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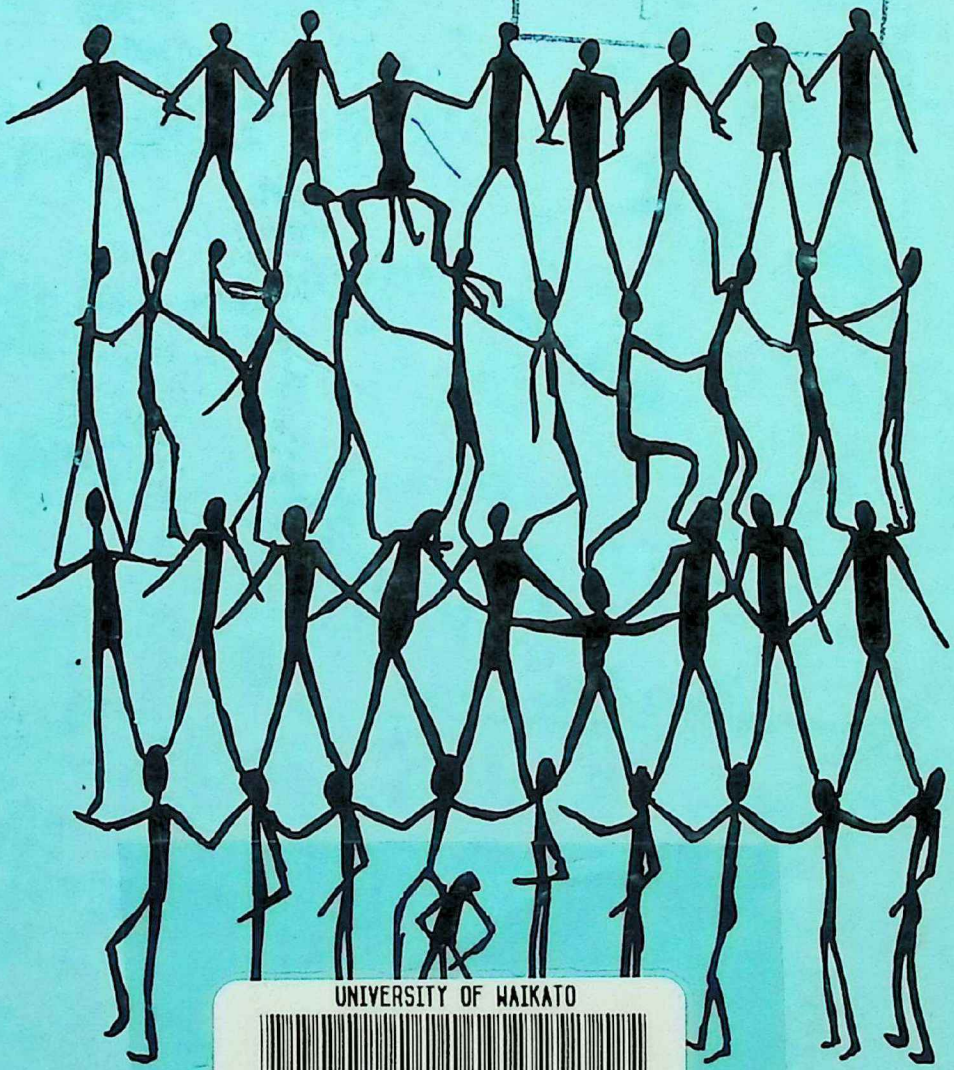

New Zealand SOCIOLOGY

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From Bodgies to Gothics: pop culture and moral panic in New Zealand

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Contemporary pop/rock music, its performers, and its associated youth subcultures, are frequently criticised by conservative commentators. Such critics point to rock music's sexuality and sexism, its nihilism and violence, and its black magic. Madonna, for example, is 'the wanton queen of pop', whose flamboyant appearance and carefree sexuality, along with coquettish record titles such as *Like a Virgin* and *Material Girl*, have captivated teen audiences and catapulted her to superstardom. (**Maclean's**, June 10, 1985:71) The misogynist lyrics of heavy metal groups like Judas Priest and Twisted Sister have prompted hearings in the US Senate, while in England a report from the charity Family and Youth Concern claimed that rock newspapers like **New Musical Express** are filled with 'sex and sadism, violence, obscene language and black magic'. (report in **Evening Standard**, October 22, 1986) Incidents at rock concerts are frequently portrayed in alarmist terms: 'Concert Siege. Police arrest hundreds in ZZ Top crush'. (**Sunday Star**, March 15, 1987:1)

It seems clear that, along with other media of mass appeal to the young, rock music remains the subject of suspicion, if not downright disapproval. Such perspectives, however, are hardly new. As with earlier forms of popular culture, at its inception rock and roll was frequently viewed with alarm. Many regarded it as the devil's music, associating it with anti-social behaviour and juvenile delinquency.

This paper examines the emergence of rock and roll as a popular musical form in the 1950's, and sketches some aspects of its impact in New Zealand. The episode is reconstructed as a further example of a moral panic, and particular attention is paid to the emergence of the bodgie as a new form of local folk devil. We then turn to a more recent moral panic associated with rock music: the "Gothic suicides" in Auckland in late 1988. Both examples are used to scrutinise the theoretical adequacy of the concept of moral panic, and to

examine how music, as a central form of popular culture, becomes invested with ideological significance. Before turning to the case studies, however, it is necessary to further consider the concepts of moral panic and popular culture.

Moral panic, youth, and popular culture

An emerging body of New Zealand work on debates surrounding the impact of popular media has utilized the concept of moral panic (Shuker, 1986; Shuker & Openshaw, 1987). Similarly, moral panic has proved useful in explaining the sometimes extreme reaction to delinquent youth, the 'folk devils 'of Cohen's original study (Cohen, 1980); to larrikins in the 19th century (Shuker, 1987: chapter 3), juvenile delinquents in the Hutt Valley in the 1950's (Soler, 1988), and to the "riots" at the 196i Hastings Blossom Festival and in Queen Street in 1984 (Openshaw, 1987, 1989). To varying degrees, these episodes represented moral panics, in that the social concern generated by them was greatly exaggerated, and the perceived threat to social harmony was by no means as ominous as many regarded it. Prominent in such episodes was the role of the media in shaping public perceptions and official reaction to the "problem".

Let us examine this process further. Concern over the activities of youth seems to periodically reach a peak, frequently associated with "boundary crises" - periods of ambiguity and strain in society, leading to attempts to more clearly establish moral boundaries. In many instances, such boundary crises are forms of *moral panic*, a term popularised by sociologist Stanley Cohen's now classic study of mods and rockers in the United Kingdom. (Cohen, 1980) The concept was further developed by Stuart Hall *et al* (1978) in their study of "mugging" in the U.K. during 1972-73. In both these works, moral panic is carefully defined and used in a sociological critique of a particular episode. Subsequently, however, there has been a temptation to use the concept in a descriptive fashion, and to apply it to any situation where there seems to be a negative over-reaction (to an issue or problem) by sections of the community and the media. It must be stressed that in some instances such social concern *is* clearly justified, even when elements of panic, exaggeration and mis-information may also be present. The reaction to the contemporary aids epidemic is a case in point here. (Watney, 1987) Accordingly, it is necessary to clarify the use of the concept of moral panic in a sociological sense, to more fully utilize and assess the concept's analytical potential.

In his study **Folk Devils and Moral Panics**, Cohen states that a period of moral panic occurs when

> A condition, episode, person or group of persons emerges to become defined as a threat to societal values and interests; its nature is presented in a stylized and stereotypical fashion by the mass media; the moral barricades are manned by editors, bishops, politicians and other right-thinking people; socially accredited experts pronounce their diagnoses and solutions; ways of coping are evolved or (more often) resorted to; the condition then disappears, submerges or deteriorates and becomes more visible. Sometimes the object of the panic is quite novel and at other times it is something which has been in existence long enough, but suddenly appears in the limelight. Sometimes the panic passes over and is forgotten, except in folk lore and collective memory; at other times it has more serious and long-lasting repercussions and might produce such changes as those in legal and social policy or even in the way the society conceives itself. (Cohen, 1980:9)

The second "stage" of Cohen's view of moral panic is particularly significant, involving as it does the repudiation of the "common sense" view that the media simply report what happens. Cohen's own case study of two English youth subcultures (the 'folk devils' of his title) showed up just such a process of the selection and presentation of news. The media coverage of the episode simplified its causes, labelled and stigmatised those youth involved, whipped up public feeling, and encouraged a retributive, deterrence approach by those in authority.

While Cohen's study provides a model that helps explain the processes apparent in the magnification of specific incidents into a moral panic, it does not provide an understanding of the reasons for a moral panic to occur in the first place. The question of why a moral panic occurs at a specific time within a particular culture is raised in his final chapter, but is not explored in detail. The question raises the need to explore the specific social and cultural contexts of a moral panic.

In their study **Policing the Crisis**, Hall *et al* examine the 'discovery' of mugging as a serious crime in the U.K. during 1972-3. They conclude that this episode constituted a moral panic, 'a panic which fits in almost every detail the process described by Cohen...'. (Hall, 1978:23) Their analysis argues that the critical question is not the social causes of a particular phenomenon (such as mugging) but why the society reacts to it, in the extreme way it does, at that precise historical conjunction.

They argue that a moral panic takes place within what Gramsci defines as a developing 'crisis of hegemony', (Gramsci, 1971) arising out of a particular historical context where the dominant class is endeavouring to win domination and consent through ideological means. Cohen's emphasis on the importance of labelling is still adhered to, as labels place and identify the initial events so that these events are assigned to a context, to enable a mobilisation of the meanings and connotations associated with that label. In Hall *et al*'s account, the motivation for labelling a particular phenomenon a moral panic is explained by the 'crisis of hegemony' which is operating within the society at that time.

