to learn duties". Such qualities were of course appreciated by prospective real employers, and for this reason transition students valued the references highly because they could one day be a ticket to a permanent job. The use of employers'

criteria for evaluating students was not considered to be problematic by transition teachers. The latter in fact developed a vocabulary of their own, with "maturity" and "transition readiness" having very specific meanings, referring to whether the particular students had assimilated the messages and attitudes passed on about being a "good worker". With reference to one transition student for instance, Ms Bowie said:

> *She's O.K. now...though she could have a horrid temper. But I've heard she's really controlling herself now. She sometimes speaks in slang to customers, and her boss sets her right. Now, if I know her, she would snap back at something like that. But it seems she's taking it now!*
>
> *(Fieldnotes, 27/3/86, p.525)*

The employers' world was communicated in other ways too. Teachers were anxious to report back to students comments made by employers. On one of Ms Grant's visits to work exploration sites, an employer said he would consider giving the boy concerned a job if he had better "work habits". Ms Grant commented to the researcher on their way to visit other students:

> *I'll tell them what that guy told me. That's the only way to get them. They will know what employers are looking for. It's a lesson for the whole class.*
>
> *(Fieldnotes, 7/7/86, p.923)*

In class, Ms Grant explained to her students that they had to be ready to put up quietly with any-of the employer's demands if they wanted to have any job at all:

> *You might have to prepare morning tea or sweep up the workshop...You mustn't go off and think you're going to be the bossman! There are those menial jobs that have to be done. It's no use grumbling about having to sweep the floor and make tea...Look at the juniors. It's usually the person last on the staff that does all those menial jobs, and that's all part of the job.*
>
> *(Fieldnotes, 20/10/86, p.1505)*

Since the students generally changed their placement every so often, many found themselves repeatedly doing the "menial tasks". Ms Trilby introduced work experience to her class in the following way:

> *For you to be able to take part in this privilege of being on work experience, you'll have to be ready to do more than just what you like. We are all good at doing what we like. It's the mundane, every-day things which show up your worth as a person. Any fifteen-year-old would like taking an engine apart. It's the sweeping up afterwards which shows what sort of person you are.*
>
> *(Fieldnotes, 24/3/86, p.498)*

Employers' criteria and values were brought into the classroom in little ways too - indeed, their presence was never far away from the educational encounter. A spelling test for instance was justified in the following manner:

Ms Bowie: *Employers have been complaining that you do not know basic spelling...and that is important if you have to carry notes around, or if you have things to read on your work placement.*

(Fieldnotes, 24/3/86, p.492)

Work exploration was also used to instil and reinforce the work ethic which the teachers presumed was in danger of disappearing. Two Co-Ed High transition teachers were overheard talking about a student: *"He wants to stay where he is for work experience because he works short hours. He's too lazy...We have to get him a job where he has to wake up at seven in the morning for it." (Fieldnotes, 24/3/86, p.497).*

Whether it was through the classroom sessions, or through the work exploration projects, transition education was therefore observed functioning in a way which schooled students into the kinds of attitudes and skills required of them in a specific sector of the labour market.

8.2.3. PEDAGOGY AND TRANSITION EDUCATION.

Two propositions are explored in this section. First, the pedagogical relationships developed in transition education themselves reinforce the overt message which promotes compliancy and obedience. Second, to re-establish status, transition education moves towards a model of schooling closely resembling the mainstream in its coercive pedagogic style.

Despite the humanistic discourse organised around the themes of "relevance", and "preparation for adult life and work", transition education reproduced the same patterns evident in mainstream schooling. What was intended to be an alternative way of schooling ended up with similar teacher-student hierarchical relationships and coercive disciplinary styles. This brought various contradictions to the surface, which some students were able to articulate, for here was a programme which set out to be different, and which had as an agenda the development of self-confidence and

self-esteem in the students, but which in reality ignored the real lives of the participants. The very physical space in which the transition curriculum was communicated revived images of discipline and imposition which students had experienced in the mainstream. As one of them said, *"I don't like it when we meet Ms Kirk, because it's at school, and it makes me feel like I was a school kid again." (Fieldnotes, 2/5/86, p.699).*

Since students had come to transition to get away from school, they strongly resisted any form of pedagogy or structure which reminded them of schooling. The only alternatives teachers knew in the form of pedagogy and teaching was story-telling and general discussion. As one Co-Ed transition student said of his teacher: *"We like Ms Trilby because she tells stories all the time." (Fieldnotes, 7/4/86, p.556).* However, unfailingly teachers were observed falling back to patterns of behaviour and control they had practised in the mainstream. This happened frequently as students in all three schools, and throughout the year, exhibited behaviour which showed their opinion about the classroom encounters. They often arrived intentionally late, threw paper around, constantly talked and roamed around the class, interrupted and hassled the teacher. The following descriptions are typical of many transition lessons observed throughout the year:

> *The atmosphere in the class is unsettled. A boy who is supposed to be writing about why he absented himself on Friday throws the paper out of the window. Craig talks constantly with his friend, and Ms Bowie sends him to the back of the class on his own. Sharon is describing her activities over the weekend to her friend. Brett arrives late, as usual. He has no pen or paper, as usual.*
>
> *(Fieldnotes, 17/3/86, p.410)*

> *Ms Jones is trying to get her students to cut advertisements from newspapers and apply in writing for particular jobs. It is obvious that the students hate writing. "Miss, all these jobs are in Auckland! I don't want to go to Auckland!" shouts one. Fred can't seem to settle down. Ms Jones moves next to him, and tells him to get on with it. "I've done this before," he says. "Show me your exercise book then," says Ms Jones. Of course, Fred's "notes" have disappeared from between the covers of the exercise book a long time ago. Paper airplanes perhaps? Naroi says with a straight face he has found a good job to apply to. Ms Jones asks what it is. "Lecturer at Massey University," replies Naroi, with a grin over his face. The class*

> *bursts out laughing. Andrew tells him: "You've got to be brainy for that! You're still a bum!" Ms Jones says: "Let's find something more suitable for you...perhaps there's a fitter's job, or a welder, or perhaps a grocery assistant." The students muck around. Ms Jones loses her patience: "This exercise is to help you get a job! If you don't do it, go back to your form class or get lost!"*
>
> *(Fieldnotes, 26/5/86,p.730)*

Writing was used as a punishment at Co-Ed High, and when students "forgot" their pen and exercise book, the teacher always had extra pens and paper ready to show them that they could not get away with the ruse so easily. On one occasion, the students had to write "True" or "False" at the end of twenty statements. A student asked if she had to write out the whole statement as well. Ms Bowie answered: *"I won't make you write it all down because I feel like being nice to you." (Fieldnotes, 24/2/86, p.221).*

Other less subtle control techniques were used by all transition teachers. Students were sent out for coming late, or taken into the office and shouted at. Others were told to leave.

> Ms Jones: *Dione is going to be given an ultimatum today. We have to weed out those who are not willing, people like Brett who never comes with a paper or pencil. Some are just not trying.*
>
> *(Fieldnotes, 6/5/86, p.712)*

Thus, certain aspects of classroom pedagogy - including top-down management, the compulsory performance of tasks which had no real relevance or utility to the students, the imposition of punishment, and the use of authority as coercive technique - were often justified by the transition teachers as necessary because through them, students were being prepared for the demands of the workforce. "Preparation for work" in these terms becomes the moulding of correct behaviour and attitudes, so that these students will learn to fit into the established way of things.

Indeed, the picture of transition students carefully copying out a "model" letter of application, as if their economic future depended on it, serves as a powerful symbol for the transition programmes observed throughout 1986. For the main agenda was that these students, often Maori/Polynesian, generally working class, and certainly always disadvantaged, had to somehow change the way they acted, spoke, dressed, and thought even for the tantalising goal of getting a job...and any sort of job at that.

All schools studied emphasised punctuality. At All Girls' High, the students were required to "clock in" and sign their name in the register during their Monday and Friday sessions at school. Ms Kirk explained to the girls:

> *In certain jobs that is what you have to do, and if you write 9.00 a.m. when you've actually come in at 9.10 a.m., you might be severely talked to by your boss.*
>
> *(Fieldnotes, 11/4/86, p.595)*

The same explanation was given regarding chewing gum: *"You're not supposed to have that at work, so you won't eat that in class." (Fieldnotes, 14/4/86, p.603).* Ms Trilby explained how she had dealt with Fred, who had "wagged" transition on Monday to go to the Maori culture group:

> *I told him that if he were to be in the army, which is where he'd like to go for an automechanic apprenticeship, he can't just leave or arrive when he felt like it. He was close to tears at the end of all that. I asked him whether he was going to take Pre-Employment seriously, or move back into school. He still chose Pre-Employment of course, and I marched him off to class.*
>
> *(Fieldnotes, 16/4/86, p.636)*

Language and dress too had to be edited to fit the requirements of the "model worker", so that transition education becomes a parody of the old finishing schools, -preparing students not for some attractive future, but *"for some crummy job in a dairy,"* as one student put it. Teachers therefore not only failed to incorporate students' real material and cultural experiences but they seemed unable to handle the often "vulgar" language in which it was expressed. They therefore imposed value and linguistic parameters on the students which bonded them into either silence or resistance. During a transition lesson at All Girls' High, where students were reporting problems they had encountered on their work placements, one of them said:

Claire: *My boss is just a dumb old bat! She doesn't let me do anything!*

Teacher: *Don't use words like that with her! You'll get youself in trouble.*

Claire: *But she is an old bat!*

(Fieldnotes, 11/4/86, p.597)

Summary.

Transition students are seen as being of less importance and worthy of less status than students in the mainstream because of the form of transition education as a separate school. The ideological significance of this is heightened with the recognition that transition students belong to the subordinate groups of society. Whether it was through the classroom sessions, or through the work exploration projects, transition education functioned to school these students into the kinds of attitudes and skills required of them in a specific sector of the labour market. Under the guise of the "relevant curriculum" and learning about work by actually performing it, students were encouraged to accept employers' criteria. The interface between school and adult life was shown to be mediated by the learning of a series of relevant skills, the assumption being that transition students were deficient in them and that once this deficiency was compensated for, their "transition-to-work" would proceed smoothly. These assumptions have been shown to be, in themselves, vital messages given through the structure of the transition courses for they bring the questions of "broken transitions" (Willis, 1986) down from the level of politics and economics to the level of the individual. Such assumptions are also seen as a response to calls from within the "new vocationalism" where the problems of youth unemployment are framed within a discourse which portrays some young people as not being "job-ready", and as not having the necessary skills to get and keep a job. The coercive pedagogical relationships developed within transition education reinforce many of these messages and attitudes.

8.3. STUDENTS AND TRANSITION EDUCATION.

INTRODUCTION.

In this third major section of this chapter, attention is focused on the reception given by transition students to the messages given and implied in the form, content and pedagogy of the transition programmes as described above. As in the previous three chapters,

students were found to be active participants in the construction and negotiation of meanings, so that they not only accepted some messages but actively contested others. These reactions are described in turn below.

8.3.1. RECEPTION OF TRANSITION EDUCATION.

Two propositions are explored in this section. First, the form of transition education as a separate school defeats the primary explicit intention of promoting self-esteem among its clientele. Second, it also reproduces and reinforces the distinction between the practical and the academic, and gives higher status to the latter.

There were ambivalent feelings towards transition education observed among both students from the mainstream and transition students themselves. On the one hand, the programmes revolved around what appeared to be a refreshingly relevant curriculum. Mainstream students for instance believed that the knowledge and skills given in the transition programmes were worth knowing. As seventh form Co-Ed High students said, comparing their curriculum to that of transition:

Jason: *Some of the things we learn are so irrelevant and useless. Last year, our Maths teacher said: "Look, you have to learn this...it's never going to be of any use to you, but you have to know it for your School Certificate exam."*

Terry: *We never do practical things...that's the Pre-Employment class that does things like that isn't it? We'd be better off in one of those transition classes I reckon! All we get to do is academic stuff. We end up knowing why and how a thing is done, but we never actually get to doing it!*
(Fieldnotes, 28/2/86, p.267)

Students on these programmes were seen from year to year going out on work exploration, and many of them were known to have secured jobs. For the students in the mainstream, that seemed very alluring, and transition students appeared to have a certain adult status because they went out to work. A fifth form student expressed a commonly felt sentiment among mainstream students in all three schools when he remarked: *"Those fellas on transition, they've got work experience, and they've got a better chance of getting a job than us. I knows two fellas from there who got a job." (Fieldnotes, 22/9/86, p.1235).*

On the other hand, the transition programmes were perceived to belong to the separate school. Senior students from All Boys' said for instance:

Dean: *They're "the rejects"...that's what we call them! The dumb class! There's two sides of the argument. One says they should be separated, and the other says they should be brought into the school, because they're sort of left out in the cold. They sort of develop their own cliques down there. Very few of them get out and play rugby, or join teams.*

Richie: *They stick to themselves, and have fun among themselves.*

(Fieldnotes, 1/10/86,p.1345)

Mainstream students, like their teachers, attributed a lower status to transition students within the school. Earlier it has been shown that school creates forms of life and generates ways of perceiving reality. An aspect of this process is the way in which it elevates types of work and activity - namely those which are intellectual - and gives a lower status to others. Students were found to have received and integrated such messages. Mainstream students considered transition programmes to be aimed at the non-academic and the misbehaving individuals. They knew that to be referred to transition meant that school had given up on them and the only alternative, aside from expulsion, was to be channelled out of the "real school" by those in authority. It became obvious that students in all three schools had received this particular message, even at Co-Ed High where the programmes had more status and were given more recognition by the administration. Mainstream students there saw both the advantages and disadvantages of being in the transition class, and after weighing both, were generally unwilling to cross over to the separate school. Two fifth formers explained:

Andrew: *Pre-Employment is quite good really...I know two of them, and both got a job through that. But it's got a bad reputation. It's all the drop-outs who go there. I was thinking of going, but I don't know if I would, because everybody looks at it as if it's for dropouts.*

Greg: *But at least you get a job.*

Andrew: *Most of the ones who were on it this year were drop-outs, and the only reason they went on it was because they didn't want to bother to do any work at school. They were all heavy metallers!*

(Fieldnotes, 9/10/86, p.1453)

Transition students at all three schools clearly received the

message about their lower status in the school. Despite the fact that transition teachers gave primary importance to the intention of boosting the self-esteem of their students, the very form of the education they were providing gave a conflicting message. It was this second message which was generally received by transition students. As an All Girls' student said:

> *When you tell others that you're on the transition-to-work course, a lot of people go "Oh yuk!...You're on that!" as if you were bums, or a drop-out of school.*
>
> *(Fieldnotes, 2/5/86, p.686)*

Transition students were able to articulate the perception that they had lower status, but also that behind all the humanistic discourse, there was another agenda at work in the transition classroom. This agenda had to do with a specific form of education, one which encouraged the formation of attitudes and outlooks which were functional to the world of work. Looking back at the year he had spent on transition, a Co-Ed High student summarised what he felt his teachers had attempted to achieve:

> *I suppose their aim in transition was trying to show us how the "rat race" works. You know...just generally show us the ins and outs to get on in a job situation. They try to make a good atmosphere of work, so that work is supposed to be good, that you enjoy your work and get a lot out of it. They tell us that it's no good turning up late for an interview. Employers want good people that want to work, that get on with other people...and that you have to be obedient and loyal. We get told how to get on with your boss, because otherwise you'll find yourself on the dole or something.*
>
> *(Fieldnotes, 10/11/86, p.1635)*

8.3.2. ACCEPTANCE OF TRANSITION.

Two propositions are explored in this section. First, students are capable of penetrating the humanistic discourse informing transition education and can highlight the underlying functional one - that of using transition not for educational ends but for securing employment for oneself. Second, transition education participates not only in a model of compensatory education, but also in one of positive discrimination. It provides cultural capital - in the form of contacts with employers - to a specific group of students.