Examining the historical relationship between youth, delinquency and the media also requires consideration of culture as a political issue, particularly the problematic distinction between high-elite culture and mass-low culture. Linked to this is the way in which, especially during periods of marked social change, aspects of culture become invested with a great deal of powerful feeling. At a deeper level, moral panics around new media are episodes in cultural politics. Underlying debates over popular fiction, comics, film, television, video and popular music are a series of assumptions about "mass" culture, which is frequently seen as diametrically opposed to a "high" culture tradition. Such debates have their historical antecedents in the work of writers such as Matthew Arnold, F.R. Leavis, and the early Frankfurt School. (Swingewood, 1977; Williams, 1981) High culture, exemplified by literature and the classic arts, is viewed as educational: involving imagination and the higher emotions, appealing to the rational mind, based in the real world, and bringing out the best in human nature. Low culture, on the other hand, is regarded as stultifying and immature: promoting illiteracy and wild fantasies, appealing to primitive emotions, and bringing out the worst in human nature. (Barker, 1984:179-180)

Such a dichotomy is, however, a doubtful basis for evaluating particular forms of culture. A strong argument can be made that the whole notion of a "high - low" culture distinction is a social construct, resting on class-based value judgements. (Taylor, 1978) It is more appropriate to scrutinize particular cultural forms in terms of *both* their form and their social function for consumers, while keeping in mind the salient point that any evaluation must be primarily in terms of the group that produces and appreciates it. This is particularly the case with popular music. (Shepherd, 1977)

Rock'n'roll and the Bodgie

Before 1956, popular music was dominated by American sounds, epitomised by the recurrent image of the crooner. The music was largely safe, solid stuff, what Cohn terms 'the palais age - the golden era of the big bands, when everything was soft, warm, sentimental, when everything was make believe'. (Cohn, 1970:11) There was little here for young people to identify with, though riot-provoking performers like Johnny Ray represented prototypes for pop.

Modern pop music began with Rock'n'roll in the mid-1950's. As Tosches (1984) documents, however, it had been evolving well prior to this, and was not the sole creation of Elvis Presley and Alan Freed. The phrase "Rock'n'roll" itself was popularised with its sexual connotations in the music of the 1920's. In 1922, blues singer Trixie Smith recorded *My Daddy Rocks Me (With One Steady Roll)* for Black Swan Records, and various lyrical elaborations followed from other artists through the 1930's and 1940's. (Tosches, 1984:5-6) Rock'n'roll was basically 'a mixture of two traditions: Negro rhythm and blues and white romantic crooning, coloured beat and white sentiment'. (Cohn, 1970:11) Negro rhythm and blues was good-time music, danceable and unpretentious. While highly popular on rhythm and blues charts and radio stations, it received little airplay on white radio stations, and was frequently banned because of explicit sexual content: Hank Ballard's *Work With Me Annie*, Billy Ward's *Sixty Minute Man*, and the Penguin's *Baby Let Me Bang Your Box* were typical big hits on the R & B charts, whose explicit sexuality predictably got them banned by the white radio stations. (Cohn, 1970:15)

It is this link between sex and Rock'n'roll - the Devil's music - which underpinned the moral reaction to its popularisation in the 1950's, and has continued to cause concern through to contemporary outcry over Madonna and heavy metal. It is also worth noting that music hall, jazz, and other new forms of popular music were also all stigmatised in their day.

The social context of the early 1950's was ready for Rock'n'roll, with fuller employment, general economic prosperity, and the emergence of teenagers as an important consumer group. Young people began to demand their own music and clothes, and to develop a generational-based tribal identity. Youth subcultures emerged, most notably the *Teds* in Britain, dressed in a

bastardisation of Edwardian style, with drainpipe jeans, pointed shoes, three-quarter coats, and heavily greased hair. Business interests developed keen to serve the new youth market.

In April 1954, Bill Haley made a record called *Rock Around the Clock*. It was a hit in America, then worldwide; eventually selling 15 million copies. While it did not start rock, it did represent a critical symbol in the popularisation of the new musical form. *Rock Around the Clock* was featured in the MGM movie **Blackboard Jungle**, the story of a young teacher at a tough New York school. The success of the film with teenage audiences, and the popularity of Haley's song, led to Haley being signed to make a film of his own. **Rock Around the Clock** (1956) told how Bill Haley and his band popularised rock and roll, but the thin story line (described by Charles White as 'brain damage in celluloid') was really a showcase for the rock acts on the soundtrack. The film proved enormously popular. Riots ensued at many screenings, as teenagers danced in the aisles and ripped up the seats, and some countries banned the film. Haley, however, was an unlikely hero for youth, and his image did not fit the music. But others were waiting in the wings.

In this brief overview, complex developments must be reduced to their key moments. The success of Haley was one, the emergence of Chuck Berry and Little Richard was another. Elvis Presley's *Heartbreak Hotel* (1956) was the biggest yet:

> 'His big contribution was that he brought it home just how economically powerful teenagers really could be. Before Elvis, rock had been a gesture of vague rebellion. Once he'd happened, it immediately became solid, self-contained, and then it spawned its own style in clothes and language and sex, a total independence in almost everything - all the things that are now taken for granted'. (Cohn, 1970:23)

By the end of 1957 Elvis had grown into an annual $20 million industry, and the process of homogenisation of "the King" had begun. The new music provoked considerable criticism. Many older musicians were contemptuous of Rock'n'roll. British jazzman Steve Race, writing in **Melody Maker**, claimed:

> Viewed as a social phenomenon, the current craze for Rock'n'roll material is one of the most terrifying things ever to have happened to popular music... Musically speaking, of course, the whole thing is laughable... It is a monstrous threat, both to the moral acceptance and the artistic emancipation of jazz. Let us oppose it to the end. (Rogers, 1982:18)

Old style band leader Mitch Miller denounced Rock'n'roll as 'musical baby food, it is the worship of mediocrity, brought about by a passion for conformity'. (Gilbert, 1986:16) Other criticism focussed on the moral threat, rather than the new teenage music's perceived aesthetic limitations. To many, Rock'n'roll appeared hostile and aggressive, epitomised by Elvis Presley's sensual moves. Conservative commentators wanted to save the youth of America from 'the screaming, idiotic words, and savage music of these records'. (**Story of Pop**, 1974:17)

This somewhat extended discussion of the early history of rock and roll is apposite because the New Zealand experience closely followed developments overseas. This can be seen through local reaction to the film **Rock Around the Clock**, the success of Johnny Devlin, New Zealand's answer to Elvis, and the emergence of the bodgie. The local reaction in each case contained elements of a moral panic, with youth once again posing a social problem. As with their overseas counterparts, by the mid-1950's New Zealand youth were more visible and more affluent. Contemporary press advertising reflected increased awareness of youth as a distinctive market, particularly for clothes and records. Dances and concerts catering for youth increased, with 1,000 people attending the Ballroom Astoria - 'New Zealand's Biggest Dance Attraction'- in Palmerston North. Youth clubs conducted Rock'n'roll dances, and the nationally broadcast Lever Hit Parade began in November 1955.

In late 1956 the film **Rock Around the Clock** arrived in New Zealand, and was approved for general exhibition. The Film Censor, Mr. Gordon Mirams, noted that 'a somewhat compulsive rhythm pervaded the film but otherwise there was nothing unusual about it'. (Undated press cutting, National Archives) As already noted, the film had provoked disturbances when screened overseas. In Britain, many local councils banned showings of **Rock Around the Clock** following "riots" in some cinemas. In the Gaiety Cinema, Manchester, for example,

> gangs of teenage youths and their girlfriends danced in the aisles, vaulted up on to the stage, and turned fire hoses on the manager when he tried to restore order. After the programme, they surged into city streets in a wild stampede, bringing traffic to a standstill in the centre of town and pounding a 'Rock'n'roll rhythm on buses and cars with their fists. (Press report, September 10, 1956)

In Sydney teenagers jived in the streets following the screening of the film, 'terrorising' city crowds and halting the traffic with their 'wild jitterbugging',

according to press reports. Anticipation of similar scenes in New Zealand were, however, rarely met. Despite headlines such as 'Larrikins Take Over After Film', and 'Rock'n'roll Addicts in Minor Disturbance', the crowds were generally restrained. Indeed, there was almost an air of disappointment. The police, prepared for trouble, were present at and following some screenings, but were rarely needed. In Invercargill, for example, a few teenagers made some efforts to emulate their overseas equivalents, but the big crowd that waited after each session to see a possible disturbance was disappointed. As the **Southland Times** put it: 'The stolid south was not outwardly moved by Rock'n'roll'. Things were little different in the north of the country:

> If this film could produce in New Zealand any of the galvanic effects it had had in Britain, Toronto and Sydney, it would have surely have done so in Auckland; yet in spite of a few policemen standing by, and in spite of the expectancy that had booked the cinema out, the first night's showing passed off with nothing more rowdy than some adolescent hand-clapping, some whistling and stamping, a little squealing in the rain after the show, and one charge of obstruction. (**Here and Now**, November, 1956)

This was in spite of the cinema's provocative publicity for the film, which included a foyer display of press cuttings of the riots produced by the film overseas!

Some observers regarded the fairly tame response to **Rock Around the Clock** as a reflection of New Zealand youth's relative maturity, whereas in Europe and America 'large numbers of young people seem to have an almost pathological urge to assert themselves, and are prepared to provoke or employ violence to do so'. (**The Times**, Editorial, September 24,1956; cutting in Archives file) This editorial writer considered that young New Zealanders 'can still be trusted to listen to a jazz (sic!) tune without having to go out afterwards and fight in the streets'. Others were not so sure. Wellington court sentences imposed on some adolescents who had converted cars and driven them towards each other at high speeds, shortly after the British Teddy Boys' game of 'chicken' had received publicity, prompted the observation that 'our cities are capable of producing "Rock'n'rollers" who could perform with the best - or worst of them' (**The Grey River Argus**, September 26, 1956, editorial). For most observers, however, Rock'n'roll was at worst a safety valve.

The music itself was perceived as a passing craze: 'it does invite one to dance with hypnotic abandon and self-display, but to listen to it is more monotonous

than boogie-woogie'. (Here and Now, November, 1956) As occurred overseas, there was a tendency to see Rock'n'roll as 'not a very attractive art form for those whose tastes have made any progress towards maturity. Prime requisites appear to be that the words - or sounds - should be meaningless and repetitive, while any semblance of melody is hastily and noisily murdered'. (The Grey River Argus, *op. cit.*). Generally, however, the press ignored the new phenomenon, while popular music on the radio remained largely confined to the numerous Maori show bands of the day, supplemented by a bit of jazz. Popular country singer Johnny Cooper did a cover version of Bill Haley and the Comet's *Rock Around the Clock*, the original being held back while Cooper's rather tame rendition was released. The success of the film Rock Around the Clock, however, led to the release of the original version of the title song, and the Haley and Presley hits which followed through 1957 and 1958.

New Zealand's first real Rock'n'roll hero emerged from Wanganui in 1957: Johnny Devlin, an 18 year old bank clerk. Devlin was a self-conscious Presley imitator, a natural singer and showman. Regional success encouraged him to move to Auckland in late 1957, and his first record, *Lawdy Miss Clawdy* became the most successful local single of the 1950's. Released on Phil Warren's Prestige Records label, formed in 1956, *Lawdy Miss Clawdy* sold some 80,000-100,000 copies. (Warren - in *Stranded in Paradise* 1982) It is worth noting in passing, that there appears to have been no objection to the records arguably explicit sexual lyrics: 'you like to ball 'til the morning, don't come home at night'.

A successful two week tour of the North Island led to further tours, including a hugely successful 5-month national tour by Devlin during 1958. This saw sell-out houses, Devlin mobbed by screaming girls, and several incidents of damage to theatres and injuries to the police protecting Devlin. While the tour subsequently assumed almost mythic proportions in the history of Rock'n'roll in New Zealand, there was clearly an element of media promotional hype present. Devlin, for example, wore lightly stitched clothing to create incidents where fans 'ripped the clothes from his back'. (*Ibid*) While Devlin was a gifted interpreter - his publicity termed him New Zealand's Elvis Presley - he was not a great innovator. However, he did dramatically alter the music business in New Zealand, showing locals could draw crowds and opening the way for 60's successes like Ray Columbus and the Invaders.

If neither **Rock Around the Clock** nor Johnny Devlin really measured up as local moral panics, the bodgies represented New Zealand's very own folk devils of the 1950's. The word "bodgie" seems to have originated in Australia, developing out of the slang term "bodger", used to describe something or someone inferior or worthless! The origin of "widgie", the male bodgie's female companion, remains obscure. Bodgies and widgies were the local equivalent of the English Teddy Boys, adopting similar styles:

> In their habits all followed a similar pattern. The males wore unusual and exaggerated haircuts, following the styles made popular by various film stars. All went to extremes in the style of suits worn. the trousers were all much tighter in the legs than usual. Some favoured extreme shortness of leg exposing garishly coloured socks. Coats, when worn, were fuller in cut and much longer than is normal by conservative standards, while all favoured brightly coloured shirts, pullovers or wind-breakers, and neckerchiefs. The "Bodgies" have reverted to the colour of the Elizabethan age. The girls were rather more standardised in their dress. Hair was worn drawn tightly back and tied in a tail or was worn in a bushy windswept style fringing carelessly over the forehead, showing neither the artistry nor the diversity of style manifested by the youths. On the average the girls were more uniformly drab than the boys with their exotic colours. All were characterised by rather louder voices when together, but were all quiet in manner during interviews. (A.F. Manning, 1958:9)

Manning's openly hostile study (it is subtitled 'A Study in Psychological Abnormality'), found that the majority of the Bodgies and Widgies he interviewed held manual or lower-clerical occupations, yet they did not lack intelligence (as indicated by standardised IQ tests). They were severely critical of their schooling, particularly its emphasis on authority and conformity. Manning makes little reference to the leisure pursuits of the group, however, other sources indicate that as in Britain Rock'n'roll was the musical style the Bodgies most strongly identified with: Buddy Holly, Gene Vincent and Eddie Cochrane joining earlier heroes like Haley.

Ian Wedde's fictional account of a 50's New Zealand Rock'n'roll band, The Gringos, documents their musical tastes and captures the full glory of extreme bodgie/ted dress:

> In their heyday they'd had a band suit: a midnight blue threequarter length jacket shot with silver lurex, shoulders padded right out, wide scarlet silk lapels plunging to a single button at navel level, a scarlet Edwardian waistcoat with a rich paisley pattern, pegleg pants with a zipper on the inside of each ankle, blue silk shirts with a foam of blue lace on the front and scarlet piping on the cuffs. *The Gringos* had been good enough to afford this number and they'd played

> anywhere there was a hop between Christchurch and Invercargill... (and) ... potent accessories: two pairs of blue suede ripple soles, a couple of chunky rings set with huge fake rubies, some velvet Mississippi string ties. (Wedde, 1981)

The New Zealand public and press generally shared Manning's view of bodgies as juvenile delinquents who posed a social threat. One extreme commentator went so far as to suggest that convicted bodgies should be sent to the former prisoner of war camp on Soames Island in Wellington harbour, with 'just enough food for a month at a time so they could fight among themselves and survive as best they could.. Perhaps when they found that work was needed to provide food it might clean up their brains'. (Readers Digest 1984:200). The bodgie became a national bogie man, with alarmist newspaper reports about bodgie behaviour. During 1958, the Wellington **Evening Post** (reported that 'the parade of brutality' by bodgies and widgies had reached such a peak that many parents were 'fearful of allowing their children out at night'. (*ibid*:201)

The hysteria provoked by Devlin was a predominantly female phenomenon, and engendered little serious criticism. The male bodgie was a different matter: 'When they are not feeling in too violent a mood they confine their activities to pushing people off footpaths. When looking for thrills, they fight among themselves, often with knives and bicycle chains'. (Press comment, cited in Readers Digest 1984:201) Bodgies became identified with hooliganism or vandalism, and Parliament debated the problem. Young compulsory military trainees on leave harassed and beat up bodgies, forcibly taking over bodgie milk bars in central Auckland. Military instructors at the army training camps used bodgies as a negative image: 'hit it as if it was a bloody bodgie', while incoming trainees with bodgie haircuts were initially left unshorn, resulting in harassment. (Broughton, 1959)

The bodgie threat was clearly an exaggerated one. In conformist New Zealand of the late 1950's, bodgies and widgies stood out. While some commentators argued that 'there is a great deal of difference between these bodgie-widgie outbursts and the old time exuberance that many of us remember from our football and rowing days', (senior public servant, in Readers Digest 1984:201), others took a contrary view. 'The Teddy Boy is only a little more bizarre than the young man who thirty years ago used to wear navy blue suits with pockets angled rakishly and festooned with buttons - the gay lads of street corners and

billiard saloons'. (**NZ Listener**, editorial, April 18, 1958: 'The Distant Hills of Youth') To some, the surprising fact was not that New Zealand had young delinquents, 'but that they are relatively such a small group'. (Ibid)

Gothic Suicides

In Auckland in late 1988, three teenage suicides aroused speculation about the influence of Gothic music on its followers. Press comment/headlines initially fastened on a possible association. Lyrics quoted demonstrated how 'Gothic music preaches a message of despondency wrapped in the mysticism of death'. (**Dominion**, 23 September 1988) Headlines referred to 'Gothic Cult suicides', the 'Music of mysticism and despair', and how 'Gothic lifestyle puts young at risk - doctor'. (**Dominion** 25,27 September 1988) In this last item, an Auckland psychiatrist specialising in the treatment of adolescents, claimed that many young people were putting themselves at extreme risk by being involved in the Gothic lifestyle. Dr. Peter McGeorge, director of Auckland Hospital's adolescent psychiatric unit, said Gothic adherents tended to be preoccupied with death, and for people who were vulnerable with low self-esteem, this preoccupation could tip them over the edge.

Death notices placed in Auckland papers by friends of the dead youths read 'Catch you later' and 'Be with you soon', encouraging allegations of suicide pacts. The father of one of the dead boys told the **Dominion** that the music of the Cure had played a part in his son's death, citing lyrics from the song *The Kiss*: 'I never wanted any of this, I wish you were dead, dead, dead'. Looking through his son's tapes, he noted that 'Not one of them says anything positive about anything. Its all "meet you on the other side" and that sort of thing'. It was soon acknowledged, however, that Gothic music could hardly be held accountable (at least solely) for the suicides. Even the father quoted above believed academic pressure and economic gloom were as much factors in his son's death as any so-called "Gothic cult". Local followers of Gothic music argued that 'the Gothic scene is simply one of fashion: We enjoy wearing the black clothes and the music'. (**Sunday Times**, 20 October 1988: 'Real problems ignored...') They also noted that 'Teenage depression should not be put down to music. That's an easy solution.' (ibid.) Indeed, the music, argued one correspondent, in some cases was a positive force in the lives of the teenage suicides:

> in the two teenage suicides of people I knew in Wellington, both were family - related. In fact, the only hope both of these guys had was the music they

> listened to. It gave them a feeling of companionship that they were unable to get from the most important people in their lives, their families. (Brian Mahoney, letter to **Dominion**, 12 November, 1988)

The Jesus and Mary Chain, frequently cited as a "Gothic" band, then touring New Zealand, issued a statement rejecting claims their music may have influenced the Auckland teenagers to commit suicide. Songwriters Jim and William Reid argued that the group's songs reflected their personal concerns and emotions. 'We do not wish to convey and have never encouraged hopelessness and despair to the listeners of our music', they said. (**Dominion**, 25 September 1988) The Reid's were on solid ground when they also observed that it is absurd to blame a genre of music for something as sad and complex as suicide. The most recent official New Zealand figures for suicide, from 1985, show five 10 to 14 year-olds and thirty 15 to 19 year-olds committed suicide, while 684 teenagers attempted suicide for complex and frequently interrelated reasons: growing unemployment, family breakdown, lack of communication in families, peer pressure, sexuality, and low self-esteem. (Fabian, 1986) In the case of the suicides picked up on by the press, it is possible that the music may have acted as a final catalyst, contributing to depression. More likely, however, is that amongst those whom Gothic music appealed to were some youth already depressed or psychotic. Another point which needs to be kept in mind here, is the press tendency to equate the "Gothic cult" with a very caricatured image: black clothes, pale make-up, an interest in the board game *Dungeons and Dragons*, and a preference for groups such as the Cure, Jesus and Mary Chain, The Mission, and Sisters of Mercy. This attempt to create an identifiable symbol, the Gothic cultist, was found wanting when subjected to closer scrutiny. Aside from being quite distinctive from mainstream commercial pop music, for example, the bands identified with Gothic music are generally quite distinct from one another. Furthermore, it was misleading to characterise their music as depressing; as one fan observed: 'The Mission's music is passionate and colourful. Lyrics like "I gave you flowers and you gave me faith, we are hearts and minds that move as one", inspire hope and unity - not depression'. (Adam Sondej, letter to **Dominion**, 4 October, 1988) Another fan noted that the Cure's song *Fight*, on the group's *Kiss Me Kiss Me Kiss Me* album, frequently referred to in coverage of the suicides, included the lyrics: 'so when the hurting starts and the nightmares begin, remember you can fill up the sky; you don't have to give in, never give in', suggesting that suicide isn't always a solution. (John Speak, **Dominion**, 4 October 1988) As **Rip It Up**, a leading pop music magazine, concluded: 'Realistic, objective reasons for

a real tragedy were ignored in favour of a more sensational line of "investigation".' (Rip It Up, October 1988:4)

Conclusion: Local Folk Devils?