Transition students were observed receiving and generally accepting the major transition discourse, which defined them as deficient, in a variety of ways. These ways have been shown to relate to job-readiness in terms of both pre-employment skills and specific attitudes towards work and authority. This acceptance was however more characteristic of the responses and observations students made at the start of the transition programmes. By the end, contestation of messages given within transition, of the transition teachers themselves, and of transition as a whole was more typical.

At the start of the year however, students agreed that their vulnerable position on the fringes of school and the labour market was entirely due to their lack of commitment to mainstream schooling. This sort of acceptance can be seen in the comments made by the following two Co-Ed High students who had been referred to transition by their dean:

Craig: *We just kept getting into trouble, and didn't do school work...and he said we'd be better off if we came to Pre-Employment.*

Martin: *I got into it the same way really. I was doing some of the work, but still gave them trouble. They're trying to help us. If they wanted to get rid of us, they'd just expel us.*

Craig: *Yeah...if you're not doing well at school, they might just as well help you find a job.*

(Fieldnotes, 17/3/86, p.415)

Transition students accepted such channelling out of the "real school" as deserved and as "natural" - they accepted that the problem, manifested in misbehaviour, was solely within them and not part of the type of schooling they were receiving. They also accepted that it was reasonable to defer their entry into the workforce to learn the cognitive and cultural skills which they were being told they lacked. This acceptance is evident in the comments made by an All Girls' High transition student who said:

Beverly: *When you are at school, you're in your own world. You don't worry about anything else, and you don't know much about work. But going to work experience sort of wakes you up, and you see that it's not easy, that you have to develop yourself...like getting up early in the morning and working right through the day...and then you have to wake up the next day.*

(Fieldnotes, 2/5/86, p.696)

Transition students also generally accepted the humanistic vocabulary used by their teachers which described them as needing

"self-confidence", "self-esteem" and "social skills". They considered that in agreeing to view themselves as lacking the required abilities and attitudes, and in accepting to cultivate such qualities, they were getting closer to the employment which had so far eluded them. A Co-Ed transition student for instance said *"I learned a lot from my work experience...I learned...what does Ms Bowie call it?...social manners. You've got to know how to get on with other people." (Fieldnotes, 26/9/86, p.1306).* Moana, another Co-Ed student, described how the transition course had influenced her attitude, and how hard she was trying to toe the line:

Moana: *If we didn't have this Pre-Employment, and we left school now, we could go out, say to Mary's Bakery, and those people don't know what you're like, and you've never been through Pre-Employment...You get in a shitty mood, and you take it out on the boss. And then everything goes kaput eh! So, it's good to have that here. They really help you to try to change your attitude towards people and how you dress, to try and...what did she call it?...Mature yourself or something?*

R.S.: *What do you do when you get brassed off then?*

Moana: *I just walk into the toilet or something...and hit the wall...and then I come out.*
(Fieldnotes, 3/3/86, p.288)

Students accepted the definition of themselves as deficient, and therefore also accepted the kinds of working futures deemed appropriate for them by their teachers. They were willing to co-operate with the school and accept the discourse about them as "low achievers", and deserving the peripheral economic future mapped out for them. The vast majority of the jobs obtained through transition education belonged to the secondary sector, and hence through work exploration, the school helped to reproduce the working-class futures of these students. While transition students grumbled about "crummy jobs in a dairy", or becoming "a bleedin' waiter", they ultimately accepted such jobs because they needed the wage and all it represented. They also hated school too much and therefore practically anything was a better alternative. Moreover they had rarely conjured up any other possible future for themselves. Only one of all the transition students observed resisted the future deemed appropriate for her. An All Girls' transition student, said

Cherie: *Most of the jobs you get when you're on transition you don't get anywhere. Who wants to work in a*

dairy?! So, I'll just get a reference from my work experience, and then try to get into Tech.
(Fieldnotes, 2/5/86, p.689)

Most of the students accepted the definition of themselves as deficient, and they generally came to the conclusion that if they failed at a job, it was because they had not developed the necessary social manners or self-control which had been recommended. This self-blame also applied to their failure in securing employment. They accepted that if they did not get a job, it was basically because they had not tried hard enough. They should have polished their interview skills, or combed their hair better, or learned to speak "proper". Few transition students were able to penetrate the common-sense discourse to realise that if everyone became as proficient as they were in the "social graces" and manners appreciated by employers, then competition - and not jobs - would increase. Like their teachers, students thought of the job market in individual terms. They saw their friends get jobs, and therefore the conclusion followed that there were jobs out there for them too. It followed therefore that the reasons for unemployment which were constructed were almost always of the blame-the-victim type. Typical comments made by transition students were that *"Most don't get jobs because they muck around too much." (Fieldnotes, 15/4/86, p.606).*[4] The negative image of unemployed people as "dole bludgers" was particularly vivid among transition students. Only two of the students interviewed throughout the year said that they wanted to enrol for the unemployment benefit.[5] Much more typical were the reluctance and strong determination evident in the following excerpt from an interview with a Co-Ed High transition student:

Moana: *I've always had a saying that I'll never become a dole bludger...I've always said that I'll never go on the dole.*

R.S.: *You feel it's something bad?*

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4. Bethune and Ballard's (1986) study of fifty young job seekers in Dunedin, New Zealand, revealed tht 70% of the respondents attributed their unemployment to personal deficiencies.

5. There is therefore little evidence to show that the "work ethic" among young people is in the throes of death. Research carried out by Ambrosius (1983) in the South Island and by Teague (1985) in the North Island of New Zealand suggest that young people still look towards work for satisfaction and fulfilment.

Moana: *Yeah...I don't know why. I've just had that saying all my life. See, when I found out my step brother was on the dole, he just bummed around like a bummer. I remember I said to my mother, I said: "I'm not going on the dole." And she goes "What if it's the last thing you'll do?" And I go, "I still won't go on the dole."*

(Fieldnotes, 3/3/86, p.293)

Even those who might have considered enrolling for the unemployment benefit had received and accepted the covert and overt messages embedded in transition education where, as has been shown earlier, the work ethic was extolled. As one All Girls' High transition student said: *"If I was on the dole, and didn't have a job, I'd probably be tempted to bum around. I don't think I could be a bum now, because I really miss working." (Fieldnotes, 2/5/86, p.696).*

Students accepted transition education, and specifically work exploration, for a number of reasons. They were ready to enjoy lower status in the school, and to accept a view of themselves as somehow deficient because such an acceptance was a key to securing a job. They knew they had no qualifications, and generally had no hope or inclination of getting any. Weighing up the situation, they had two choices open to them: to leave school and try to get a job on their own, or to join transition and be helped to get a job. Students were able to penetrate the discourse which promoted skills and self-confidence and realised that the key to employment lay in work experience. For transition students, this represented a back door to employment in two ways. First it placed them on the shop floor, the place where the hiring of and firing from jobs in the secondary sector are often carried out. Second, each placement gave them a reference based on an evaluation of work habits and attitudes. The references were invaluable as powerful and convincing proof to employers of their standing as workers. Students who normally symbolically vented their anger and frustration with schooling on any form of paper, kept employers' references neatly in envelopes. They knew that for the sorts of jobs they could aspire to, "attitudes" mattered more than grades, as the following interview excerpt shows:

R.S.: *Why are you back at school?*

Adriana: *We get a better chance of finding a job.*

R.S.: *How?*

Moana: *Through the work experience, we might get the first chance. If someone leaves, you might be the first one they'll try, because they know you.*

Shawn: *Most jobs are hard to find. You've got to be patient and one day you might just..see, even if I don't get that job that I'm working on now, my work experience, you never know...one of the men might retire and they might just phone me, phone the person who worked there on work experience, and they say if you want to work for them...I'm just hoping that I'll get that job.*

Fred: *Like the place that you're working at...they might like the way you're working. They can help you on. It's like an apprentice, a trial run.*

Shawn: *They write a report about you...*

Moana: *A reference.*

Fred: *And you keep it till you apply for another job.*

Shawn: *And you just hand it over to your new boss, and straightaway they see that you have experience about that job.*

R.S.: *When you say reference, what do you mean?*

Fred: *It means how you're working...what you're like.*

Shawn: *Yeah...if you get to work on time, your attitudes and manners...*

Fred: *How you adapt to your job...*

Moana: *How you adapt to the people, and how your personality is, because you might be a really bad-tempered person, and not able to take orders from your boss.*

(Fieldnotes, 3/3/86, pp.280-1)

This excerpt shows how well some students could "read" the functioning of a particular sector of the job market, its recruitment procedures and its dependence on contacts to land oneself a job.[6]

It became obvious that transition students, like students from the mainstream, had informally developed a sophisticated formula for

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6. In this regard therefore, the present research challenges Corban's (1985) conclusion that transition students did not know how to find work; by making such a statement, Corban unwittingly reinforces the blame-the-victim approach she criticises. It is precisely because they know how jobs are obtained that these students have decided to join transition courses!

job-getting. Transition students were moreover wily enough to use the school resources for their own ends - for them, work exploration provided the "experience" factor in the job-getting formula described in an earlier chapter. As one student said, *"Transition gives you more of a chance to get a job. It would be more hard if you didn't come to school at all. You actually get to go places this way, and you get experience too." (Fieldnotes, 17/3/86, p.412).*

It was also obvious that work exploration provided the necessary "contacts" factor in the job-getting formula. Students were aware of the fact that their transition teachers knew many employers: indeed, they had whole lists of them so that they could place their students for work experience. As one Co-Ed transition student said: *"Ms Trilby knows a lot of people...she can get us jobs." (Fieldnotes, 26/9/86, p.1310).* In other words, these students knew that they did not have the "cultural capital" (Bourdieu, 1977) - in terms of contacts with employers - to secure themselves a job. But they also recognised that the networks established by their transition teachers could act as a substitute.[7] They hoped to gain employment more easily riding, so to speak, on the comet's tail of school contacts. Students therefore might not have realised that transition programmes did not create jobs at the macro level, but at the level which counted for them - the individual level - the programmes seemed to be unlocking jobs. A transition student who wanted to become an apprentice hairdresser knew that there were a hundred and fifty applicants like him for only two apprenticeships in the city. He left the sixth form mainstream, and by the end of the year, had obtained the job. He told the researcher he would never have managed without the contacts Ms Bowie and Ms Trilby had. Moreover, transition teachers took risks on students' behalf and withheld information from employers. At Co-Ed High, teachers did not tell an employer about the kelptomanic tendencies of a

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7. This is probably especially true for students from ethnic minorities, if research from the United States applies to the New Zealand situation. Becker (1979) demonstrated that blacks have less access to personal networks which included whites who could act as referees or job intermediaries. McPartland *et al.* (1985) also found that social networks to which whites are attached are more useful in the United States for access to jobs than are the social networks to which blacks are attached.

particular student. She was thus accepted first on work exploration and finally for paid work at a dairy (grocer's shop). At All Boys' College, a student was unable to get himself a job, and was continually turned down by employers (once in the researcher's presence) because of his family's bad criminal record. However, through work exploration and the untiring efforts of his teacher, he managed to get a permanent job by the end of the year. A total of 13 transition students from all three schools (Co-Ed High = 7, All Girls = 3, All Boys = 3) had obtained jobs by the end of the year.

Transition students often got jobs in sectors of the labour market which were characterised by instability and precariousness. They were also at risk of being dismissed once they became eighteen and eligible for an "adult wage". A longitudinal type of research is needed to ascertain how long students were kept on jobs they got through the transition programme. In all probability, the duration would not be long. Through chance meetings, the researcher found that by the early part of 1987, four of the thirteen students who had obtained jobs were unemployed. During a weekend seminar for transition teachers from the city's secondary schools and Technical Insitute, a transition tutor running a Training Assistance Programme at the Technical Institute said:

> *I used to run a Transition course at Co-Ed High with Ms Trilby. We used to take up the pupils rejected by the mainstream...Only to find them now in our schemes! And it's the second or third programme they've been regurgitated through...I wonder what we're training them for now!*
>
> *(Fieldnotes, 5/7/86, p.928)*

8.3.3. STUDENTS' CONTESTATION OF TRANSITION EDUCATION.

Six propositions are explored in this section. First, students contest the educational goals of transition, and instead give priority to its value in unlocking jobs for them. Second, such a contestation signifies that they do not accept the definition of themselves as deficient. Third, transition education, with its emphasis on living and coping skills, is targeted at those students in the the school who are already the most adept in these areas. Fourth, contestation does not necessarily turn on itself to reproduce the future mapped out by the institution for the

individual. Fifth, the aims to promote self-esteem and self-confidence are defeated by the model of compensatory education which transition is steeped in. Sixth, transition education and its teachers fail to acknowledge the needs and culture of students, and therefore the claims for the relevancy of the curriculum provided are unfounded.

Students' reception of transition - its programmes and its messages - was characterised above all by contestation. This contestation took place on a number of levels, and each is considered in turn.

[a] Contestation of goals for transition.

Despite teachers' intentions to redirect transition away from its purely vocational and job-oriented nature to a wider sense of preparation for adult life, students consistently emphasised the former rather than the latter. They joined the programme for two reasons - to get out of mainstream schooling and to get a job. This emphasis was evident in their choice of vocabulary, always calling the programmes "pre-employment" rather than "transition". The following students from the All Girls transition programme cover all the reasons students gave throughout the year for joining transition.