While the episodes we examined both show elements of moral panic, as conceived by Cohen and Hall, there are important distinctions and emphases to be drawn when describing Rock'n'roll and the bodgies, and the Gothic cultists in such terms.

The bodgie emerged to be defined as a threat to established social values and interests in the late 1950's. They stood out partly as a consequence of the visibility of their cultural style in a largely conformist society. To a degree this style itself reflected their low socio-economic status in a period of prosperity and the deliberate adoption of an anti-social stance. Manning (1958:84) concluded that the Bodgie case histories he collected showed a number of common factors, including unhappiness in early childhood; strained and tense home atmosphere; broken homes; lack of parental supervision; and lack of moral and spiritual training. These led him 'to indict Society of Failure', and to argue that the bodgie's delinquency was born out of:

> The complete frustration of urges and the resultant feelings of anxiety, inferiority, deprivation, and inadequacy (which) force the child to seek substitute satisfactions in conduct that we call "delinquent". (Manning, 1958:85-86).

In Cohen's terms, the term 'bodgie' acquired symbolic power through its media usage, being established as a local 'Folk devil'. Subsequently, this symbol and its associated images of delinquent behaviour were consolidated in the public arena into a 'collective theme': the bodgie was magnified by press coverage so the scale of the phenomenon became conceived as widespread, and the public 'sensitised' so that a variety of incidents were associated with the initial incidents (which gave rise to the perceived moral threat). At this point, the 'control culture' took a greater role, with police, parliament, and judiciary all responding to curb and contain the threat. In the case of the bodgie, even the army became informally involved to neutralize a subculture that was regarded by some as "fair game". In all this, as with other folk devils, the media transmitted a stereotype of the bodgie, giving the deviant group the appearance of a greater uniformity and magnitude than they actually possessed.

The link between this treatment of a youth subculture and value-laden conceptions of high-low culture was clearly evident in the widespread condemnation of the bodgies preferred music, Rock'n'roll, on both aesthetic and moral grounds. There was no discussion of *why* the Rock'n'roll of Eddie Cohrane, Gene Vincent, Buddy Holly, and Elvis Presley appealed to the bodgie, that is, the social functions the music performed in the subculture. As Willis observes of the British scene: 'It is difficult to evidence, but the motor-bike boys' fundamental ontological security, style, gesture, speech, rough horseplay - their whole social ambience - seemed to owe something to the confidence and muscular style of early Rock'n'roll'. (Willis, 1978:35). Informal interviews with New Zealand former bodgies suggests similar associations between musical styles and group values and identity, (while twelve of Manning's fifteen bodgies owned motorbikes!)

If the bodgies and Rock'n'roll neatly fit the classical pattern of moral panics, the case of the Gothic cultists is much less clearcut. Again, the media initially fastened on and sensationalised a youth subculture, presenting the Gothic cultists in a stylized and stereotyped way. While the suicides which sparked off the flurry of press comment represented a definite human tragedy for those involved, press coverage tended to too-easily make a casual link between the suicides and the subculture and its music. This labelling process fits Cohen's use of 'symbolisation', but the process did not acquire the status of a collective theme. It soon became evident that adolescent suicide was a complex issue, and certainly not an act which a style of music alone could be held accountable for. (On this point, see 'Teenage suicide myths exposed', **Dominion Sunday Times**,, February 19, 1989:9; also Fabian, 1986). Furthermore, the scale of the incidents was a factor - three "Gothic suicides", close together, with suggestions of death pacts, were obviously newsworthy. Once it became clear however, that these were an isolated episode, and the complexities of suicide among adolescents began to be aired, the press quickly lost interest.

Further, the Gothic subculture, (even assuming it had such a collective status) did not fit the 'folk devils' image evident in other moral panics over youth. Though obviously not socially condoned, suicide constitutes a "crime against the self" rather than a threat to society in any delinquent sense. Nor was the subculture associated publicly with delinquent behaviour; being seen rather in terms of a particular style of hair, clothing, and makeup - "weird", certainly, but no more so than other historical and contemporary youth subcultural styles.

Finally, the reaction to the Gothic suicides hardly represented a crisis of hegemony, necessitating a reassertion of Cohen's 'control culture'.

If the Gothics were not folk devils, and hardly constituted a full-blown moral panic, at least their music fitted the traditional negative reaction accorded popular culture, particularly its more "fringe" variants. As with the bodgie's preference for Rock'n'roll, there was practically no serious press discussion of the reasons for the Gothic preference for music that was frequently simplistically characterized as 'macabre and depressing'. (**Dominion**; 25 September 1988) It was also too readily assumed that the lyric content of songs was important, overlooking the long debate on this point amongst consumers and critics of pop/rock music. (Frith, 1983)

These case studies have illustrated the interrelationships between youth subcultures, popular culture and the media. Previous discussions of 'moral panic' in relation to youth and the media have at times used the concept in a descriptive fashion, applying it too simplistically to situations involving a negative over reaction by sections of the community and the media. Our examination of bodgies and Rock'n'roll and "Gothic suicides" suggests that while the Cohen/Hall concept of moral panic is valuable in explaining such episodes, we must attend to variations and differences in their development. Not all folk devils are of full theoretical stature and not all can be awarded the status of true moral panics.

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Doing Field Research in Schools:

A Case Study of Ethical Considerations

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Abstract

Despite the increased adoption of field research methodologies within educational contexts, the ethical component has received scant attention in much of the research literature. The impression often given is that ethical issues are either unimportant, or that educational field research proceeds in a completely orderly, unproblematic, fashion. Yet, an extensive literature from within both sociology and anthropology illustrates that ethical concerns influence all facets of an inquiry. While various 'Codes of Practice' serve to guide the researcher, this literature indicates that ethics in the field context involves a consideration of the ongoing relationships and interactions between researcher and participants. This paper presents such an account of the ethical issues which arose during an investigation of adult students in a New Zealand secondary school.

> *There can be no final truth in ethics anymore than in physics, until the last man has had his experience and said his say.* (William James)

The application of field research methodologies to the study of educational contexts has undergone a period of extensive growth, particularly during the past two decades. These methodologies encompass techniques of participant observation, interviews, and a number of documentary methods as conducted by both anthropologists and sociologists. For the purpose of this paper, *field research* is used as a generic term which subsumes these various approaches and procedures where the researcher is involved in an interactive relationship with those being studied. The conduct of such research is an immanently social process involving human informants with their own problems, concerns, beliefs and values, giving rise to situations of 'choice' and 'selection' often requiring consideration of ethical principles.

Despite the increased application of field research methods to educational settings, the ethical component has received scant attention in much of the literature. Although introductory texts (see, Bogdan and Biklen, 1982; Goetz and LeCompte, 1984) mention the need to take ethical principles into account, reports of actual ethical and methodological issues from the education context are very limited. (Battersby, 1980; Burgess, 1981, 1984c, 1985b; Fuller, 1984; Hammersley, 1984; King, 1984) Indeed, overall the impression given within the educational literature is that ethical issues are either unimportant, or that field research proceeds in a completely orderly, unproblematic, fashion. Certainly, a reading of much of the well-known educational field research literature (for instance, Corrigan, 1979; Delamont, 1976; Hargreaves, 1967; Jackson, 1968; Lacey, 1970; Smith and Geoffrey, 1968; Spindler, 1974; Willis, 1977; Woods, 1979) would do little to dispel this general impression. Yet, ethical considerations have been reported in an extensive body of sociological and anthropological literature. (Becker, 1964; Bulmer, 1982a; Cassell, 1980, 1982a, 1982b; Cassell and Wax, 1980; Roth, 1962; Sieber, 1982; Sjoberg, 1967a; Wax, 1957) A brief survey of this literature would find numerous articles reporting debate upon such issues as: the 'risks' and 'benefits' for those who participate in the research; the nature and extent of information regarding the research, and researcher, to be given to participants; whether research should be 'open' or 'covert'; the form of data to be collected, how it is then analysed and disseminated; and, the 'protection' of identity to be provided for participants. (Burgess, 1982, 1984a)

Accordingly, it is predominantly from settings other than education that the researcher must seek guidance for the ethical conduct of the research. As a further contribution towards the general literature, and to extend that available within educational settings, this essay presents an account of some of the ethical issues which I confronted during a field research study of adult students at a secondary school.[1] Following a description of the study, each issue is presented as a separate section incorporating examples taken from the research.

The Study: A Biography

As an integral component of the reporting of field research, many authors provide both a biography of the conduct of the inquiry and an autobiographical

1 This account is developed from a paper presented at the Annual Conference of the New Zealand Sociological Association, Hamilton, 2-4 December, 1985 (Cocklin, 1985).

account of the influences upon the selection of a particular area of sociological investigation. (Battersby, 1981; Burgess, 1984c, 1985b; Pollard, 1985) In my case, the objectives and intentions for the research developed over a period of time, and were not solely the outcome of a review of the literature and consideration of the numbers of adult students enrolled in New Zealand secondary schools during the 1980's. The origin of the project owes at least something to my experiences as a beginning teacher in the early 1970's when I was party to the debates in the Boys' College regarding the admission of adult students to secondary school classrooms alongside the full-time school-aged pupils.[2] This was followed, in 1975, by the allocation of two women to my Fifth Form Biology class at the school; an event which brought some personal concerns. First, both adult students were some ten years older than me. Second, they were placed in a class of 30 second-year Fifth Form boys, perhaps best described as a 'difficult' group in terms of discipline and work habits. Finally, there was no information available to me, or other teachers, as to how such students should be taught, or treated, in the classroom. While, like many of my teaching colleagues, I eventually built up an experiential basis of treatments and information during a ten-year career, there remained only superficial insight - and no available literature - into the background and characteristics of adult students, why they returned to school, or the nature of their experiences.

This dearth of available information still existed when, in 1983 as a Ph.D. student, I was seeking a topic for investigation. At this point, these prior experiences, as a teacher, merged with the more recent outcomes of my degree studies within education, sociology, and field research, particularly that emanating from the British tradition. (Burgess, 1981; Corrigan 1979; Hammersley and Atkinson, 1983; Hargreaves, 1967; Lacey, 1970; Willis, 1977; Woods, 1979, 1983) Others, however, were also influential. (Battersby, 1981; Schatzman and Strauss, 1973; Spradley, 1980; Wolcott, 1973) This literature and experience predisposed me towards the adoption of field research methodologies as providing the more appropriate approach in seeking to provide an holistic account of the experiences of being an adult student in secondary school. In addition, this background directly influenced the location of the research within a broadly categorised framework of symbolic interactionism (Burgess, 1981, 1983; Woods, 1979, 1983) adopting *'grounded theory'* (Glaser and Strauss, 1967) strategies for the analysis of data.