R.S.: *Why are you on the transition course?*

Toa: *Oh! I was sick and tired of school!*

Tina: *It's hard to find a job.*

Judy: *I wanted to leave school, and I was told about this Pre-Employment course, and that I could join it. It's better than just staying at home. It gives you some experience and that.*

Carla: *Yeah...it's better than being on the dole. Here at least you're doing something with your time. You're not just sitting and watching T.V...you're making use of your time, and meeting friends.*

(Fieldnotes, 2/5/86, p.682)

Only two students in all three schools mentioned the educational objectives which were given so much emphasis in the teachers' intentional language. They both mentioned that they had joined transition because work exploration offered them a means of finding out which occupation they wanted to do. Michelle, a Maori Co-Ed High student, explained: *"Work experience helps you sort out what*

career you want to do. I'm sort of battling out between an office job or a nursing home. I'm not too sure yet." (Fieldnotes, 10/10/86,p.1464). Another student from All Girls' gave the same reason for joining the transition course. In her case, she wanted to find out whether she would be happy as a pharmacy assistant. It is important to point out that both girls represented the academic students in the transition classes. They were two of the five students who joined transition from the sixth form, and one of them - Beverly - moved back into the mainstream sixth form after spending two months on transition.

[b] Contestation of the targeting of transition.

It has been shown that transition teachers argued that the skills and knowledge they were communicating covered areas which were not only relevant but also worth knowing. These same areas - referred to earlier as "life skills" and "social skills" - were considered to be relevant and worthy only for a specific group of students. They were therefore not to be found in the mainstream curriculum. The only exception to this was at Co-Ed High, but even there, the mainstream Lifeskills course was perceived to be a "soft option" (Fieldnotes, 27/3/86, p.522), a "cop-out of school" (Fieldnotes, 17/2/86, p.196) and a recruiting ground for possible drop-outs and future "full-time" transition students.

The life and social skills approach to transition has also been shown to be couched in a discourse which implies that certain groups of young people lack the cultural and cognitive resources which they have somehow not obtained (see also Atkinson *et al.*, 1982, p.120). There were two contestations to these definitions. The first came from mainstream students who felt that as young people always involved with the academic and the abstract, they were the ones who should receive such a practical curriculum. Seventh form students from All Girls' High:

Karen: *It's only the...what do you call them?...the Pre-Employment class who do interesting stuff. Everybody needs to know how to open a Bank Account...all you have been doing if you're academic is studying, while the others, who aren't so academic, have been exploring other areas. We, at the seventh form level...we need it more than anyone really, because we haven't experienced how to get on with people.*

Sarah: *I don't even know how to write out a cheque!*

Karen: *But we have to know all this! I've no idea about banking or budgeting. Even a crash course about car mechanics would be good. I don't even know how to fill a car with petrol! You feel silly.*

Sarah: *That's part of what makes you scared, because you're afraid you're not going to cope when you're out there.*

Janice: *You're going to look a right idiot. You feel you're too old to start learning things like that. You feel all embarassed and dumb, and yet there's no reason why you should know, because you've never come across it before.*

Karen: *Yeah...all these little things which everyone in the workforce does every day, and you think: "How do you do that?!" You just don't know.*

(Fieldnotes, 18/3/86, p.440)

Comments such as these, made at all three schools by senior, academic students contested the right of schools to give a "practical" curriculum to one group of students and not to others. As the students in the excerpt above seem to be suggesting, transition may not be aimed at those who need it most. Interview data show that it was the academic, often middle-class and protected group of students who expressed the need for the sorts of skills and knowledge which transition education has to offer.[8]

A second contestation came from the group of students who had been targeted as needing transition. While academic students in the mainstream expressed a certain anxiety about the process of transition from school to adult and working life, transition students themselves hardly ever identified these same concerns. The former often mentioned the need to know about living and survival skills. The latter felt adept at dealing with those issues in the transition process. What made them anxious was not that they would not have the ability to effect the transition, but rather that there were impersonal and overwhelming forces preventing them from carrying it out. Their access to the wage, their need for independence and for relieving the financial burden felt by their families were all being threatened by unemployment.

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8. Willis (1976) suggests that "the Lads" experience little difficulty in making the transition because the school counter-culture acts as vital preparation ground for entry to the working-class culture proper of the shop floor.

Four Maori transition students from Co-Ed High reveal the real transition concerns of working class youth in transition programmes.

Shawn: *What made me join the Pre-Employment class is that I look back at my parents...they pay the house, the food and the power for us. My brother was helping too, but not enough eh! So I felt sorry and I said "I want to find a job, man, and help the family in paying things." So I'm looking forward to getting a job.*

Fred: *Yeah...mum should use the money she earns for herself, because she's done heaps, you know.*

Adriana: *Yeah...you feel you're just taking advantage of your mother's money.*

Moana: *My mum works, but we help her. We do the housework. She's pretty pleased about that eh! She gives us money to get us a smoke. Sometimes I don't take it, 'cause it makes me feel bad.*

(Fieldnotes, 3/7/86, p.291)

It was thus often ironic to hear transition teachers lecturing about the road code with students who had been driving (and converting!) cars and heavy vehicles for months if not years; or teaching about flatting when many of them had been fending for themselves from their early teens; or be taught how to change car tyres, handle sexual relationships or give the correct change when they were past masters out of experience! On one occasion for instance, Ms Bowie said:

Ms Bowie: *I want to teach you about the city's resources...Quiet!...Oh! If only you would listen!*

Naroi: *I don't only know about them Miss...I know how to use them.* (Naroi winks at his friends and everybody laughs).

(Fieldnotes,28/7/86,p.1017)

[c] Contestation of the label "Deficient".

Because transition students generally considered themselves capable of effecting the transition from school to work, given the chance to do so, they increasingly contested the implications embedded in the kind of education their teachers were offering. Earlier it has been shown that students were capable of penetrating the transition discourse which construed their position on the fringes of schooling and employment as resulting from a lack of specific cognitive and social skills. It was suggested that this

penetration started off first as acceptance, but as the year went by, this acceptance turned into contestation. Not all the students observed contested the implication that they were deficient in the same way or to the same degree. Indeed, the transition groups in each school seemed to have leaders who expressed and directed the resistance. At All Girls' High these leaders were Denise and Claire, who were very vocal and assertive in expressing their feelings. Their friends on the course looked up to them for articulating the disillusionment they all felt with the kind of curriculum their teachers were offering them on the Monday and Friday sessions at school. They said:

Cherie: *We try to make Ms Kirk understand that what she's going on about is useless, but she goes "Na..na...na!"*

Beverly: *Like sometimes, I feel like snapping back...the stupid questions she asks!*

R.S.: *Claire and Denise do it, don't they?*

Beverly: *They do it for you. They're the whole class practically. If there's a strong point to make, they're just genuine. So they come out with comments like "We hate the public" when Ms Kirk kept insisting that the public always come first. They orry about the money, but not about much else.*
(Fieldnotes, 2/5/86, p.611)

This contestation embedded Denise and Claire even more firmly in the economic futures Ms Kirk had considered realistic for them. (She told the researcher one day, apologising for their "bad behaviour" in class, *"Those two have been around!" Fieldnotes, 2/10/86, p.1528).* Both ended up drawing the unemployment benefit, and doing voluntary work with a theatre company.

However, not all contestation or resistance observed turned on itself to reproduce pre-determined futures. This was especially visible at All Boys' College, where students did not volunteer to go to transition, but were selected by teachers with the help of tests. One of the transition students there described his efforts to get back to the mainstream, and to redefine himself as a capable student.

Simon: *I was in the rejects class all last year, but I got out because I wanted to show the principal that I can do something at school...that I'm not as thick as he thinks.*

R.S.: *What do you mean?*

Simon: *Oh! You get the message pretty clearly that you are not part of the mainstream..that you're good for nothing, useless, the "rejects". So they stick you up in this class and get rid of you that way.*

(Fieldnotes, 21/3/86, p.477)

The other student at the same school who strongly contested the school's definition of himself as "deficient" was Emmy. He recounted his struggle to get himself out of the transition class to the reseacher on various occasions:

> *I've been trying to get out of transition ever since I was in third form. This year I decided I was going to work really hard and get out. So I worked really hard and busted my guts. I just about got out except the timetable keeps me in. The deputy principal hasn't fixed me a proper timetable. They just stuff you there to get rid of you. It's like going down in quicksand! Basically, I can't get out and there's nobody to help you get out. Mum wants me out too.*
>
> *(Fieldnotes, 23/7/86, p.983)*

Emmy did finally manage to get back into the mainstream and later that year, his Mathematics teacher said in a surprised voice to a group of other teachers: *"I think Emmy will actually get his School Certificate in Maths this year." (Fieldnotes, 24/11/86, p.1720).* The fact that he did indicates in an even more concrete manner the danger there is in schools and teachers making decisions about a person's educational and vocational future - decisions which are often based, as has been argued in various sections in this study, on reasons and values of doubtful validity.

[d] Contestation of the "relevant curriculum".

Transition teachers claimed that the value of the classroom sessions lay in the relevance of the curriculum they had developed. Students from all three schools however contested this claim, and did so in a number of ways. Contestation of the "relevant" curriculum was expressed in all three schools by a high level of absenteeism. At All Boys' College, the researcher occasionally accompanied Ms Kirk on her regular visits to the transition students' homes to check why they had not turned up at school. "Wagging" (truanting) was the rule rather than the exception, and at Co-Ed High and All Girls' High, strolling into the classroom half an hour late for the Monday and Friday sessions was not unusual. While the transition teachers felt that this was a problem, the students considered it a bit of a joke:

Ms Bowie: *Today I'm going to make a note of those who are on time.*

Selina: *Or of those who are actually here, Miss!*

(Fieldnotes, 30/6/86, p.877)

The students also used late-coming to make a direct statement about how they felt about the lessons they received. Two All Girls' students complained that Ms Kirk made them feel like school kids again. They said:

Claire: *You're little kids again. That's why we're always late.*

Claire: *Yeah...like when we go to work, we're always on time.*

(Fieldnotes, 2/5/86, p.699)

The state of the notebooks - where students were supposed to put down their "transition notes" - was another indication of how much the students valued the "relevant curriculum". At Co-Ed High, the only surviving exercise book at the end of the year was in tatters. When the researcher asked All Girls students for copies of transition notes given throughout the year, he discovered that some had lost them, and the rest had never bothered to collect them in the first place.

Students felt that not only was the transition curriculum irrelevant, but it also failed to acknowledge central aspects of their lives and cultures. Transition teachers first of all did not acknowledge the linguistic register they, as working class students, used. Often their behaviour and language were deemed inappropriate by transition teachers. At All Boys' College for instance, Emmy powerfully asserted his own way of speaking. He said:

> *The reason why we're in this class is because we've got bad points. We may not be good at English or Maths, or something like that, so we can't really express ourselves. So you just swear heaps and get across that way....see, if these jokers are really good at English, they can explain themselves without swearing. But for me, I know I have to swear to get my point across. Like, if I'm really hecked off or something, I don't go around saying "Oh golly jeeze!" and all this...I just go "Fuck me!" and all that sort of thing...because that's the only way I know of getting my point across at the moment...And that's not accepted really.*
>
> *(Fieldnotes, 15/4/86, p.611)*

Transition students from All Girls similarly resisted the linguistic and dress codes Ms Kirk had insisted on as proper when going for an interview:

Vicky: *I don't think I'll go for an interview. I just go myself and look for a job on my own. You don't have to go and be absolutely perfect, and talk properly and dress properly.*

Judy: *I reckon that's really stupid in a way, because that's not the real you. And if you speak... like, a lot of people say "Eh?!" and all that sort of stuff instead of saying "Pardon?" Like Ms Kirk, she asked me: "Would you go dressed like that if you were going on your first date?" That's really stupid that! Of course I would, because that's who I really am!*

(Fieldnotes, 2/5/86, p.686)

The insensitivity shown by transition teachers to the real cultural forms of youth ended up by defeating the humanistic aims so fundamental to the discourse surrounding transition education. The following discussion between two All Girls' students reveals how the teacher fails to communicate the basic aims of transition, namely "self-confidence" which it is presumed the students lack:

Claire: *It gets really annoying when in class we're put down all the time...Because you know, you want to say something, and you say it, and Ms Kirk doesn't take notice. And then five minutes later, somebody goes and says exactly the same thing and "That's a really good idea!" she goes. And you've just said it yourself, but in a different way!*

Denise: *And when you're going out to work and that, that's not teaching you, sort of...if you're being put down all the time, saying "Shut up", you know, because it's not right...then you're really not going to have any confidence, or the initiative to go out and work, because if you're scared that you'll always be put down. Like Ms Kirk isn't doing the best thing to boost us up a bit, you know.*

Claire: *What she wants is a "perfect student", and we're not perfect students.*

Denise: *Right!...We've never been...if we were, we wouldn't be sitting here, on this course. We'd be doing our exams.*

(Fieldnotes, 2/5/86, p.695)

Such loss of self-confidence is a hallmark and indicator of compensatory education (see Labov, 1972).

Contestation of the content of the curriculum included fundamental criticisms which challenged what transition teachers were assuming and attempting to do. A few students found hints about interview technique useful, but even then, there was dissatisfaction. The following comments by two All Girls' High transition students are typical:

Claire: *What they say about interviews is just common sense...that to me is common sense.*

Denise: *And they keep going on about it!...It's stupid, because you're not going to an interview every minute of your life. It's pathetic really...they should be telling us other things, and not going on about the bloody interviews!*

Claire: *If you don't know how to do that, then you must be so bloody thick it's unbelievable!*

(Fieldnotes, 2/5/86, p.704)

The transition curriculum content was moreover considered to be at times crucially "off the mark" on a number of issues, and laid the transition teachers open to the accusation that they were "not clued in". Students felt that their transition teachers were incorrect in the emphasis they put on neat and correct letter writing as a job application technique. Students considered that to be irrelevant to their needs and the way they secured a job:

Andrew: *You don't prepare all that stuff they told us about yesterday...all those letters and stuff...what did she call them?*

R.S.: *Resumé?*

Andrew: *Yeah...you go up to people...a lot of the time you sort of, ehm, tell them where your district is and how large the farm you'd come off was, and how much experience you'd had. And it more or less depends on which part you're in. If the farmers in the area know you, then you're pretty well right.*

(Fieldnotes, 9/10/86, p.1442)

Sometimes teachers were unaware of what happened in practice. Ms Trilby gave a series of lessons on flatting, and on one occasion, a Maori student leaned towards the researcher and said:

She doesn't know what she's saying! If you happen to be a Maori and you're trying to get a flat! I've tried, and it's not so easy, because people are afraid we're going to break things up and make a mess.

(Fieldnotes, 7/4/86, p.556)

Transition teachers seemed to be either unaware of, or unwilling to, incorporate students' real experiences and concerns into the content of their classroom sessions. A Samoan transition student at All Girls' High told the researcher:

I don't want to come to this transition stuff any more. All I'm doing is slave labour, working without pay. All my social life has stopped completely because I've no money at all. Denise and Claire are giving it up too. They hate it! Ms Kirk!...She is so...! We tell her we need money, and she goes: "Never mind!" It's stupid!

(Fieldnotes, 28/5/86, p.745)

The lack of relevance of the transition curriculum is clearly described by students from All Boys' College. In the following excerpt Paul works as a panel beater during his work exploration sessions; Kevin is a sprayer and general help at a private airport, and Emmy is a "hand" with a house removal firm.

Paul: *I'm treated like one of them...they call me names and everything, and I know them really well now. I've blended in.*

R.S.: *How do you feel when Ms Grant comes to visit you?*

Kevin: *You feel embarrassed, especially when there are all these men around eh?! They make jokes and everything. It's like mummy coming to visit!*

Emmy: *Yeah...My boss asked me if she were my girlfriend, and that she was a bit old for me.*

R.S. *They give you a hard time then.*

Kevin: *Only for fun, eh...*

Paul: *They just swear at you...they just treat you as one of them I suppose. It's the same with everybody really. There's a fella called John, and his teeth are a bit out. They call him Bubsby and call him a wanker all the time. They give him heaps, and he gives someone else heaps. And you've sort of got to prove yourself. When- you're lifting things, you can't really say "Oh...give us a hand!" You've just got to go for it and strain.*

Kevin: *You've got to sort of "blend in", and you can't say: "It's too heavy." You've got to do what they do, otherwise you're rejected by the gang. Like when they send you for an errand, you can't just say: "I don't know where it is." You've got to try and find out.*

Emmy: *And you've got to swear too.*

Kevin: *Yeah! At school you're not allowed to swear. I have a detention today for being caught swearing...But there you can do whatever you want to...you just swear and "f" "f" "f" one after the other for half an hour if you want to...nobody would mind.*

Paul: *Because you're not with people your own age, but, you know, with fellas who know everything, done everything.*

Emmy: *Yeah...and when we're in the truck and they stop for a beer, and I say "Hell! I can't" because I'm under age, they look at me and say: "Are you a pouff?!" and all that sort of thing. So you swear like hell*

and if there's a girl and all the fellas fling off, so you fling off and try to do better. You start walking after her and all this...It's really pervert at times!

R.S.: *At school, Ms Grant is telling you a lot of things about work isn't she?*

(They all laugh)

Kevin: *Yeah...but you don't take no notice of that! "Be on your best behaviour, otherwise they'll tell us!" she says. But everybody gives me a hard time, so I give them just as much back, and they reckon I really work well.*

(Fieldnotes, 21/3//86, pp.480-4)

This excerpt reveals a number of themes. It indicates the inaccurate perceptions of some transition teachers of the realities of the shop-floor culture, and reveals their idealistic and romantic view of work. It shows the real stuff which "transition-to-work" entails - where for boys it is often a trial-by-maleness in which they have to prove their worth by participating in all the elements of sexism and macho-type behaviour that New Zealand culture contains. It also shows that these students perceive the transition curriculum as largely irrelevant and inaccurate at best, located as it is in cultural realities and values different from those they experience in their everyday lives. Moreover, rather than lacking an appreciation of the world of work as the discourse of transition programmes assumes, these students have a lively, and from their point of view, realistic understanding of it.

Since so many of the areas which the transition curriculum explored were considered by the students to be either irrelevant or incorrect, a feeling of boredom pervaded most transition sessions at school. One wonders if this was in itself functional in training them to tolerate the boredom characteristic of locations on the fringes of and outside the labour market. The only positive comments about the school sessions made by transition students from the three school referred not to content, but to the very practical needs of friendship and rest. School was a rest from work, and a chance to catch up with one's mates.

R.S.: *Do you feel bad it's Monday then?*

Adriana: *No. Relieved!*

R.S.: *Why?*

Moana: *Working for eight hours a day makes you tired!* (they all laugh).

(Fieldnotes, 3/3/86, p.296)

[e] Contestation of work exploration.

Transition students liked the days on work exploration most of all, not for the learning they were doing there, but because they felt that it might lead to a job. The fact that they were not paid for long hours of work and effort did not seem to be a problem for many of the transition students as long as there was (what they thought to be) a fair exchange of goods: free work in return for a reference, possibily a job, and time out of school. An All Boys' transition student explains:

Kevin: *You can get a job through work experience. Say Bob here had School Cert., and I didn't, the boss would probably take him because he's got S.C. But if I'd worked there beforehand on work experience, he might have seen how good I work, and take me on without my qualifications...he'd try to help us.*
(Fieldnotes, 4/3/86, p.343)

So, as a student put it, *"In a way, they're helping you and you're helping them...in a way, it's a fair deal." (Fieldnotes, 2/5/86, p.692).* So, when jobs did not materialise after a length of time in free labour, resistance to work exploration became more and more pronounced. Some students felt that employers were exploiting them, and the fact that they were ready to put up with personal and financial exploitation for the tantalising expectation of a job did not extinguish the students' sense of injustice and anger:

Shawn: *I just don't like watching my mates getting their pay. I just look away and hope they'd come to me and offer me just five dollars. You work for eight hours for nothing...I work for eight hours for three days...for nothing.*

Fred: *I hate it when sometimes...when they get you to do the dirty work. Like one of them spills oil in the garage, and "Hey!" they go, "Come here! Clean this up!" ...And I hate that.*

Shawn: *I reckon they just take the Pre-Employment class to let them work just for nothing. Me, I've got plenty of bosses. I just like one boss, not three or four bosses who tell me to do this, do that. And I'm already doing one job, and they tell me to come to do this and I do that, and then I go back to my same job, and another person comes to tell me to do that. I just like one boss, not three or four...that's what really gets on my nerves.*

Fred: *They're sort of using you.*
(Fieldnotes, 3/3/86, p.289)

Some of the problems with "personal exploitation" here refer to processes frequently found on the shop floor, where the junior is given a hard time and is often given the "mundane" jobs to do as a sort of initiation into the workforce. However, students, changing their work site every six weeks, had to go through this initiation ordeal over and over again, as if rehearsing a passion play without the salvation of a permanent job ever in sight. Michelle became very bored *"stamping about a thousand envelopes a day."(Fieldnotes, 10/10/86, p.1462)* Fred commented thoughtfully: *"They seem to keep you out of the customer's way, so that the customers don't see you...They're too scared that you might do something wrong." (Fieldnotes, 3/3/86, p.284).* Moana complained that she was never given anything new to do at the bakery, and therefore could not learn the trade. Adriana was not allowed to serve customers in the boutique; she just stored boxes at the back of the shop.

Only those students who stayed on longer at their work experience site were entrusted with more satisfying tasks, and ended up learning real work skills. Kevin and Paul, transition students from All Boys' College, stayed at their same respective site for over eight months.

Kevin: *At first they gave me all the rotten jobs...now it's all the young apprentices who do the worst jobs. As you stay longer, you move up.*
(Fieldnotes, 21/3/86, p.489)

Students also felt that work exploration handsomely served the needs of employers. Employers were keen to get this source of free labour. The manager of a large retail store told one transition teacher: *"I don't want to sound mercenary, but if you have more students to send, we would be pleased to have them." (Fieldnotes, 27/3/86, p.523).* Denise, a transition student from All Girls' High, recounted how at her placement, a restaurant in town, there were three transition students from other city schools. She commented: *"I reckon employers and firms get it sweet out of these courses. They get all their work done free...it's slave labour!" (Fieldnotes, 2/5/86, p.706).*

[f] Violent Resistance.

It is important to document the fact that there were other forms of resistance against transition education as such. These took the form of real violence. At the end of the year, transition students from one school did not turn up to collect their prizes for Work Exploration, and broke into school vandalising photographic equipment. Generally, however, such resistance is to be seen as a reaction to the "symbolic violence" school perpetrates, in that it does not lead the students to explore, articulate and transform their positions.

Summary.

Transition students have been shown to be unhappy with the educational element in their courses, and to have important criticisms to make about their work exploration placements. They found the first irrelevant, often boring, occasionally misleading and incorrect. The form of transition education gave them - and their teachers - a lower status in school. Moreover, the emphasis on living and coping skills in the transition programme meant that it was targeted at those students in the the school who were already the most adept in these areas. Students also had genuine problems with the work exploration component because they felt financially and personally exploited. They put up with this, and the irrelevance of the curriculum offered in the hope that their teachers' contacts would lead to a job. While students contested a number of assumptions and messages within transition education, the job-getting imperative led them to accept schooling for docility and compliance - the qualities required of them on the fringes and outside of the labour market.

The following is a list of the propositions described and accepted as being theoretically saturated in this chapter:

[1] A liberal and humanistic discourse informs the intentions of transition teachers. This discourse construes specific groups of young people - identifiable by their class and ethnicity - as deficient in cognitive and social skills.

[2] This deficit model in itself brings the problem of unemployment to the individual level, and encourages a blame-the-victim approach. In other words, while transition education sets out to be enabling, its very discourse is disabling in the way it views youth.

[3] The discourse which guides the intentions of transition education also guides the kinds of questions it raises and the sorts of solutions it envisages. The problems groups of students experience at school and in securing employment are considered personal and pathological, rather than political. Transition therefore sets out to place a solution to the problems in society and in schooling in the boundary between them. It is not society and schooling which require critical inquiry - and transformation - but the student.

[4] Transition education sets out in an explicit manner to act as a holding-pen for students who are considered to be "at risk" of unemployment and eventual criminal activity. Teachers do not seem to experience any conflict between their calling as educators and their new role - one funded by the state - to act as agents of control.

[5] Transition education leads to the promotion of the separate school. The groups who are separated from mainstream schooling are recognised by their membership of ethnic and class groups.

[6] The humanistic ideals of transition education are appropriated by mainstream schooling for goals which are neither humanitarian nor educational.

[7] The form of transition education as separate from mainstream schooling helps to promote and reproduce the lower status of non-academic and non-achieving students at school. This fact foils the declared intentions of increasing the self-esteem and confidence of transition students.

[8] The provision of transition education helps to maintain the *status quo* of mainstream schooling by funnelling off those students who are most likely to question the legitimacy of schooling in the context of increasing unemployment.

[9] Transition education, compared to mainstream schooling, puts an even stronger emphasis on inculcating attitudes and skills functional to society. Transition students are to be moulded into compliant citizens - this docility is required both in the employment sector they are likely to inhabit if they get a job, and in the "quiet unemployed" if they do not.

[10] The job-getting imperative which rules over transition education leads to the jettisoning of education for democracy in terms of the promotion of personal rights.

[11] The "relevant curriculum", developed to tie school life more securely to adult and working life, functions primarily as an instrument of control within the classroom and within the school generally.

[12] The constant emphasis on "preparation for adult life" construes students' lives as somehow not real or relevant - it precedes "real life" and is different from it. Young people's experiences in the work force are therefore ignored, and when they are recognised, it is to reinforce *status quo* themes. Since transition students are defined as ignorant about the reality of life, they need to be taught about it. To do so it is justifiable to delay them from entry into adult life.

[13] Work exploration serves to reproduce the established order in that it channels students to the secondary sector of the labour market which is considered to be appropriate and realistic for transition students by their teachers.

[14] Work exploration is also used by teachers as a pedagogical tool to reinforce the work ethic and the sorts of attitudes employers appreciate in particular sectors of the labour market.

[15] The pedagogical relationships developed in transition education reinforce the overt message which promotes compliancy and obedience.

[16] To re-establish status, transition education moves towards a model of schooling closely resembling the mainstream in its coercive pedagogic style.

[17] The form of transition as a separate school defeats the primary explicit intention of promoting self-esteem among its clientele.

[18] It also reproduces and reinforces the distinction between the practical and the academic, and gives higher status to the latter.

[19] Students are capable of penetrating the humanistic discourse informing transition education and can highlight the underlying functional one - that of using transition not for educational ends but for securing employment for oneself.

[20] Transition education involves not only a model of compensatory education, but also one of positive discrimination. It provides cultural capital - in the form of contacts with employers - to a specific group of students.

[21] Students contest the educational goals of transition, and instead give priority to its value in unlocking jobs for them.

[22] This contestation signifies that they do not accept the definition of themselves as deficient.

[23] Transition education, with its emphasis on living and coping skills, is targeted at those students in the school who are already the most adept in these areas.

[24] Contestation does not necessarily turn on itself to reproduce the future mapped out by the institution for the individual.

[25] The aims of promoting self-esteem and self-confidence are defeated by the model of compensatory education which transition is steeped in.

[26] Transition education and its teachers fail to acknowledge the needs and culture of students, and therefore claims for the relevance of the curriculum provided are unfounded.

CHAPTER 9.

DISCUSSION AND DIRECTIONS: A CONCLUSION.

This chapter brings together some of the more important themes explored in the preceding four chapters. These themes are discussed in the context of the main concerns of contemporary sociology of education, namely the issue of equity and the role and function of schooling in society. Such questions have become especially important as schooling's legitimacy is challenged. These issues also relate to larger questions in social theory regarding the relationship between structure and agency. Directions for curriculum development in the area of critical pedagogy generally, and work education specifically, are suggested.

INTRODUCTION.

A total of ninety-eight propositions have been advanced in the course of exploring the messages schools and teachers give about work, and the reception given to these messages by students. Some of these propositions are considered to have more significance than others in developing a grounded theory which informs various audiences about the educational encounter and the relationship between it and the wider structure. The audiences envisaged include, among others, "practitioners", policy-makers, and sociologists of education and social theorists generally. The discussion is directed at all three groups because of the approach to knowledge favoured here. In other words, there is considered to be a dynamic interrelationship between theory and practice, with insights generated by both leading to a challenging and mutual reflexivity. Theoreticians and practitioners in the field of education need to address the same issues for practical reasons also. As Connell and his colleagues suggest (1983) in the context of drawing up plans for reform in the educational system:

> *Teachers on their own are certainly not able to carry through the whole of the reforms [suggested] which depend also on the involvement of parents, administrators, unions and researchers. But these other groups, without the involvement of classroom teachers, can do precisely nothing.*
>
> *(Connell et al., 1983, p.205)*

For this reason, Connell and his colleagues (1983, p.206) point to the importance of getting *"accurate bearings on the social situation of teachers, the constraints they work under, and the possibilities open to them."* The directions which social theorists indicate must take into account situations and constraints such as these if their suggestions are to have any impact. On the other hand, practitioners need to be informed about the context of their experience. They need to be shown the working-out of inequalities in their classrooms and schools, and how they themselves, often unintentionally, contribute towards those inequalities. Moreover, they need to be made aware of the ways specific forms of schooling reproduce inequalities in society generally. In other words, in the spirit of cultural studies, practitioners and theoreticians need to acknowledge the value of both experience and context, of agency and structure, of the personal and the political.