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2 Throughout this article, 'adult student' and 'student' will refer to these adult students, the term 'pupil' designating members of the full-time school-aged population.

The objectives of the research were to focus upon a group of adult students attending secondary school, and in so doing (a) establish a profile of the adult student on the basis of a selected sample [N=36], and (b) derive from an in-depth and systematic view of the everyday experiences of this sample an account of the processes involved in becoming an adult student. In meeting these objectives, a further priority for the study was to *'elaborate upon the application of field research techniques within an educational setting'*, involving an autobiographical account of the 'processes, pitfalls, dilemmas, and discoveries' encountered during the investigation.

Throughout the 1984 school year, data was collected from the sample of adult students, school Principal, Dean of Adult Students and classroom teachers, using a selection of field research techniques (e.g. participant observation, interviews, questionnaires, diary accounts, and documentary materials). During this year particular ethical considerations arose during the conduct of the investigation. The focus of this essay is a presentation of these ethical issues and are discussed under the following headings: *Codes of Ethics; Sponsorship: Negotiating Access and Participation; The Research Situation: 'Open' or 'Closed'? Informed Consent; Anonymity: The Use of Code Names;* and *Data Dissemination.*

Codes of Ethics

To provide a basis of conduct for the social scientist, ethical codes of practice have been promulgated by professional associations, research bodies, and governing agencies such as the American Anthropological Association (see, Spradley, 1980) and British Sociological Association (see, Burgess, 1984a) In general terms, these Codes of Ethics carry the implicit suggestion that any investigation which cannot exclude the potential for harm or damage, either to those studied or the scholarly community, should not proceed.

At a superficial level, it can be reported here that I adopted the broad principles outlined in such Codes of Ethics as a *guide* for the conduct of this study. In particular, the investigation was to be conducted under an open approach, involve informed consent, and adopt code names as providing a measure of anonymity. Before commencing the fieldwork, an outline of the research was prepared for submission to the Social Sciences Ethics Committee of the university. Incorporating an account of general aims and the methodology, this

outline included the initial statement to be provided to each potential participant. (Appendix 1) The design being approved, the research then proceeded with these principles acting as a basis for conduct.

However, while the postgraduate student is under some obligation to submit the research design for consideration, there appears to be no specific requirement that it be premised on ethical principles, nor much in the way of available guidance or sanctions should it fail to meet such standards. Even with the Codes of Ethics produced by professional bodies, there are no effective means of ensuring that the code is adhered to (see, Barnes, 1981), nor, of course, are all researchers members of these associations or necessarily subscribers to their views, which further limits the power of such codes to guide research practice. Furthermore, the strict adherence to such Codes of Ethics in field research situations is made somewhat problematic through the origin of such codes within biomedical research and their universalistic nature. (Burgess, 1984a; Cassell, 1980; Cassell and Wax, 1980; Galliher, 1982; Wax, 1982) As Cassell (1980) argues, the complex nature of interactions and interrelationships characteristic of field research is such that these regulations may distract attention from the ethical adequacy of the research and from the moral problems which arise during its conduct. In other words, ethical decisions are an integral part of the entire research process and are in this sense an ongoing component of the conduct of field research where:

> Researchers are learning that ethics does not consist merely of a set of commandments and prohibitions to be piously professed upon the Sabbath. Rather, it provides a way of thinking, or ordering and guiding everyday decisions, in an attempt to avoid harming and wronging others. Of the ethical problems of fieldwork, many of the most significant are generated in the day-to-day interaction between researcher and hosts. These dilemmas are not only personal, they are moral - and ethical knowledge and reflection can guide the decisions of the field-worker. (Cassell and Wax, 1980:260)

Accordingly, the adoption of something of a mid-point between strict adherence to the Codes and the unrestricted pursuit of an inquiry appears to be both warranted and justified. (Bower and de Gasparis, 1978) This is not to suggest that a policy of anything goes is therefore acceptable and that the complete abrogation of responsibility is being advocated. As Dingwall (1980) remarks, research should be able to proceed with a clear conscience and many would wish to express something of a moral outcry (Adelman, 1985) at some of the investigations conducted under the name of field research, as indeed

have a number of authors. (Burgess, 1984a; Horowitz, 1974; Sjoberg, 1967b) What does seem to be required, in connection with all aspects of the ethical conduct of field research, is the self-reflection upon the inquiry (Cassell and Wax, 1980) accompanied by the more widespread discussion and illustration of such issues as an integral component in the reporting of any research. The recent trends in the educational field research literature indicate an increasing awareness of the need to document the ethical component of the research enterprise as autobiographical accounts are provided of this aspect of the inquiry. (Battersby, 1980; Burgess, 1981, 1985b; Fuller, 1984; Hammersley, 1984; King, 1984) Rather than presenting ethical statements and dramatic instances of ethical violation, such accounts have focussed on the day-to-day interaction between researchers and informants. (Burgess, 1984a) The purpose of this paper is to provide such an autobiographical account of some choice and selection situations arising during my study, the first of which occurred during the negotiation of access to site and sample.

Sponsorship: Negotiating Access and Participation

For the field researcher, the issue of sponsorship impinges upon many aspects of the inquiry. Considerations in this context might focus on such facets as funding (for instance, Agar, 1980; Burgess, 1984c; Stenhouse, 1984; Moore, 1978), relationships between supporting agencies and the researcher (for instance, Jenkins, 1984; Mamak, 1978), as well as those relating to the conduct of such *'infamous'* projects as the *'Project Camelot'*. (Horowitz, 1966, 1974; Sjoberg, 1967b; Oppenheim, 1969) In my situation, however, sponsorship was primarily related to the processes of access negotiation, and it is with this that discussion in this section is concerned.

The issue of access to the research site, and subsequently to the sample, has received scant attention in much of the literature. While such methodological texts as those by Schatzman and Strauss (1973) and Spradley (1980) indicate the vital role negotiating access plays in the research, they provide only broad guidelines without any significant depth of information regarding this particularly important, and often difficult, aspect of the research process. In much of the educationally based literature, access, if discussed at all, is often presented in terms of the unproblematic task of *'seeking permission'* (for instance, Hargreaves, 1967; Lacey 1976) to conduct the research in a particular school. The autobiographical accounts of field research in other settings (for instance, Bell and Encel, 1978; Bulmer, 1982a; Habenstein, 1970; Hammond,

1964; Whyte, 1955), however, illustrate that issues of access impinge upon many aspects of an investigation, as was the case during the course of my research.

Access To The School

In May and early June of 1983 which was the pre-fieldwork year, an examination of enrolment statistics from schools in the region illustrated that only two sites ('A' and 'B') provided the required *'convenience'* of location and *'sufficient'* numbers of adult students.[3] The final phase of this process where the researcher gathers information regarding the site and people, and prepares to negotiate access, was then undertaken. As much of this information had already been gathered, during the initial selection of the topic and my own experiences as a secondary school teacher, this final phase was more concerned with completing the process of site selection and negotiating access. The following discussion examines this process which resulted in *'Site B'* being selected.

The expedient first step was for me to approach the schools, seeking any further negotiation of access after selection was completed. This situation was *'resolved'* by the use of a newspaper article (Guardian, 10.5.83) which had appeared at the same time as I embarked upon the review of enrolment statistics. Dominating this report were remarks from the Dean of Adult Students at each school concerning such aspects of the experiences as the reasons for the return to school, difficulties faced, and achievements made by their students. In short, this report contained similar *'issues'* as I had arrived at from a consideration of the situation and literature. This, it seemed, presented an ideal solution by providing points of contact, and mutual concerns, through which initial access might be achieved. Accordingly, I sent a letter to each Dean which introduced me, referred to the newspaper article as the source of the name, and outlined the general intentions of the research as:

> For my research thesis I intend to do a study of adult students returning to secondary education. In particular, I am interested in exploring: (1) their reasons for taking this 'second-chance' education; (2) the reactions of the teaching staff

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3 These *structural conditions* (Glaser and Strauss, 1967) were premised on the basis of two governing factors: first, that any site involving intensive *observation* should be within easy travelling distance; second, examination of enrolment statistics had illustrated that many adult students would *drop out* during the year requiring that any potential site have *sufficient* numbers to provide at least some likely to remain for the fieldwork year.

> and secondary school-aged pupils to them; (3) their socialisation at secondary school; (4) the problems and difficulties they encounter; and, (5) the achievements and attainments they make during the year. (Extract, Letter to Deans, 29.6.83)

The letter concluded with the suggestion that they may wish to contact me to discuss mutual concerns.

The processes of initial access and final selection were completed during the ensuing meeting with each Dean in July, 1983. I saw these meetings as serving a two-fold purpose: first, to elaborate and explain the research; and, second, to obtain information regarding the school and its population which might aid in determining the suitability of the site for the conduct of the research. As part of this latter purpose, I attached importance to the Dean as a *'sponsor'* of the research and that selection of the site could be based on the discussion which we held. In particular, I saw it as facilitating the progress of the study if the Dean exhibited an interest and understanding of the research with a willingness and ability to provide information.

While the contact with the Dean at *'Site A'* was open and friendly, these selection criteria were not satisfied. For instance, this Dean reported that there were probably only three full-time adult students at the school and seemed unsure of exact numbers of those attending part-time or of the courses being taken. In addition, when I outlined the observational strategies to be employed, noting the need for access to groups of adult students outside of the classroom, the Dean felt this could not be achieved as the school did not provide any gathering place for the adult students. These factors, then, led to the rejection of *'Site A'* as a school for the conduct of the research. One point which did emerge from this discussion, however, concerned the ways in which a researcher's biography may exert some influence upon the conduct of an investigation. In the early stages of our meeting, it was established that we had both attended the same secondary school as pupils and had a number of mutual acquaintances. This appeared to contribute towards establishing an initial rapport which was then assisted when I mentioned my own experiences and background as a secondary teacher. Although not to imply that access and rapport were conditional upon this, it did appear to contribute somewhat to the establishment of the relationship (see, Woods, 1979) such that I decided to raise this biography during the meeting with the Dean at *'Site B'* the following day.