This concluding chapter addresses both concerns. First, a summary of the major findings is presented (Section 9.1.). Theoretical discussion and analysis is provided in order to draw the links between the data and the context described in the first two chapters of the study. This leads to a consideration of the nature of educational encounters observed, and to suggestions for alternative practice in education generally (critical education and pedagogy) and in work education specifically (Section 9.2.). Finally, directions for future research are suggested (Section 9.3.).

9.1. THE MAJOR FINDINGS IN CONTEXT.

The summary of findings draws together some of the major themes explored and organises them in such a way as to highlight the function of schooling in reproducing the social order by responding to the industrial impulse, and in transforming it by responding to the democratic impulse. The contributions to this process, first by schools and teachers, and then by students, are considered.

The Givers of Messages and the Industrial Impulse.

Perhaps the most pervasive theme to emerge from this study was that schools and teachers embodied the industrial impulse through

knowledge forms, knowledge content, and classroom social relations. Within its structures and its curriculum, overtly and covertly, schooling was shown to inculcate those qualities appreciated by employers, and specifically those qualities functional to an economy in crisis. With varying degrees of emphasis among the three schools studied, the social relations developed were authoritatively hierarchical and promoted passivity, docility and silence. They established the teacher as the expert and dispenser of knowledge, and failed to appreciate the different experiences of students. Like the activity characteristic of the very subject they were studying - work - students were involved in tasks which only had an extrinsic validity: Just as people work in order to live, so did students "learn" in order to ensure access to a job. Students, like workers, were not invited to become involved in an active or critical manner in the work/learning process. Generally speaking, the roles demanded of the students did not include participation in the difficult and complex task of the consummation of their own ideas. Knowledge consumption rather than knowledge production was encouraged. Often therefore, relationships fostered in the classroom failed to encourage a mediation between individuals where they received mutual recognition, or a mediation between the individual and the "material of production", through which the self could be objectified. This sort of classroom behaviour encourages competition between students and passivity in front of authority, and produces an ideology inasmuch as it provides an effective guide to social practice within capitalist society.

Most of the ideas communicated by teachers about work were idealised, avoided the tougher aspects of life and were overly concerned with orthodoxy. Overt messages were overwhelmingly of the type that urged students to fit into and perform in the world of work as it existed, rather than to explore its nature. Teachers gave a specific view of the wealth creation process as "natural", whereby employers had a right to the surplus value produced by labour, and therefore also had a right to expect from workers those forms of behaviours - of obedience and compliancy - which contributed to the process and made it proceed efficiently. The hierarchical arrangement of labour within this process was presented as "common sense", as were the differential status and

rewards afforded to different workers. Students were therefore to take their place in this occupational ladder, but little or no light was shed on the influence of class, ethnicity, and gender in determining specific locations on the ladder, and the results of that location for their future lives. Rather, teachers often participated in defining the "realistic" and the "appropriate" for particular students identified by their class, ethnicity and gender.

This picture of work was presented not only as natural, but was also divorced from the historical, social and economic processes which gave rise to it and could make it explicable. Schooling inculcated the competitive ethos values of abdication and self-denial. In this way, as well as overtly, students were taught to put the employer's needs above their own, or seeing them as complementary rather than conflicting. Workers were generally presented as involving themselves in competition for better places in the social order, rather than in voicing a unified concern for their own rights and dignity. Teachers taught <u>for</u>, rather than <u>about</u>, work by the knowledge content which they omitted. They avoided controversial issues such as the role of trade unions, or the problems of workers arising from their age, class, gender and/or ethnicity. Teachers systematically excluded critical insights into the position of individuals and groups in the social structure, and presented a distorted view of labour politics, and over-emphasised consensus and conformity while under-emphasising conflict.

The kinds of explanations offered to students were of the type which encouraged personal responsibility for system-caused injustices. This taught students to explain their lives in terms of their own inability to succeed at school and to obtain skills and qualifications. In so far as anything was explained about the crisis of capital accumulation, it was not in terms of relations of conflict and contradiction between social and historical forces, where specific economic, political and ideological decisions were being made by people in power. Rather, explanations were located in terms of mysterious and reified processes of causation outside the understanding and control of persons - youth unemployment was either the fault of young people themselves, or caused by the

"recession". In many respects the teachers adopted a form of reasoning which put young minds to sleep. Moreover, the subject of unemployment evoked responses similar to teaching for employment: teachers encouraged patience, perseverance and competitiveness in the job-search process. If these failed to secure employment, then young people were encouraged to "enjoy leisure".

The efforts of some teachers, inspired by a liberal humanism to cater for the needs of students disillusioned with mainstream schooling, were also considered. Here too, and with a greater degree of emphasis, the personal was divorced from the political in that transition education and work exploration encouraged the atmosphere of job expectation while managing the anxiety of being unemployed. These curricular initiatives served the mainstream by removing undesirable elements from the classroom, offering in exchange the promise of specific skills which would lead to a job. While occasionally these promises were kept, transition education was shown to reinforce the peripheral positions of students from working class and ethnic minorities in school and in the labour market.

The Givers of Messages and the Democratic Impulse.

The summary so far has tended to minimise the substantial inter- and intra-school differences noted among the three schools. If this study is to lead at all to the "language of possibility" (Aronowitz and Giroux, 1985) which finds its expression in Gramsci's *"pessimism of the intellect and optimism of the will"*, these differences and struggles have to be given prominence, and their significance for both social theorists and practitioners highlighted. These struggles, even when ultimately defeated, point towards the possibility and necessity for alternative practice on the part of teachers. The actual data in which this discussion is grounded show that the three schools studied, when compared to workplaces, were more equal, participatory and democratic. Even if in practice All Boys' College was the most clearly reproductive of the inequalities in the social order, in intention at least its vision of education drew sustenance from a set of religious and ethical values which emphasised the rights of the oppressed in society, and argued for a better and more equitable social system.

For All Girls' High, that educational vision highlighted and participated in democratic endeavours to bring about equality for women. At Co-Ed High, its liberal emphasis and the promoting of the rights of ethnic minorities formed an integral part of the multicultural vision embraced by the school. In different ways therefore, the description of these three schools has indicated that, as Carnoy and Levin argue,

> *The educational system is not an instrument of the capitalist class. It is the product of conflict between the dominant and the dominated. It is an area of conflict over the production of knowledge, ideology, and employment, a place where social movements try to meet their needs and business attempts to reproduce its hegemony.*
>
> *(Carnoy and Levin, 1985, p.50)*

Schools, and individual teachers within them, were shown to have a certain degree of autonomy, an autonomy which was directed towards various democratic ends (and with the expressed contestation of other groups with <u>their</u> interests in society), so that groups of students - especially those identified by their ethnicity and gender - could find a voice in the schooling process and establish a space to tell their story in their own words.

By their very choice of "clientele" in terms of gender, class and ethnicity, the three schools were shown to be making a statement about their transformative or reproductive goals. They also indicated their willingness to participate in the struggles within the state for civil liberties and democratic rights in all their forms. Teachers, themselves educated in a humanistic, liberal psychology which values the individual and his/her development, expressed a preference for "personal" over "property rights" (Bowles and Gintis, 1981), even if in practice, and for reasons explored below, they emphasised the latter. They were shown to be most effective when the same ideological critique was shared by a group of teachers - a critique articulated in the school ethos and located within wider social movements. Here, opposition and contestation in their privatised forms became politically informed and directed. For this reason, the ideological critique of society by women may be one of the most united and advanced in New Zealand schools, and offers great promise for the sort of critical education which is described in this chapter. It is also promising in that <u>any</u> ideological critique of aspects of the *status quo* is

conducive to an easier grasp of other injustices suffered by other groups in the social structure. The struggle of ethnic groups within the wider social structure and as expressed in schools lacks the same unity and clarity of intentions, expression and method which were found to characterise gender movements at All Girls' High and, to a lesser extent, at Co-Ed High.

Discussion.

A number of reasons can be advanced to explain the bias in schooling which ultimately favours the needs of industry. The mechanisms relating industrial demands to educational processes are hegemonic, depending not upon physical coercion but upon symbolic violence (Bourdieu and Passeron, 1977). Teachers are seen to participate in exerting this symbolic violence both consciously and unconsciously. The latter form of participation is best explained through their class location and unconscious allegiance to the bourgeoisie. Steven (1978) makes this point in his brave attempt to provide a class analysis of New Zealand. He locates teachers within the middle classes, and argues that - depending on the advanced state of capital accumulation in the country and the amount of surplus value that is produced - teachers do not experience capitalism as an external force, and *"can take more surplus value with one hand than [they] surrender with the other. [Their] interests therefore move closer to those of the bourgeoisie." (Steven 1978, p.124).* He also argues that slow accumulation of surplus value will test the loyalty of teachers to the bourgeoisie, and enhance their proletarianisation. Teachers become increasingly critical of capitalism so that *"as the crisis deepens the bourgeoisie will find in the middle-class an increasingly unreliable ally, although not too much hope should be placed on this." (Steven, 1978, p.125).* Despite the critical state of capital accumulation in New Zealand, and the way this is felt by teachers in terms of lower salaries - hence their stop-work meetings in 1986 - vulnerability of tenure and threats of accountability, there was little evidence in the data to show that they were openly critical of capitalism, and specifically so in the classroom.

Another reason to account for teachers' unconsious reproduction of the social order is their lack of political literacy. This sort of literacy is vital if, as Giroux and McLaren (1986, p.225) have argued, they are to move away from the dominant view of teachers as primarily technicians or public servants whose role is to implement rather than to conceptualise pedagogical practice. Teachers need to have an understanding of how their actions relate to the wider structure of society if they are to engage in the sort of education favoured in this study and described later in this chapter - an education which engages in a critical study of power, language, culture and history and which is linked to the practice of a critical pedagogy which values student experience and student voice. Particular groups of teachers - especially those involved in wider social movements - were keen to embark on this form of transformative teaching, but they were often seen to be constrained on the one hand by the school structure, and on the other by their lack of resources, personal and otherwise, to develop this form of pedagogy. Most teachers however laboured on, largely oblivious to their reproductive role in their belief that their activity was a "neutral" representation of "pure" knowledge.

An account of the conscious reasons to explain teachers' emphasis on the needs of industry utilises Apple's (1978) argument of "structural causation". The conspiracy approach implicit in the work of the early Bowles and Gintis is therefore viewed critically in this context. The process of reproduction that schools are involved in, and the various structures developed to facilitate this (including "transition education", "work experience" and "life skills teaching") is not the work of an *"elite group of managers...plotting ways to 'do in' their workers at both the work place and the school." (Apple, 1978, p.384).* Rather, the existing patterns of productive relations among individuals and social groups will naturally generate actions that lend support to the allocation and socialisation of students into unequal productive relations. Apple argues:

> *Given the extant economic and political forms which now provide the principles upon which so much of our everyday lives are organised, this reproductive process is a "logical necessity" for the continued maintenance of an unequal social order. The economic and cultural imbalance follows "naturally". (Apple, 1978, p.385)*

In other words, what the teachers teach is what they think employers want - not necessarily because they believe in the values of advanced industrial capitalism, but because they believe that given the unequal outcomes of society, a student may face unemployment without these values. The emphasis on employability provides the basis for the reproduction of the social relations, the culture and the ideology of business in the classroom. What in the earlier chapters has been referred to as the "job-getting imperative" achieves further prominence in teachers' as jobs become more scarce. Thus, while it is true that school, as Carnoy and Levin (1985) have argued, is more democratic than the workplace, decisions made about what to teach had to do less with the ideals of justice and equality which teachers generally endorsed, and more with the practical concerns of achieving a livelihood. This was seen to operate even in the two areas where transformative education was most explicitly engaged in, namely gender and ethnicity. This sort of tension is best expressed by the most progressive teacher observed in all three schools. Ms Woods explained a conflict between teaching her students to be critical and teaching them to adapt:

> *If you don't prepare kids to accept their lot, then when they go out to work, they're actually going to have some really serious problems. A bright girl I used to teach accepted a lot of the critical ideas I gave her. She got a job with a government department, but couldn't stand it for more than six months...and being young and foolish and idealistic, she chucked in the job without having another one to go to. She was unable to tolerate the bullshit, and she's going to have real difficulties fitting into work structures which are going to say: "You must suppress yourself!" And so, it makes me nervous when I see that...some of the best parts of her may have to get crushed simply for her to survive. It is not our job to produce a person who fits nicely into the conveyer belt, and yet, if they want to survive, they will have to fit.*
>
> *(Fieldnotes, 3/10/86, p.1392)*

This sort of dilemma explains, to some extent, the conflicts and contradictions noted in teacher practice, conflicts which are exemplified by the following types of oppositions in teachers' messages and attitudes observed throughout the year:

* Skills and qualifications are needed more and more, but personal qualities are what employers are really looking for.

* School qualifications secure jobs, but qualifications are losing their strength.

* Unemployment is mentioned for control and motivation purposes, but is played down as a topic for fear of the loss of the legitimacy of schooling.

* The work ethic is no longer appropriate, but is at the same time reinforced by the insistence on the investment in certification as a "salvation" from unemployment.

* Choice of occupation should be carefully made as this leads to fulfilment, but it's best to be realistic and not too choosy.

* The development of pre-employment skills is necessary in securing jobs, but if everybody has these "skills", the competitive edge is lost.

* Female (and Maori) students are not to be bound by stereotypes in their approach to the labour market, but it is best to choose "traditional" jobs to ensure employment.

* Sexual and racial discrimination is bad, but you had better put up with it if you want to secure and keep a job.

In a similar context, Simon (1983, p.249) argues that the work of teaching embodies contradictory moments, and involves contradictions that cannot be resolved at an individual level since their origin is in the social order. The contradictory messages outlined above are not mistaken or inadequate or confused but are produced through teachers' participation in sets of social relations which reflect conflicting interests and orientations. Such moments of contradiction are the gate through which it may be possible for a critical education to enter the schools.

The Receivers of Messages.

So far the discussion has considered schooling as a structure and teachers as givers of specific messages. Students too form an integral and dynamic part of the process of schooling. They participate - willingly or unwillingly - in the structures and forms of life presented to them, and are bombarded day in, day out over a number of years by a series of overt and covert messages. They have been presented as active receivers of these messages, accepting some, contesting (modifying and resisting) others. Despite the "banking" concept of education (Freire, 1972) adopted by teachers, students generally speaking refused to be the passive receptacles of knowledge teachers willed them to be. They were shown to be aware of the kinds of thinking/behaving encouraged by the school, and active participants in the eductional encounter,

appropriating those messages which they felt had a valuable contribution to make to their lives, and contesting others which they knew - from their own personal experience in the workforce and by contrast with other signals they received from other social spaces they inhabited - to be inappropriate or even misleading. Students therefore actively produced meaning. Their development was shown to occur in response to the experience of the total social structure, with social class, ethnicity and gender - or other groupings - constituting a "master setting" within which family, schooling and other institutions occupied a subordinating and mediating status. Students were seen acting as active theory builders and relatively autonomous, certainly active participants in their own development (Hogan, 1982).

Consciously and unconsciously, students too participated in both the democratic and industrial impulses which constituted the terrain of struggle for teachers and schools as described earlier. In various ways, students expressed their criticism, dismay and anger at various processes in the school which they considered to be undemocratic. They critiqued the notion of authority and a pedagogy which appropriated neither their voice nor their experiences, and which divorced the abstract from the practical; they contested the teachers' assumptions that as non-adults, they knew little about work; they did not accept the idealistic picture of the world of work presented by their teachers; they constructed for themselves a realistic understanding of the hiring practices relevant to a time of high unemployment. Moreover, groups of students identifiable by their class, gender and/or ethnic location were often able to penetrate the workings of a system which directed them towards certain locations in a segmented labour market. While some accepted this as appropriate and actively worked towards the reproduction of specific social positions, others did not but expressed their resistance in a number of ways. Occasionally - as has been shown in detail in the case of Maori students - this contestation took the form of a kind of cultural production which reinforced them in the location deemed appropriate for them by the school. At other times, this contestation encouraged them to break free from low expectations. This victory was often pyrrhic however, for in winning positions they lost the membership of groups - both class and ethno-culturally based -

which gave them roots and meaning. Nevertheless, all this contestual activity bears great promise and optimism for critical education and pedagogy, and to some extent rescues "resistance" from the tragic character implicitly attributed to it by accounts such as those of Willis (1977) and McRobbie (1978).

Students were shown to participate in impulses which were other than democratic. The tendency for schooling to reproduce was therefore observed to have both a vertical dimension (teachers) and a horizontal dimension as well in that students oppressed others in their classroom. Such oppression, in the form of low and/or stereotyped expectations for instance, was principally directed by boys against girls, and by Pakeha against Maori. Moreover, the imperative of the wage - as a means to livelihood, as a symbol of independence and adult status, as a way to avoid the stigma of dependence, and as a way for some to alleviate a financial burden on their family - was observed to strenghten the industrial rather than the democratic impulse in students, for it encouraged in them an instrumental approach to education. The value of schooling was often measured in terms of the steps it brought them towards the fulfilment of an ultimate goal in the form of a job.

The Context.

The above description clearly shows the link between this ethnography and the two strands in the Marxist tradition of educational scholarship identified in the first two chapters of this study. The first strand refers to economic determinism which stresses the connections between educational institutions and economic power. In this tradition, schooling is seen to reproduce both labour power for the capitalist class and ideological consciousness which legitimates capitalist production and defends the *status quo*. The second, and more recent, strand has been influenced by a culturalist Marxism where cultural processes are seen to be intimately connected with social relations. This connectedness is neither an autonomous nor an externally determined field, but a site of social differences and struggles.

The ethnographic data, recording the experience of individuals and groups, led to personal accounts which embody a dynamic and complex

relationship between agency and structure. It may be concluded from the analysis of the data that a balance be maintained between the culturalist emphasis on the qualitative recovery of people's experience, and a structuralist concern with theory and the context of people's experiences. In order to be able to account for the contradictory and conflicting behaviour of participants in this study, culture, or *"the production of forms of consiousness - ideas, feelings, desires, moral preferences, knowledges, forms of consciousness of self" (Johnson, 1980, p.11)*, had to be linked to structures of power, politics, and social situations, the context which strives to establish the hegemony in defining what "legitimate" culture is. This hegemony has been shown to be exercised in a context of struggle and contestation, engaged in both by teachers and by students. It is not, therefore, a matter of teachers imposing meanings and values on students for the benefit of the wider structure. Rather, a degree of autonomy and agency characterises both the givers and receivers of messages in their attempts to negotiate constraints by historically created conditions. This study has clearly shown the ways in which participants interact with these conditions, accepting, modifying, contesting and resisting them. In this way therefore, a structuralist focus on the objective conditions within a social formation combines with the culturalist insitence on seeing those conditions as ongoingly built, and contested, in daily lives of people.

The data collected throughout the year therefore reflect the ever present dualism in social thought, which - with reference to schooling - has been referred to as the tension between the democratic and the industrial impulses to which education must respond. The dynamic, often contradictory and dialectical process of the transmission and reception of messages recorded in this study show that the structures of schooling and the people who inhabit these structures participate in responding to both imperatives. Schools therefore at one and the same time reproduce aspects of the social order and are engaged in attempts to transform other aspects. The following section explores some the pedagogical implications of transformative, as against reproductive education.

9.2. A CONTRASTING VIEW OF EDUCATION.

Apple (1987, p.9) has argued that the key to winning the debate between the democratic and industrial impulses in education, and therefore the establishment of hegemony, usually rests with that group which can control the parameters of the debate by incorporating the competing claims of other groups under its own discourse about education and social goals. As has been shown throughout this study, the current discourse is increasingly framed in economic terms, but the democratic impulse has been shown to be very present, attempting to co-exist with industrial imperatives. The nexus where both impulses meet can be seen in the contradictory messages given by teachers and pointed out earlier, and expressed through the emphasis put on the teaching of "skills". The discussion about knowledge and pedagogy in this section will connect with themes raised earlier. Skills teaching is shown to be the sort of education which schools students to fit into the structure of the social order. Critical education in contrast sets out to recognise agency, and empowers students with knowledge and understanding so that the democratic impulse can be released.

Skilling and Deskilling.

This study has shown the extent to which teachers, in particular areas of the mainstream curriculum and in the innovations through transition education and work exploration, have interpreted their role of educators in the form of teachers of skills. In the face of contradictions, such as when they have to deal with student and parent instrumentalism, when they wish to do their best for their students within the constraints of the syllabus, and when they are confronted with the objective situation of increasing unemployment, few of those observed were able to respond creatively. The majority assuaged their feeling of powerlessness by providing skills to increase their students' competitiveness for a diminishing number of jobs. This study has also suggested that the skills approach has been accepted in various areas in the curriculum. As Wexler and his colleagues (1981) have argued in a North American context, some curriculum subjects are undergoing "decomposition" - English becomes communication skills, Social Education is transformed into social and life skills, and Economics

into a study of techniques rather than values - thereby reducing their potential for promoting critical understanding.

A number of authors have critiqued the skills approach to teaching. Skills have been seen to reinforce an ideology which stresses industrial needs in a number of ways. Cathcart and Esland (1985) are worth quoting at length in this regard:

> *That creativity which drew its sustenance from the psychological theories of Piaget and existential philosophy was founded on an open-ended concept of cognition and an expanding consciousness in which the concrete and the abstract were seen in a continuing dialectical relationship. The ideal pedagogical mode, in the phrase of Freire, was "learning by discovery". By contrast, the innovation, initiative and enterprise called for in the current discourse are entirely instrumental. They are directed at practical or technical rather than intellectual development, at information rather than knowledge, at syncretism rather than understanding.*
>
> *(Cathcart and Esland, 1985, pp.184-185)*

This study has thrown some light on how critiques like the above, and like those made by others[1] apply to the New Zealand situation. The skills approach was shown to effectively cut off young people from bodies of abstract theoretical knowledge through which they might elaborate structural and collective understanding of their situations. Students are therefore "deskilled" because they are alienated from taking control of and understanding their own lives - they end up having little grasp of who they are in the world, or any real understanding of how and why they relate as they do to those institutions and individuals whose power orders and fashions their lives. Frith (1979), following Bowles (1973), has pointed out the distinction between cognitive and attitudinal skills and argued that what is demanded form the "skilled worker" is not a specific task ability but a general set of attitudes:

> *Employers are getting away with blatant mystifications of their demands: there is little connection between the skills they say they need and the tasks young school leavers can expect to perform.*
>
> *(Frith, 1979, p.11)*

Such "skills" have been shown to include the ability to follow instructions, fit in, and apply oneself diligently to tasks without

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1. See, *inter alia*, Atkinson *et al.* (1982), Moore (1983), Dunn (1984), Gaskell (1986), and Korndorffer (1987).

understanding their general import. Simon (1983, p.243) notes that such "skills", taken the major deskilling of many occupations, have become a paramount concern for employers. Gorz (1976) has moreover argued that one cannot conceive of "technique" outside the social relations in which it is embedded, and therefore the concept of skill is not just a technical question, but is also a question of power and interest. It therefore follows that the mystification of personal characteristics into skills is highly problematic because skills are always defined with some socially defined version of what constitutes competence. This "skilling" also mystifies the students' positions in teachers' and employers' eyes. In the case of transition students it justifies free labour with the excuse that they have to "learn" how to be workers.

Atkinson and his colleagues (1982) have also questioned whether an adequate curriculum of "social and life skills" can in fact be formulated, given our lack of knowledge of their nature. They argue that *"teachers can be forgiven if they fall back on such 'traditional' formal educational practices as drilling students in job application letters which could well have immediate benefit, but hardly matches up to the more grandiose claims of social and life skills." (ibid.* p.124).

Despite these valid critiques, there is agreement here with Simon (1983) who says that since individual students face an uncertain job market, teachers have the responsibility to give youth a sense of how to "make it" within the system. Failing to do so might condemn some to social marginality, and *"we fall into yet another high-minded way of perpetuating the structural inequalities in our society." (ibid.* p.244). What is argued here is that while teachers should certainly help students adapt to the world of work, that should be neither their sole, nor their primary interest. Rather, concentration should be on a genuinely critical pedagogy. The context for the reconstruction of a curriculum based on critical pedagogy is outlined below.

Critical Education.

While teachers have often been criticised for the way in which they have consciously and unconsciously acceded to the formulation of

education within the technicist and instrumental concerns characteristic of the "new vocationalism", it would be true to say that they have been offered little in the way of alternatives. Aronowitz and Giroux (1985) are right when they say:

> *For the last decade, radical accounts of schooling have focused too heavily on critiques of schooling, while failing to provide the more difficult task of laying the groundwork for alternative modes of educational theory and practice.*
>
> *(Aronowitz and Giroux, 1985, p.213)*

Apple (1986c), while agreeing that there are few tasks of greater importance than establishing what "really useful knowledge" for the majority of the population is, argues that a democratic curriculum is not a received one.

> *It is not established by a few and then channelled downwards so that the only real question left for the majority of people is how to implement it. To do so would be to mirror the dominant ways curricula are too often dealt with today. "We" shall decide what is important to know; "you" will teach it or learn it.*
>
> *(Apple, 1986c, p.322)*

While that is true, and has to be given great importance, it is also imperative to suggest ideas, literature and pedagogical tools in order that a perspective alternative to the "new vocationalism" reach policy-makers and teachers. For, the dismantling of the discourse and practices of the "new vocationalism" has to be replaced by viable alternatives which satisfy both teachers and students, as well as parents, that something <u>is</u> being done.

Often too, critiques from the Left and from the "new" sociology of education have gone into a lot of "teacher-bashing" in their approach to the problem (with some notable exceptions, *inter alia*, Connell, 1985, and Ramsay, 1985 and their colleagues). They thus fail to realise that teachers too are finding it difficult to respond to new situations, are often so bewildered that they fall into dejection or passivity, escape into "routinisation", and find themselves "cribbed, cabined and confined" by rigid structures, sharing the same disillusionment (and fears of redundancy) that confront their students. Often during this study teachers' energies were observed being drained not by a critical reflexivity but by the very practical tasks of surviving. This survival can only become more difficult as the school increasingly loses its legitimacy. With such constraints in mind, Giroux's (1980) comments are appropriate:

> *"Radical" education prescriptions that call for teachers and students to reassert their individuality, to criticize existing definitions of knowledge, to defy determinism with freedom, and to actively construct their own lived reality and true humanity tend to go up in metaphysical smoke if they don't speak concretely to the existential reality of schooling. That is, such a theory must recognize the social sphere in which students and teachers operate, the actual conditions and parameters of practice. Not to do so is to end up with an elitist notion of change, one that may mistake powerlessness for passivity, for it is only with the conditions of practice that specific educational strategies can be assessed with regard to both their possibilities and limits.*
>
> *(Giroux, 1980, p.239)*

It is important therefore that, in attempting to establish the groundwork and context for the construction of an alternative curriculum, these "parameters of practice" be recognised. In short, education cannot, and should not, be expected to change society on its own. But this does not exhaust its transformative potential within the constraints it, and its participants, labour under. A reconstituted notion of education and pedagogy acknolwedges these constraints, and enjoins teachers to become *"bearers of critical knowledge, rules and values through which they consciously articulate and problematise their relationship to each other, to students, to subject matter, and to the wider community." (Giroux and McLaren, 1986, p.225).* Education in this sense fosters an intellectual and practical understanding of economic, political and social issues which enables youth to strive to address the critical social questions of their times. Critical curricula and pedagogies in this mode owe a lot to Freire (1972). In this discussion, his contributions in making the pedagogical more political, and the political more pedagogical, will be appropriated and placed in the context of concepts developed by the Frankfurt School, and particularly by Marcuse. Together, they provide the raw ideas and transformative energy not only to point towards directions for critical teaching, but also to generate that spark of enthusiasm, for visions are caught, not taught.

The Frankfurt School of thought bring together several of the threads woven in this study, and add another dimension - a forward-looking one. While this ethnography has highlighted the "what is", the Frankfurt School translates Marx's vision of "what could" and

"what should be" into terms which will find approbation among many of the teachers involved with this project, and others all around New Zealand. Since, as has been argued throughout this study, education is political, then it also involves the making of a number of value judgements. While there will obviously be different opinions about which judgements are "correct" or "legitimate", the philosophical framework of critical social theory proposed by the Frankfurt School presents New Zealand, as it did post-war Europe, with a humanistic challenge and vision.