At *Site B* the Dean (D.1) expressed considerable interest in the project, suggesting it was long overdue, and exhibited an understanding and appreciation of the proposed methodology offering to provide every assistance during the conduct of the research. Indeed, without any suggestion on my part and prior to the methodology being discussed, D.1 provided a few examples of the adult student files held by the school containing some biographical information and reports on progress. In this case, access extended to confidential files and took place without the awareness of those being discussed (see, Burgess, 1984a), which illustrates the power of those granting access within a hierarchical organisation. However, perhaps contributing to D.1's openness, these files were provided after I had informed her of my ex-teacher status and following some time spent in discussion. Whether or not this was the case, my ex-teacher status did appear to exert some influence and assume some importance in the research context as will be evident at later points within this essay.

As the Dean at *Site B*, then, met the final selection criteria and the site provided the conditions of numbers of students and context for observational methodologies (The Adult Student Commonroom), it was adopted as the location for the investigation. By July 1983, processes of selection and initial access had determined the fieldwork site for 1984 and I had arranged to meet later in 1983 with those adult students present, as a means of gaining general impressions and indications of the ease with which relationships could be established.

One further process of access negotiation was still required. It was necessary for me to meet with the school Principal in order that personal contact and approval could be established. It is this individual who exercises the role of primary gatekeeper (see, Kingwall, 1977, 1980; Wolcott, 1971) within the school, even when initial contacts have been established with individuals lower in the hierarchy. (Hammersley, 1984) While access may subsequently have to be negotiated with those in subordinate positions (see, Fuller, 1984), the Principal's sponsorship may be such that they do not have much opportunity for refusing to participate as they respond to the structural situation within which they are located. (Burgess, 1984a) As such, this raises ethical considerations concerning sponsorship and access to the participants, including the extent to which the researcher can assume that those taking part have *freedom of participation.*

I met with the Principal (P.1) in October 1983, the same time as meeting with the group of adult students. During the discussions with the Principal, it was evident that D.1 had already informed him of the intended research and of my ex-teacher status, a biographical feature which dominated the meeting and to which P.1 appeared to attach considerable significance. The Principal also remarked that this former status and the proposed *full year* of fieldwork would ensure more attention to the *realities* of schooling than, as he termed it, the *usual garbage* from those *unfamiliar* with the situation and basing findings on one visit which as the *normal* type of investigation. (Woods, 1979) Regarding the conduct of the research, P.1.'s main concern was that the Board of Governors be informed of the proposed study. This would fulfil the final stages of *seeking approval* to involve the school. While he undertook to do this at their next meeting, I suggested that this be supported by a letter outlining the proposed research. This offer was accepted, with P.1 suggesting that the letter be sent to him just prior to the start of the fieldwork so that he could place it on file for the Board of Governors.

As an outcome of this meeting with P.1, full cooperation of the entire school, access to staff, students, and information, and a welcome to the school were received. The Principal undertook to inform the staff that I would be present in the school for the duration of the following year, although I requested an opportunity to meet personally with the teachers to both introduce myself and provide an outline of the research. This, P.1 suggested, would be best accomplished at a Staff Meeting early in the fieldwork year, final arrangements for which we would discuss at our next meeting in January, 1984. Not surprisingly given the nature of the institution, then, the function of the gatekeeper in granting access to those in subordinate positions was clearly evident.

One final aspect of access to site, and processes of acceptance by participants, is to be introduced here as it arose in connection with this first meeting with P.1. This concerns the mode of dress where the researcher attempts to blend in with the participants. (Cassell, 1982b; Galliher, 1980) Prior to the meeting with the Principal, D.1 had remarked to me that the wearing of a tie would be a good idea as the *Boss is a great believer in them.* Although given in a jocular manner, this advice was followed up on to the point where observations showed that both staff and adult students exhibited a range of dress standards.

It was decided that a mid-point should be adopted and throughout the research I wore casual trousers, open-necked shirt, and shoes, which probably placed me in a position where general appearance was similar to some teachers and some adult students, indeed being mistaken on different occasions as a member of both groups. Dress, it is suggested, then aids in the processes of access and acceptance contributing towards making the outsider at least appear like an insider. The adoption of a particular mode of dress, however, may be interpreted as a form of *deceit* in that the researcher adopts a *disguise* in order to *blend in.* (Galliher, 1980) I saw the adoption of a particular standard of dress more in terms of a variety of tact and politeness (see, Cassell, 1982b) in that deceit would appear to be more applicable where dress is used to provide a disguise where those being investigated are unaware of the identity and purpose of the investigator.

This, then, completes a description of the processes of gaining access to the school, a process which saw the methodology accepted by the *sponsors* and *gatekeepers* and full cooperation and assistance of all those within the institution being offered. At the conclusion of this, I gave both the Principal and Dean my home phone number should they have any further questions regarding the research during the period up to the start of fieldwork in January, 1984. The final action of gaining access, then, was the provision of the formal letter of introduction to the Principal which was sent in January. This included a formal application for access to the school, outlined the research - along similar lines to that earlier sent to the Deans - as well as introducing myself in terms of present status, background, and university supervisors.

The negotiations involved in gaining access do not cease with the primary sponsors nor with entry to the school, rather it is ongoing as selection processes take place and continued participation by subjects is sought.

Access to the Research Sample

The selection of the sample proceeded from the principle of voluntary participation by the adult students in the research process. The first opportunity to meet with a few of the adult students in the fieldwork year of 1984 occurred when they enrolled in late January. Here, I was seated in the Hall alongside the Dean who, once enrolment procedures were completed, introduced me in terms of *the researcher from the university who would like to speak to you.* A second, and larger, group were met on the first day of school (1.2.84) where a similar

introduction was made by the Dean. Finally, there were others who were contacted at a later date - as they were not available on the two earlier occasions - and those who enrolled during the course of the year. This provided the initial negotiation of access to the adult student sample [N=36]. In all instances, either individually or in a group, they were informed of the basic intentions of the research, had stressed to them the voluntary nature of their participation, and the separation of the research and researcher from the school was emphasised. (Appendix 1) This latter aspect I saw as necessary so as to: remove any notion of *compulsion* should the students see the research as part of the school; and, to lend *confidentiality* to their participation by establishing a *neutral* position for myself in relation to the school. In addition, this also provided some basis for the establishment of the role of researcher and suggestion, as a consequence, that advice could not be provided as I was not part of the school and could not interfere. These features of access negotiation, in turn, reflected the ethical considerations upon which the present study was based. Following these same broad principles, access was renegotiated with each adult student as their participation at different phases of the methodology was sought during the course of the fieldwork.

In addition to the Principal and Dean, the teachers of the adult students were interviewed on two occasions during the fieldwork year, as well as participating in some informal conversations. Comprising this staff sample, then, were the Principal (P.1), Dean (D.1), Deputy Principal (D.P.1) and 19 other members of the teaching staff.

Access to the Staff, guaranteed by P.1 at our meeting the previous year, was negotiated on an individual basis at the time of the first interview in June of 1984 under the same principles as adopted with the adult students. First, however, was the Principal's introduction (sponsorship?) of me at a meeting of the Staff on February 20, some 2.5 weeks into the First Term of 1984. While I had met some teachers during the enrolment period, this was the first opportunity to meet with all teachers at the school. Following an introduction by P.1, I was given *a minute or two* to present an outline of the *study of adult students* which allowed only sufficient time to present a summary while stressing the intention to involve teachers in the investigation. I concluded with a request that those interested, or seeking clarification, could meet with me at the end of this meeting or, should they wish, approach at any stage of the year. P.1 then outlined my previous teaching record - establishing credentials? -

promised the *full cooperation* of the whole school, emphasised that the research would involve the *entire year* - a statement which drew some general approval from the staff, extended an open invitation to the staffroom, and suggested that I should remain for the remainder of the meeting to allow for staff to approach me when it concluded. The latter point appeared to indicate a *trusted* role for me as I was then privy to a number of confidential discussions concerning the school and some of its pupils. Although the *sponsorship* apparent in the present research appeared to have little direct effect upon the course of the investigation in terms of restrictions of access, suggestions as to methodology, or recommendations regarding the focus, there was some extent to which this perception of a *trusted* relationship exerted influence. It certainly alerted me to the importance of making every effort to provide confidentiality for the participants, within the realisation that complete guarantees cannot be given. (Johnson, 1982; King, 1984; Morgan, 1982; Wild, 1978)

The implied guarantee of teacher cooperation evident in this meeting then determined my approach to each individual staff member when seeking their participation in the study. Here, the broad intentions of the research, its methodology, and the voluntary nature of their participation were provided. Furthermore, in line with the basic ethical principles of the research, the staff were informed of their right to review their comments after they had been recorded and transcribed. Hopefully, it was these aspects and the relationships between us that led to their full cooperation, rather than P.1's promise during the staff meeting.

In summary, 36 adult students, the Principal, Dean, Deputy Principal, and 19 teachers, formed the total sample of participants at the school. This group was *selected* on the basis of voluntary participation which, along with processes of access negotiation during the course of the fieldwork, saw them informed of the basic intentions of the research, its methodology, my role as researcher and the separation of the study from school requirements, as well as of their rights to view the information regarding them which was being recorded - although none were to do so.

Also related to this principle of *voluntary participation* and negotiation of access was the decision to adopt of *open* approach to the research. Discussion will now focus on this aspect of the study.

The research situation: open or closed?

While the principle of *open*, rather than *covert*, approaches was to be adopted in the present research, it was evident from the literature that this issue had been subject to a widespread debate and that it was not as straightforward an issue as this dichotomy would suggest. (Burgess, 1985b) Indeed, this debate covers a wide range of perspectives including those who wish to categorically reject covert methods under any circumstances (see, Erikson, 1967, 1968), those who see this rejection as untenable (see, Denzin, 1968), while those conducting covert research justify their position (Holdaway, 1982; Humphreys, 1970; Homan, 1980), and yet others who query this justification (for instance, Bulmer, 1982b, 1982c; Shils, 1982). However, as Roth (1962) suggests, perhaps this focus upon a dichotomy of approaches is itself misleading and something of an oversimplification as all such research contains, at least, some elements of *secrecy* for it would be impossible to *tell all* to the participants. In other words, overt and covert practices, and the related aspect of informed consent, need to be examined from within actual research settings, rather than separating it from its contextual foundations. (Dingwall, 1980)

From the inception of the project, I held it as important that *openness* should be a basic principle. Throughout the research, I was *open* about the role of researcher, attempted to answer questions regarding my *intentions* and background, emphasized the voluntary nature of participation, and stressed the separation between the research and school requirements. Yet, it was evident from the research context that a simple dichotomy between *open* and *closed* approaches did not cover every eventuality and some elements of secrecy did exist. (Burgess, 1985b; Roth, 1962) Certainly, as far as non-participants within the school were concerned - pupils and some staff members, for instance - the only potential sources of information regarding my role in the school were a brief newspaper report of the investigation and comments possibly made by participants in the research. Even in those situations where non-participants were informed of the research, there was no guarantee that this would be understood or recalled. The Office Staff at the school are a case in point. Although introduced to them by both the Principal and Adult Dean prior to, then again during, the fieldwork year, I found it necessary to restate my position and purpose whenever seeking information or appointments with senior staff through the School Office.