Following Hegel, Marcuse (1964, 1968) and his colleagues insisted upon the existence of a realm of objective reality, and the corollary existence of human reason with which to understand that reality. However, they argued that facts on their own disclose very little - they are just brute data, and the human person need not be at the mercy of the facts that surround him/her. Rather, the person is capable of subjecting the facts of common sense to a higher standard of reason. What is experienced in the social, economic and political worlds is what men and women have historically made - the philosophical quest proceeds from this finite world, susceptible to ethnographic research, to the imagining and building of a humanity that could and should become in the name of more rational, just and humane criteria.

In the spirit of "Critical Theory" rather than "Positivism", the propositions developed in this study lead to a dialectical thinking which seeks to preserve the critical difference between what is and what ought to be. That which falls under the senses and can be observed is related to the whole system in which it operates rather than to its constitutuent parts, and also goes beyond the givens of that society and experience towards a better social order. Within Critical Theory, the goodness of any social order should be judged by the tribunal of reason, but reason is not to be seen as transcendentally outside of history. However, to deny transcendental immutablity is not to fall prey to relativism. Each historical period has its own truth: what is true is what fosters change in the direction of a rational democratic community within which authentic human happiness is possible. In this context therefore, the data presented in this study needs to be related to the historical agenda of the Left which has dreamt that human

persons be free so that they can act as subjects rather than be acted upon as if they were a contingent predicate. In order to do so, the often good impulses of teachers within schools have to be extended to an understanding of the whole, and how their actions are related to the maintenance of a whole social system. Teachers, like social theorists, have to move beyond a narrow focus in order to walk, in Marcuse's words, the fine red line of human achievement and of hope which exists within history (see Brosio, 1981). Like social theorists too, they are to appropriate Marx's central political interest and point out the discrepancy between humanity's essence - what it could and should become - and its miserable historical existence.

The vision of society held by the Frankfurt School is based on two value judgements, which Marcuse outlined in his introduction to *One-Dimensional Man*, and which have remained central to Critical Theory since its origins. The first is the judgement that human life is worth living, or can and ought to be made worth living; this judgement underlies all intellectual effort; it is the *a priori* of social theory, and its rejection rejects theory itself. The second judgement is that, in a given society, specific possibilities exist for the amelioration of human life and specific ways and means of realising these possibilities are available.

This study has shown that on occasion, the knowledge forms, knowledge content, and pedagogy utilised by teachers have addressed these two concerns. However, the industrial impulse has been described as gaining in strength and becoming an imperative. The immediate result of this is the alienation of youth from itself and from a democratic vision of society. Moreover, young people - especially those coming from class and ethnic suboridinate positions - are defined as deficient because they fail to develop the competency and narrowly-defined performance skills needed by industry. Because of such tendencies, young people have to become aware, at more than a "partial penetration" (Willis, 1977) level, of the forces affecting their lives. They have to be able to reject an approach which blames them for the very problems society has imposed on them.

Freire's (1972) notions of critical education and pedagogy concretise possibilities and alternatives for progressive teachers who feel urged to respond to the democratic impulse. His notion of "thematic investigation" gives priority to the student voice and experience, and addresses their peoccupations, doubts, hopes and fears. This study has shown the vivid and dynamic understanding of the realities of work which students, rather than teachers, had. Through their participation in casual and part-time labour, through their membership of groups defined by their class, gender and ethnicity, they are far in advance of any theory or knowledge content teachers can give, because they are the ones living specific realities. The teacher therefore enters into a respectful relationship with students, not to fill "empty" receptacles, but to share insights, information, and knowledge in a critical manner. Freire describes this sort of relationship in the following way:

> *The students, no longer docile listeners, are now critical co-investigators in dialogue with the teacher. The teacher presents the material to the students for their consideration, and re-examines his earlier considerations as the students express their own.*
>
> *(Freire, 1972, p.54)*

As a truly liberating, problem-posing education, it seeks to illuminate the "raw data" of lives, comparing and contrasting it with what it could and should be. In this way, persons

> *...develop their power to perceive critically the way they exist in the world with which and in which they find themselves; they come to see the world not as a static reality, but as a reality in process, in transformation.*
>
> *(Freire, 1972, p.56)*

This sort of education addresses the lives of both students and teachers in a truly dialogic relationship, and offers an organised, systematised and developed re-presentation of things about which they want to know more (Freire, 1972, p.66). This could range from an awareness of the rights of persons to an attempt at a wide-ranging democratisation of the social relations of educational practice and democratic restructuring of the curriculum.

There seems to be a general consensus among authors writing from a transformative perspective as to what sort of forms of school life should be encouraged within education generally. Drawing from

various authors in this perspective,[2] a number of questions which teachers and students could address can be suggested in order to translate abstractions into workable curricular concepts.

Work:

1. Why is it that some work represents more status, wealth and power than other work? How did this come about? Are there alternatives to this hierarchical structuring of labour?

2. What sort of experiences do people encounter in different sectors of the workforce? Why? How is this justified in a democratic society?

3. Why is it that groups of people identifiable by their ethnicity, gender, class, age, are treated differently from others? Why is it that these groups have less access to power?

4. What do people expect from work? How do the structures of work enable them to fulfill or thwart these expectations? Are these expectations fulfilled for identifiable groups of people, and thwarted for other identifiable groups? Why? Are there alternatives?

5. What sorts of relations are encouraged in the workplaces in your district - which you or your family and friends have experienced? Who stands to gain by these sorts of relationships? What alternatives can be envisaged?

6. What is the philosophy behind the wage? What happens to the profit generated by industry? How does this compare with worker participation in decision-making and in profit?

7. How do things that happen to people on the job affect other aspects of their lives? What consequences do they experience as a result?

8. How do events in people's lives affect their participation in the workplace? Again, what consequences do they experience as a result?

9. Do all employees follow specified procedures for accomplishing work? If not, why not? If not, what effect does ths have on the production process?

10. Do students with different educational and cultural backgrounds experience work differently? Why?

11. How does the nature of the work people do affect their satisfaction with their jobs?

12. What is the function of unions in the workplace? If a worksite has no union, why not? If it does, why does it?

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2. Shor (1980), Simon (1983) and Richer (1986) in North America; Cohen (1984) and Willis (1986) in the United Kingdom; Cole (1981) and Kemmis *et al.* (1984) in Australia; and Ramsay *et al.* (1983) and Korndorffer (1985, 1986) in New Zealand

13. On what sources of authority, physical equipment, and investment capital does a company or agency depend? How does this dependence influence the nature of work in the workplace?

14. What changes in either job requirements or job position can an individual make? What are the limits, if any, to individual initiative? What would need to be done for a person to define the nature or their work in the world?

Unemployment:

1. What are the causes of unemployment?

2. In whose interests is it to define unemployment as a problem caused by the unemployed and their unwillingness to find work?

3. Why is it that young people, women, and ethnic minorities are disproportionately represented in unemployment statistics?

4. How do government economic policies affect unemployment?

5. What are the everyday experiences of the unemployed? How does their status affect their relationships with themselves, their family, their community, and society generally? What problems do they have to face - in terms of financial and psychological hardship, housing, food, health?

6. Who stands to gain in a situation where there are large numbers of unemployed? Who stands to lose?

7. Are there groups of people who, because of the economic crisis, are becoming wealthier and others becoming poorer? Can we identify these groups? Are there patterns emerging? What are the political alternatives to this?

8. If the wage cannot be guaranteed to all citizens willing to work, what other forms of wealth distribution could be envisaged which ensure that every citizen has access to a decent standard of living?

The consideration of questions such as these will ensure that teachers and students engage in *"a version of education that includes real social and technical competence, but as well a critical social intelligence that refuses to let questions of compassion and justice to be suppressed by the concerns of technique and efficiency." (Simon, 1983, p.246).*

Various pedagogues have attempted to apply Freire's insights to specific projects and have helped students address some of the questions listed above. Three are mentioned as examples of critical pedagogy which points to alternative practice within the specific area of work education. In North America, Shor (1980) has demonstrated an excellent example of this sort of education by

initiating a structural analysis of the regional labour context with a group of working class youth. This led the latter to become aware of the structures of domination and injustices as played out in the neighbourhoods they had grown up in. They were also able to "read" - in Freire's definition of the word literacy - why it was that particular groups of people consistently gained, and others consistently suffered, from the social arrangements in the established order of their neighourhoods. They were also capable of moving away from a blame-the-victim model which characterises much of the residual effect on young people which schooling normally entails.

In Britain, Cohen (1984) developed Freire's insights about knowledge form, content and pedagogy with a group of unemployed youth. Cohen encouraged these young people to take photographs of aspects of their everyday lives, and to bring into the classroom this material evidence of their participation in social reality. The thematic investigation which followed was rooted in the peer group uses of language and literacy, as well as the oral traditions through which the residual forms of working class knowledge were transmitted. In such a pedagogy, "disadvantaged groups" were not considered to lack culture, even if the resources which they had might have been inappropriate for certain purposes in some social contexts.

Another critical educator is Jensen (1986), whose experiments in Denmark have led to the development of a pedagogy which, through its very formulation, leads to a critical conception of work. He therefore conceived of learning as a work process, and took as a referent Marx's ontological work concept in his efforts to develop a versatile, democratic and socially aware person. In his action research with high school teachers and students, he made a distinction between work (which creates use-values and is qualitatively determined) and labour (which creates value and is only measured quantitatively), and suggested that progressive teachers use their relative autonomy to re-create qualitatively-determined work in school for the pupils and to minimise quantitative school labour. He developed a model of education which, when organised as a work process in the terms defined and in its simplest form, would give rise to three phases:

> *The first phase is that in which the conception of work is formed, i.e. one conceives a situation converted to another situation with new possibilities. The second phase is that in which the work is carried out; one changes the situation or the conditions. The third phase is the new situation; the changed conditions and the possibilities that lie therein.*
>
> *(Jensen, 1986, p.202)*

In this way, work and education were viewed as processes which embraced conception - concerning change of the physical conditions, the implementation of changes and the evaluation of the utility of the changes, and where the participants work towards reducing external determination in relation to conceptions - in relation to action and in relation to the control of the output.

Critical educators in New Zealand can learn from these examples of transformative pedagogy, although they also have to integrate within it the country's special concerns and specific character and history. It is the researcher's belief that a brave, but necessary start would be a consideration of racism in New Zealand, and a structural analysis of the ways in which forms of schooling and of labour ensure the continued subordination of groups of people in social locations characterised by poverty and powerlessness. Sections of the present ethnography have provided some raw data for the development of this project, and have been collected in another study (see Sultana, 1987). It is speculated that such endeavours could open the doors to a consideration of how liberal capitalism subordinates other groups too. While structural analysis and transformative education regarding the subordination of women have reached an advanced stage in some schools, an appreciation of subordination based on class is almost entirely absent in many of the teaching communities encountered both within and outside the three schools observed.

Such progressive pedagogies cannot, of course, change the whole of society. However, they do create spaces in which changed social relations and methods of gaining experience can be transported to other spheres - spheres in which they can be used more directly in the work for greater social equity and solidarity. Apple (1987, p.15) warns that if the transportation from one sphere to another is to maintain a democratic trajectory, coalitions within schools with other progressive groups in the economic, political and

cultural sphere have to be built from the ground up. Similarly Giroux (1983b) encourages teachers to join social movements outside the school and participate actively in the "public sphere." Their role as "transformative intellectuals" means that the issue of teaching and learning is linked to the more political goal of taking risks and to the struggle within ongoing relations of power in order to alter the oppressive conditions in which life is lived - and to educate others to do so as well. That this requires a high degree of commitment and moral courage is not denied. As a teacher told the researcher when the latter suggested such forms of critical education and pedagogy as alternative practice:

> *If we make it so obvious to students that the problem is with the system, then we're going to have a lot of angry young people on our hands...and the first ones who will feel that anger are teachers like myself who have to meet them everyday. Stones will fly not only through my classroom window, but also through those at home!*
>
> *(Feedback Fieldnotes, 11/6/87)*

One of the major points of this study has been however that teachers are "intellectuals", even when their role is a structured silence about specific issues. It is up to them to verify whether they are acting as oppressive or transformative intellectuals. "Neutral" they never are.

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In the light of this study, and in relation to areas in the curriculum other than work education, theorists and practitioners need to address the following questions in a critical evaluation of their work and in planning future directions. This ethnography has addressed a number of these questions, and embodies both the possibilities of transformative education, and the contraints encountered by teachers and schools in their transformative attempts.

Questions related to the <u>reproductive</u> image of schooling:

* How do schools reproduce unequal relations based on class, gender and ethnicity?
* How do schools reproduce the dominant culture (ideology) and the social relations and division of labour in production?
* What pressures are exerted - and by what/whom - so that schools go on reproducing?

* How does industry exert its agenda in the schools? What are its overt ways (e.g. visits to schools by employers)? What are its covert ways (e.g. nature of textual material offered to students)?

* What reactions are evident among teachers and students to the reproductive function of schooling?

* Do schools, characterised by their difference in ethos, mixture of population in terms of class, gender and ethnicity, reproduce aspects of the social order in different ways and to different extents?

* How has the crisis in capital accumulation affected the reproductive function of schooling?

* In what ways do schools help reproduce specific occupational futures for students identified by their class, gender and ethnicity?

Questions related to the transformative image of schooling:

* How do schools experience, and express, the conflict between property rights and person rights?

* What attempts are made to resolve this conflict?

* In which ways are these attempts constrained and limited by the structure?

* Are there groups or individuals within schools who are utilising the "cracks" apparent because of the conflict? Is this utilisation politicised and extended to the social sphere for democratic ends?

* What happens to those individuals/groups who attempt to struggle for equity and alternative arrangements in schools?

* How affective are progressive teachers in engaging in an educational/pedagogical role whch emphasises human rights rather than the needs of capital?

* What sort of reception from colleagues, from students and parents do such progressive teachers receive?

* What is the relationship between social movements and the social order, as played out in schools?

* What potential for transformation do innovations (e.g., transition education, work exploration, *taha Maori*) in schools have?