Also of some concern in the conduct of the research is the extent to which those participating will tend to assign some other status to the researcher or

make assumptions regarding the processes or focus of the study. (Burgess, 1984a; Pollard, 1985; Woods, 1979) In the relationships with the teaching staff, for instance, the Principal's introduction of me, as being an *ex-teacher researching adult students*, may have assumed priority despite expressions of the intention to involve them in the research. Even the Deputy Principal, after being informed of the study, gave me a Staff Manual stating *you'll need one as you're one of us*. Moreover, although participating staff members were *informed* that all comments made to me were likely to be recorded, there appears no way, short of constantly reminding them of the fact, that I could guarantee that they remained aware of this aspect of the research. In particular, in those situations where staff made passing remarks to me in the corridors, staffroom, school grounds, and other occasions it remains possible that the teachers were unaware that these would be recalled and later placed in the fieldnotes. (Hargreaves, 1967; Woods, 1979) In such instances any potential conflict of ethics was resolved when examination of data so obtained demonstrated that it did not '...impinge on the individuals concerned'. (Woods, 1979:300)

While note-taking and recording served as constant remainder to the adult students of their involvement in the research, there remained the possibility that they might have assumed that a particular comment was of no relevance to the research and unlikely to be recorded. Some indication that the adult students were aware of the fact that anything could be of interest came from instances where I was told during discussions to *get this down, it could be important.* As this occurred in a variety of instances, and covered a wide range of information, it appears possible to suggest that the adult students viewed *all information* as *of interest* to the research. On the other hand, as with teachers, they were unaware of exactly what was being recorded and certainly of the possible interpretations and analysis to which the data would later be subjected (see, Pollard, 1985)

There were also situations where covert access to information regarding the adult students was granted to me by members of the school staff. In particular, access to the Personal Files of the adult students was covert and a source of some concern during the conduct of the study.

Located in the School Office was a locked cabinet containing the personal files of all pupils and adult students enrolled at the school. These were treated as

completely confidential and it was necessary for me to obtain the Principal's permission to have access to these files on each occasion, although I had been granted such access during the process of negotiation of entry to the site. During the fieldwork, P.1 was approached and then accompanied me to the Office where the staff were informed that I would be using these files. I was then required to use a nearby office to view these files and P.1 stated categorically that contents were not to be divulged under any circumstances.

As the adult students were unaware of this access by me, nor were efforts made to inform them either, this remained a covert activity within my research. From the point of view of the conduct of the research, perhaps some justification for this stems from both the content of the files and the potential for harm which may have resulted from being open about this access. First, the adult student files contained only brief biographical data - name, address, age, and telephone number - as supplied by the student upon enrolment - a copy of their personal timetable, and a duplicate of each School Report. These adult student files, then, contained very little information and I merely used them to provide a further check on some of the data gathered by other methodological techniques. As each student conveyed all such content to me, and in greater detail, there seemed little point - although it was not considered as an option - in informing them of this access to their files. Indeed, considering the highly confidential status given these files by the school there appeared to be some potential for harm in acknowledging access in this situation. Consider, for instance, the possibility that an adult student discovered such access to the files and then asked me to divulge the contents. Leaving aside the possibility that this could have resulted in my being barred from the site by the school staff, there remains a further dilemma in this situation. All that could be done, without any means of substantiating the claim, would be to assure the student that the contents were innocuous and nothing unknown to me or the student was included in the file.

That one student, at least, assumed that I had access to various items was shown by F.10's[4] remark that 'You've probably already seen this' when handing me her School Report. One other incident, however, did give some cause for concern over these files. This occurred when I was approached by D.1 in the corridor outside the Commonroom and informed:

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4 This code name provides gender - 'M' or 'F' - and an assigned number. The adoption of this strategy will be discussed further at a subsequent point in the essay.

D.1 *M16 was worried about whether you had access to his records.*
I *Why?*
D.1 *I said there was nothing in them other than his enrolment forms and Report.*
I *Why was he asking, do you know?*
D.1 *Perhaps he thought we had some secret information about him.*

(Fieldnotes, 9.8.84)

At this point we arrived in the Commonroom and conversation stopped, with D.1 apparently unconcerned about the incident. At the start of an interview the following day, I asked M.16 whether he had any concerns about the research and what it might imply to which he responded that none existed. Perhaps, then, he had been satisfied with D.1's truthful comments regarding the contents of this personal file. The only indication of a possible basis for M.16's concerns was that he might have assumed that the school would have records from his previous school where, he reported, he had a very bad reputation. Yet, M.16 was to later show me a personal notebook containing teacher comments on his behaviour from his other school and was completely open about this part of his prior experiences. Accordingly, without divulging the fact that I had access to such files and breaking the confidence of school staff, I could not determine the source of M.16's concerns, nor did he mention the matter again, either with me or the Dean.

Patterns of choice and selection were also evident in the overall nature of field relationships and interactions. As in any social setting, there were instances where I developed negative perceptions of certain participants at particular times (see, Battersby, 1980), a process which undoubtedly also worked in reverse. While consciously determined not to show such feelings, or let them direct data collection, one such situation - again involving M.16 - did occur where my impressions directly influenced the course of the investigation and involved a period of covert research. M.16 was a 16-year old who had enrolled as returning Fifth Form pupil at the beginning of the year then was given adult student status, arriving in the Commonroom at the end of February.[5] Perhaps because of this change in status, his youth, or some of his early activities in the Commonroom - such as riding his motorbike inside, using the sofa as an ashtray, turning the radio to full volume, interjecting in conversations - I

5 The decision to change M.16's status was taken by the Principal, yet the Dean and some subject teachers were highly critical of this situation.

formed a rather negative view of him and was then reluctant to involve M.16 in the research.[6] However, as the year progressed, M.16 was a frequent participant in the interactions within the Commonroom, and often referred to by other adult students, making it essential that he was inducted into the investigation if the principles of open research and informed consent were to be upheld. Yet it was not until near the end of Term Two that he was inducted and informed of the purposes of the study and the reasons for my presence - although he did indicate that he was aware of this and had been so for some time. Notwithstanding the retrospective seeking of his participation, in M.16's case there was a period of covert observation directly influenced by my personal preferences. Once inducted, M.16 was a very willing participant and a good relationship eventuated between us, perhaps most succinctly indicated by the considerable effort M.16 expended on preparing afternoon tea on the occasions I met him at his home and the openness of the ensuing discussions. Whether this was a reflection of the changes apparent in M.16 as the year progressed, or changes on my part, remains a matter of conjecture. The incident, however, clearly illustrates the role which personal preferences may play in the field situation, and may serve as something of a warning to those who follow. Such incidents, as a component of the ethical accounting, should be documented.

It would appear, then, that the dichotomous view of overt and covert research and its inclusion within universalistic codes is inappropriate in the field research situation. This arises from the interactive nature, involving give-and-take, of field research in comparison to the biomedical experiment where the researcher can outline procedures to be taken with *passive subjects* (Wax, 1980) It is precisely this involvement in an on-going interactive relationship which presents a central dilemma for the researcher faced with an ethical problem in the field as they often require an immediate resolution not allowing a halt to the proceedings either to consider the situation or consult with others. (Dingwall, 1980) Compounded by the close relationships that exist between the researcher and the participants, situations may arise where advice is given, or actions are taken, on the spur of the moment, with little time available for consideration of the possible ramifications. (Battersby, 1980) In such situations, then, the researcher has no other recourse but to document the

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6 Perhaps it is also pertinent to note that both teachers and other adult students reported similar perceptions of M.16's status and behaviours, some using his case as a rationale for their view that adult student status should be *limited* to those *over 18-years of age.*

incident, not only as an illustration of the possible ethical considerations but as a possible effect upon the research processes.

In view of this, there would appear to be some substance to the suggestion that fieldworkers are constantly taking decisions about ethical issues in both *open* and *closed* research. In turn, as Burgess (1985b) argues, this implies the need to arrive at some ethically justifiable compromise whereby the impossibility of obtaining informed consent from everyone, of always telling the truth, while protecting everyone's interests, is acknowledged and, furthermore, documented. As I have outlined in this essay, there were situations where the choices I adopted involved strategies of the *white lie*, the *equivocation*, the *silence*, and the claim of being *ignorant* of events or information as means for obtaining further data or detail, protecting confidentiality, and to prevent undue pressure and influence being exerted upon participants. (see, Battersby, 1980) Such instances were premised on the point that, while truth-telling is the preferred strategy, the *untruth* may provide the path to information or the least *harm*. (Atkinson, 1981; Bok, 1978; Burgess, 1984a; Cassell, 1982b)

From this discussion it becomes apparent that the dichotomous view of *open* versus *convert* research does not cover every eventuality in this field research situation. In this sense, then, while I adhered to an *open* approach as a guiding principle there were situations and conditions which involved *covert* strategies. Such situations need to be detailed as part of the overall process of documenting the ethical component of the research.

Allied with the *open* approach is the issue of *informed consent*, the second broad principle I adopted for my research.

Informed consent

The principle of informed consent arose as a result of such incidents as the biomedical experiments conducted during the NAZI regime and some of the generally, covert and unethical studies conducted since. (Cassell and Wax, 1980; Burgess, 1984a, 1985b) In general terms, this principle requires that subjects be in a position to voluntarily give their consent to participation in the research based upon a full understanding and comprehension of the investigation. Yet, in its full legalistic sense, requiring signature to a document containing full methodological and outcome presentation, informed consent is somewhat problematic in field research where:

> In most kinds of fieldwork, it is pragmatically useful, even essential, for the researchers to inform their hosts of their hopes for the investigation and to seek not merely initial consent but active cooperation. Yet, neither party can be sure of what will be entailed by the course of the fieldwork. The hosts are changing, the fieldworkers are changing, the world itself is changing. During good fieldwork, the researcher is able to establish deepened relationships with the hosts and be offered the opportunity to perceive and understand more; in a sense consent is broadened in scope. (Wax, 1980:282)

The field researcher, then, should communicate as much information as possible as part of an on-going process of *informed consent*, although this would be unlikely to involve the *conventional consent form.* (Wax, 1980) As Thorne (1980) argues, consent may need to be informed by different methods at different stages in the field research process, rather than relying upon the once only signing of a consent form. Accordingly, consent becomes a continuous process in which the researcher is open about the intentions of the research along the lines suggested by Wax (1980) and others. (Burgess, 1985b)

The fact that an open approach was adopted for the present research formed an integral component of the practice of informed consent as I was always willing to discuss the research methodology, or myself, in response to questions from the participants. (Dean, Eichhorn, and Dean, 1969) It was this consideration which led to the production of a *Letter of Consent* (see Appendix 2) given to all those adult students [N=27] who participated in the research beyond the completion of an initial biographical questionnaire.[7] The contents of this letter also formed the basis of comments made to each participating staff member at the time of our first meeting.