9.3. DIRECTIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH.

This study has provided a critical insight into different forms of school life in New Zealand. It has highlighted the ambiguity and contradictions in classroom culture, and showed the contestation,

struggle and cultural politics which characterise educational institutions. It was suggested that classroom life is socially constructed, historically determined, and reproduced through institutionalised relationships of class, gender, ethnicity and power. In order to be able to capture this complexity, the researcher had to stretch a wide canvas, with the result that, as in Bruegel's paintings, an extensive range of actors was depicted playing out an intricate and complex number of activities. The researcher hopes he has succeeded in relating such seemingly independent manifestations of life to each other, so that the parts and the whole contribute mutually to each other. Future research in school life generally, and work education in particular, could paint different canvases, generating new and further insights by drawing portraits of individuals or small groups rather than teeming life. Such portraits could focus, like Jones' work (1986), on specific aspects of the social and educational encounter, or like Middleton's study (1985) on recording oral histories which confront the present with the past, and with possibilities for the future.

However, it is speculated that future educational research in New Zealand which is informed by the critical and radical mode should move away from merely describing school life to promoting specific versions of it, versions which have been identified as being more equitable and democratic than the ones currently being engendered. The grounded theory strategy utilised in this study, in conjunction with the effort to share with teachers the perspectives of both students and the researcher/observer, led to moments of reflexivity and opened doors to change. The action research aspect of the present study has been described in detail in Chapter 3. Future researchers, however, could engage in a more directly transformative mode. Such transformative researchers would work on the project of identifying faction groups among teachers engaged in emancipatory interests or involved in exercising liberating actions. They would offer their support, and share knowledge and insights in carrying out concrete analyses of the power layers within a situation, helping to tilt the balance in favour of the oppressed. Similarly, these researchers would support student contestation, and help them develop it from its privatised forms to more political ones. They would make students' contestation

available to teachers after the educational encounters, offering insights leading to reflexivity and praxis. In other words, the researcher would be involved in the sort of Freirian pedagogy advocated for teachers, appropriating various democratic and emancipatory voices, and introducing themes which heighten the chances for a truly critical education to occur. This is a crucial theoretical and political shift which is suggested for future educational research, because it supplants the attempt to study and understand, somewhat dispassionately, the prospects for reform in schools in favour of the role of advocating such reform, insisting upon its possibility, and become actively involved in making the possible probable. There is skill in the ethnographer's depiction of life. The genius of the radical researcher will be to transform that life closer to a democratic vision.

APPENDIX A.

DESCRIPTION OF RESEARCH TO BE UNDERTAKEN BY RONALD G. SULTANA, A COMMONWEALTH SCHOLAR FROM MALTA.

I am interested in looking in detail at the preparation of students for the world of work and some related aspects of life after school. I am particularly interested in programmes for those pupils who are about to leave the educational system, and in any activities which the school organises to facilitate the transition from school to work.

The research, supervised by E.J. Wadsworth (Senior Lecturer) and P.D.K. Ramsay (Reader) from the Education Department of the University of Waikato, will follow steps piloted by the Learning in Science Projects:

Step 1. Observation of Programmes-in-action. The research is designed to begin data collection by observing the careers education programme as it develops during the school year. Initially this would involve a systematic observation of selected teaching episodes to ascertain the knowledge which teachers are attempting to convey, and the messages that are received by the students.

Step 2. Discussion with students and teachers about the aims and objectives of the programmes on the one hand, and what has been learned on the other.

Step 3. Perusal of the Curriculum Materials and other written documents pertinent to the careers programme.

Step 4. Feedback of information gathered to the sample for further discussion.

This research project is planned to allow data collection during the course of one school year. The final report, based on my experiences and observation in three of the city's secondary schools, will be of interest to the Maltese Education Department in organising programmes to tackle the same issues. As is customary in research projects of this nature, I guarantee the anonymity of the school, staff and students.

Thank you for your co-operation,

(Ronald G. Sultana)



APPENDIX B.

THE INITIAL SET OF GROUNDED THEORY CATEGORIES.

Categories developed from the First Term in the field to process in-coming data. The corresponding numbers are the ones to be found on the left hand margin of the data. The refinement of these categories led to a list of 8 CATEGORIES (P.T.O.) for which PROPERTIES and PROPOSITIONS were developed.

1. *Entry into the field (including field relations).
2. Schools.
3. *Methodological Concerns.
4. +Guidance Personnel (including training, values)
5. *Offices and Classrooms.
6. Materials.
7. +Guidance Personnels' Roles and Services.
8. Messages about Work to Students.
9. +Messages about Work to Parents.
10. Transition.
11. Work Exploration.
12. +Classroom-Based Transition Programmes.
13. +Knowledge/Views on Employment/Labour Market by Students.
14. +Knowledge/Views on Employment/Labour Market by Parents.
15. +Knowldege/Views on Employment/Labour Market by Teachers.
16. +Knowledge/Views on Unemployment by Students.
17. +Knowledge/Views on Unemployment by Teachers.
18. +Employers, the Students and the School.
19. +Female Students and the Labour Market.
20. +Maori and Working Class Students and the Labour Market.
21. *School Leavers.
22. +Qualifications/Certification.
23. *Knowledge of Training Schemes.
24. +Finding Jobs and Forming Networks.
25. *Low Achievers.
26. *Guidance Personnels' views on Students.
27. +Careers as Choice.
28. +How Students Feel (about school, careers, transition, dole).
29. +Visitors Related to Guidance.

Note: Categories marked * have been retained for data collection, coding and indexing purposes. No propositions were developed from them because they do not form the focus of the research.

Categories marked + have been subsumed into a more general Category, for e.g., Category 22 becomes a Property of the major Category: SCHOOLS.

THE FRAMEWORK OF THE GROUNDED THEORY AT THE BEGINNING OF THE THIRD SCHOOL TERM.

Categories	Properties (X=Saturated)	No. of Propositions
1. SCHOOLS	a. Structural Messages re. Work	X....4
	b. Nature of staff/student Populations	X....2
	c. School's response to Labour Market	X....3
	d. Certification	X....2
	e. Aims of education	1
2. CAREERS ADVISORS/ TEACHERS	a. Training, Gender, Ethnicity	X....1
	b. Knowledge/views about Labour Market	X....3
	c. Attitudes Towards Work	X....2
	d. Conceptual model/s of voc. guidance	3
	e. Speakers they invite	X....1
	f. Finding Jobs and Forming Networks	X....1
	g. The educational decision-makers	X....1
	h. What school should be doing	1
3. MATERIALS	a. Nature of Materials used	X....2
	b. Sources of Materials	X....1
	c. Teacher-constructed or packaged	X....1
	d. Philosophy and attitudes embedded	X....4
	e. Reaction by students/teachers	2
4. TRANSITION EDUCATION/ TEACHERS	a. Rhetoric and Philosophy behind T.E.	X....2
	b. Function of transition education	X....2
	c. Overt/Hidden Curriculum of T.E.	X....2
	d. Who goes to T.E.? Why?	1
	e. Reaction by students/teachers to T.E.	4
5. WORK EXPLORATION	a. Rhetoric and Philosophy behind W.E.	1
	b. Function of work exploration	3
	c. Overt/Hidden Curriculum of W.E.	X....2
	d. Who gets Work Exploration? Why?	1
	e. Reaction by students/teachers to W.E.	1
6. MESSAGES	a. Intended Messages to Students	X....3
	b. Intended Messages to Parents	1
	c. "How To" Messages: The Job Formula	X....1
	d. Socio-Political Content of Messages	3
	e. Employers' Influence	1
	f. Messages re. state of labour market	X....1
7. INTERVENING VARIABLES	a. Competing Messages outside school	1
	b. Developmental Stage of student	1
	c. Gender/Class/Race of student	2
	d. Political literacy of student/teacher	1
	e. Student's experience of work	2
8. STUDENTS	a. Messages received by student at school	X....2
	b. Knowledge/Views re. labour market	X....3
	c. Attitudes towards Work	2
	d. Transition concerns	1
	e. The process of career choice	1

APPENDIX C

INTERVIEW SCHEDULE FOR STUDENTS.

(Questions related to SOURCES of Information)

1. Where do you get your information about work from? Who do you trust most to give you information like that?

2. Is what you hear about work from school different from what you hear about work from your parents and friends? Or from the media?

3. How good are teachers at informing you about work?

5. Do you go to the Careers Adviser? How do you feel about what they tell you there?

(Questions related to MESSAGES)

6. What sort of picture does the school paint to you about the world of work? About the future?

7. What aspects of work does the school emphasise? Ignore? What sorts of things should it emphasise more?

8. How does school prepare you for the world of work? What should it be doing?

9. What is school telling you about unemployment? How do you react?

10. Does school talk about such things as workers' rights, trade unions, discrimination, sexual harassment on the workforce, who to go to to help you settle a dispute with your employer...?

11. Have you found the school has helped you in thinking about particular careers/jobs you'd like to do? How?

12. Do teachers make a difference between some jobs and others?

(Questions about ATTITUDES)

13. What will be the main differences between school and work?

14. How important is work to you? How would you feel if you had to go on the dole for some time? What are you looking for in a job?

15. Why is there unemployment? Why are women and Maori people more unemployed than other groups?

16. If you had a chance between grabbing a job now, and continuing your studies, what would you do?

17. Are some jobs more important than others, with more prestige? Which jobs do you look up at? Down at?

18. How do you imagine your future career life to be like?

19. Are there groups of people who have a different attitude towards work, do you think?

(Questions related to TRANSITION)

20. What problems, if any, do you think you will be meeting with once you leave school? Which problems has school talked about?

21. How will you go about getting a job? Do you think it will be difficult? Why?

22. What do you think of Transition Courses in your school? Would you like to be on it?

23. How many students who leave school this year will find it difficult to get a job? Why? Who will they be?

SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTIONS FOR TRANSITION STUDENTS.

24. Why did you join the Transition class?

25. What good about Transition? What don't you like?

26. What do you hope to get out of being in this class?

27. How did you feel when you were first advised to go on Transition? How did your parents, friends feel?

28. Is it better than being in the mainstream with the rest of the students?

29. What do you think transition teachers are trying to do? Do you think they are successful? Why/Why not?

30. What sorts of things do you do in Transition? What would you like to do?

31. What sort of people go on Transition? Why?

32. How do you feel about work exploration?

33. How do teachers try to prepare you for work exploration? What do they want you to take out of it? What do you want out of it?

34. What have you learned about the world of work from work exploration? From Transition lessons?

APPENDIX D

INTERVIEW SCHEDULE FOR CAREERS ADVISERS.

(Questions related to ROLE)

1. How do you see your role as Careers Adviser in the school? Is it more than the disseminating of information?

2. How would you describe your role with reference to employers? What are you hoping to achieve when you invite them as speakers?

3. Do you feel unemployment has in any way affected your role as Careers Adviser.

4. What part/s do you usually play in the individual guidance interview?

5. What sort of training and time allowance should today's careers adviser receive?

6. In what ways do you feel you can affect the transition of students?

(Questions related to MESSAGES)

7. What sort of messages do you pass on to students about work?

8. What set of messages do you think students carry around with them form parents, peers, environment? Which of these would you like to affirm or contest? -What are students ignorant about with relation to work?

9. What factors do you take in consideration when assisting a student to make a career choice? What sorts of things do you emphasise?

10. Do you feel that certain groups of students should be receiving a different set of messages?

11. What sort of work attitudes do you find students have? Can you identify different groups of students with different work attitudes?

(Questions related to OPINIONS/BELIEFS)

12. How do you see the future career life of today's students developing?

13. Do you think schooling should make a response to the changes and requirements of the Labour Market?

14. What areas of work should school educate about? What should school be doing regarding vocational guidance?

15. Who, in your opinion, are the "at risk" students regarding the transition from school-to-work?

16. What do you think of the transition programmes running in your school? What future do you see for them?

(Questions related to VOCATIONAL GUIDANCE MODEL)

17. How useful are the Labour Department booklets in your work?

18. Do you feel a need to develop a Maori/Feminist model of vocational guidance? Why? How would you envisage this?

19. Can you identify "types" of students who come for individual vocational guidance? Can you draw any conclusions about this?

20. What sort of resources would you like to have available?

APPENDIX E

INTERVIEW SCHEDULE FOR TRANSITION TEACHERS.

(Questions related to ROLE)

1. What are the things you hope to achieve for your transition students? How?

2. How does Transition Education fit into the secondary school curriculum? What are its aims?

3. What criteria do you have to choose/refuse students for transition?

4. What is your status as a member of staff? Is your worth as a Transition teacher tending to depend on the number of students you place into employment? How can Transition achieve the status you want it to achieve?

5. How do you interpret your role when liaising with Employers?

6. In what way do you think you can affect the transition of students?

(Questions related to MESSAGES)

7. What sort of messages would you like to pass on to your transition students regarding the world of work? Are they to receive any special messages different from those you would normally give to mainstream students?

8. What set of messages do you think students carry around with them from parents, peers, environment? Which of these would you like to affirm or contest? What are students ignorant of n relation to work?

9. What set of messages should be given to those who are "at risk" of being unemployed?

10. What sorts of things do you hope your students learn/achieve from work experience?

11. Do you feel that certain groups of students should be receiving a different set of messages?

12. Should transition deal with the socio-political aspects of work like rights, unions, discrimination, race relations on the work force, sexual harassment? Why don't you?

(Questions related to OPINIONS/BELIEFS)

13. What problems do you think students will face on leaving school? How does the transition curriculum try to address these problems?

14. How do you feel about the fact that it is the unmotivated, non-academic students who are referred to you? Why does this happen?

15. Who, in your opinion, are the "at risk" students regarding the transition from school to work?

(Questions related to MODELS FOR TRANSITION EDUCATION)

16. What do you see as the main areas of concern in the development of transition curricula?

17. What future do you see for Transition Education?

18. What sort of resources would like to have available?

19. Do you think schooling should be responding to the unemployment problem? How?

APPENDIX F

INTERVIEW SCHEDULE FOR PRINCIPALS AND STAFF.

(Questions related to AIMS OF EDUCATION)

1. What aims and objectives do you see for your school? What directions would you like to move towards?

2. Has the school ethos influenced your approach to teaching and the emphasis you place on specific issues?

3. How do you consider the relationship between school and the world of work? The relationship between the school and employers?

4. Do you think schooling should be responding to the unemployment problem? How? Has it had any sort of repercussion on the structure of schools? On students? On any units of lessons you teach?

5. What messages about work and the preparation for work do you see implicit in this school's ethos and character?

6. Students carry messages and attitudes about work transmitted by parents, peers, enviornment. Which of these messages would you like ot affirm or contest?

(Questions related to TRANSITION EDUCATION)

7. What sorts of messages about work do you give generally to students?

8. Who are the "at risk" students regarding the transition from school-to-work? Why? What should/can the school do about that?

9. What do you see the role of Transition Programmes to be? What future do you see for them?

10. What should the school be doing regarding vocational guidance?

11. How do you think schools can improve career propsects of maoris and females?

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