As Oakley (1981) reports, the researcher may be asked many questions regarding personal background and the research, yet the present context saw, primarily, background information being sought by the participants with only *How's it going?* - type queries relating to the research processes. No student asked about the *aims* of the research beyond the standard *definition* which was incorporated in the *outline* (see Appendix 1) presented to all participants, namely, that I was *interested in all aspects of the experiences during the year,*

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7 This difference from the original sample [N=36] illustrates a further methodological issue, that of the process of *attrition* which was to see only 15 adult students remain for the full year. Access to those who left school remained an unresolved problem - while some did reply to my letters or phone calls, contact with half of the leavers was *lost* without discovering *why* they left school.

inside and outside the school'. Also, there were no requests from participants to view the notes I was taking, although, unlike Hammersley (1984), no efforts were made to disguise either the fact that they were being taken or the actual content. This applies only to those situations, however, where note-taking was done with participants present, and there were occasions where notes were made following a conversation or session out of view of the participants. While this was a strategy of convenience, rather than an attempt to disguise note-taking, it still raises the concern that participants were unaware of this process.

Consent was continuously negotiated in that students were asked to present themselves for interviews and discussions, they willingly accepted my presence and the recording of their conversations, and completed questionnaires and documentary materials, all under the principle of emphasising their *voluntary participation*. The fact that some adult students did *decline* to take part in the study, either from the outset or *withdrew* at a later stage, perhaps indicates the success of this aspect of the research. A full assessment of their understanding of the principle of informed consent would require an examination of the reasons for their non-participation which, in most cases, was not forthcoming despite efforts made to elicit the information.

With the staff members, the process of *informed consent* followed a similar pattern. Although not issued with a *Letter of Consent*, at both interviews teachers were informed of the *voluntary participation*, *right* to decline to answer questions, and that they could ask questions or to see what was being recorded. There were no refusals - of participation or comment - other than one instance where the Principal made some remarks *off the record*.

During the present investigation, the only *concern* expressed by participants - a few adult students, and many of the teachers - regarding the research, involved the *anonymity* of responses.

Anonymity: the use of code names

In response to such enquiries, as part of the principle of informed consent, and in consideration of the literature pertaining to the recording and dissemination of data (for instance, Morgan, 1982; Sieber, 1982), the participants were told that code numbers would be utilised. At the same time, they were informed that this process could not be taken as a *guarantee* of complete anonymity, and

certainly the identification of site and perhaps sample remains a possibility, particularly in a relatively small country such as New Zealand. While every effort has been made to protect identity, including that brought about by the delay between the fieldwork and the dissemination of data, the adoption of code numbers does not necessarily prelude identification.

Considering the more widespread use of actual (pseudo) names in reporting educational field research (for instance, Ball, 1981; Burgess, 1983; Hargreaves, 1967; Willis, 1977; Woods, 1979), some indication of the rationale for the present use of numeric codes appears warranted. First, until the start of the fieldwork year, and even then not fully determined for some time afterwards, I was uncertain of the number of participants. The logistical task of assigning *other* names to potentially many individuals appeared unnecessarily complicated when a number would serve the same purpose - let alone the possibility that a subsequent enrolment might have the actual name already *assigned*. Second, the use of a designated code appeared to lead to easier identification of participants, particularly as a method of distinguishing the Principal, Dean, and teachers from the adult students. While perhaps *titles*, such as *Mr.*, *Mrs.*, and *Ms.* may have been used for members of staff, I considered that this could imply some unintended differentiation between these adults and the adult students. This is not suggesting that there was no differentiation between teacher/student, merely that it should not be further emphasised by the use of titles for one group of adults and not the other. The use of code numbers and appropriate designations for the teaching staff appeared to resolve this situation. Further, despite the success others (for instance, Delamont, 1984) report where the *assigned name* becomes better know than the *real name*, I found it easier to recall a numeric code as equivalent to the participant's actual name, rather than referring to the individual in the social setting by one name then writing notes using another. While, of course, names could have been added in place of code numbers during the writing up of the report this appeared to be an unnecessary extra step in the process when all fieldnotes use the code number. Finally, names have certain symbolic meanings, not the least to those reading a report, and thereby imbue a degree of meaning to either individuals or institutions. (Burgess, 1984a) Certainly, an argument may be advanced that this meaning is important in specific contexts, but equally there are instances where a particular name may elicit a vision of a character or institution - even with a similar name - from a reader's own experiences, perhaps influencing the

impressions conveyed in a manner not only unintended but potentially false. The adoption of numeric codes appears to negate this possibility. It was for these reasons that code numbers were adopted in the present research, although this is not to imply any inherent superiority of one form over the other nor to deny that others may equally justify the use of names. In the present research, no participant was to suggest that they would prefer their real names to appear in any reports. Indeed on such materials as their diaries and questionnaires the adult students placed their own code numbers and appeared to interpret this as contributing further to the notions of confidentiality.

Also related to this aspect of anonymity, as well as other ethical considerations, there are those situations where the presentation, and even recording, of data is influenced by ethical issues. In particular, this relates to the ethical considerations involved in data dissemination.

Data dissemination

Ethical issues involved in the publication of research data have been extensively considered in the literature. (Barnes, 1979; Becker, 1964; Burgess, 1984a; Johnson, 1982; Trend, 1980) Here, according to Burgess (1985b), the researcher is required to take into account such aspects as: loyalty to both sponsors and participants; potential violations of secrecy and privacy; and, potential harm to the individual, both researcher and researched. As a consequence, the researcher becomes involved in making decisions as to what will be incorporated in the final report, and what should be excluded, as well as those affecting confidentiality. (King, 1984) This may require consideration being given to such strategies as the exclusion of material, perhaps even under legal advice, from the published report (see, Wild, 1978), delays in producing the final report (see, Burgess, 1985b), and the various methods of disguising the identity of the site and participants (see, Delamont, 1984; Hammersley, 1984; Tomlinson, 1982). Another strategy adopted has been to involve the participants in the process of data dissemination, particularly by some who have had to name the research site. (Edwards and Furlong, 1985) This has been used as a method not only of validation but also allowing for the participants to make *corrections* to the content, (Ball, 1984; Burgess, 1985b; Whyte, 1955), although this is not without its own inherent difficulties as Ball (1984) discusses. In all cases, the researcher is faced with decisions taken to maintain confidentiality while, at the same time, providing for sufficient identification of the participants and detail of information to allow further use of the research. (Burgess, 1985b; Hammersley, 1984)

Yet, none of the strategies adopted may be completely foolproof, and there are numerous instances where identity of the site and the researched have been discovered, by those external to the situation and by the participants. (Johnson, 1982; King, 1984; Morgan, 1982; Wild, 1978) While some (Cavendish, 1982; Gibbons, 1975) argue that the policy of using code names is unsuitable, such techniques are now commonly applied, not the least, as Cavendish discovered, partly to protect the researcher who could be involved in actions for libel. (King, 1984)

It was from considerations such as these that code numbers were adopted in the present research and selections of content proceeded. For instance, decisions were taken to present the incident without providing the details given by the participant. (Burgess, 1985b) One adult student provided very detailed accounts of an ongoing relationship with a married man - including such aspects as names, dates, and locations - as a source of influence upon her during the course of the year. For obvious reasons, such detail has been deleted.

While these issues of content and confidentiality were not the only factor in the delay between the fieldwork and completion of my thesis in 1988 (Cocklin, 1988), they did at least contribute. In particular in that they were a source of personal anxiety during the writing-up stages resulting in numerous drafts as I sought to convey the information without providing cues to the identity of the source. Even the issue of student language and its reporting became a matter of some concern in this context. A number of the adult students frequently employed four-lettered words in conversations within the group and these dominated certain sections of my fieldnotes. When confronted with the situation where such conversations formed part of the thesis, I experienced some fears that they might elicit an adverse reaction from examiners or other readers, especially the frequent anatomical references and the disparaging remarks made about teachers. Although infrequent within the thesis - and perhaps in itself this is a reflection in part of my own concerns - this language was part of the social reality and warranted inclusion, yet this did little to ally my fears over the issue.

Thus, the processes of writing the thesis, and undoubtedly subsequent reports, were influenced by both field-note content and considerations of the ethical

dilemmas of data dissemination. The compromise reached was the adoption of code names and delay in presentation of the information derived from the research. These appeared to provide the best level of protection for all involved and yet further the knowledge of the social context. At the same time, however, it was recognised that complete anonymity could not be guaranteed by these strategies of code names and data dissemination. It was in this context, then, that participants were informed that their code number and a delay of publication were all that could be applied to make it difficult, but perhaps not impossible, for identification of them to occur.

Conclusions

In this essay I have presented an account of some aspects of the ethical considerations which arose during my research with adult students returning to secondary school. This is not offered as a model of ethical conduct, but rather in order to stimulate further discussion on the ethical conduct of field research in general, and within educational settings in particular. While reflection upon some of the incidents conveyed here might suggest better alternatives that could have been adopted - and thereby serve a definite purpose - the overall intention in this presentation has been to convey the point that instant solutions are often not available to the field researcher within an ongoing and interactive situation. Rather than merely stating the ethical codes adopted, the appreciation and understanding of the complex issues relating to the ethical conduct of field research will only develop through provision of accounts from within actual field situations. Accordingly, I would suggest that it becomes incumbent upon all field researchers not only to consider the use of ethical codes as a guide to practice but to provide documentation of the influence of ethical considerations upon their research.

APPENDIX 1

Points to be Covered on Initial Meeting with Participants

(1) I am embarking upon my Ph.D. research which will focus on adult students, like yourself, who have returned to secondary school.

(2) This is my own research and is quite independent of the school and any of its requirements.

(3) As the first part of this research, it is necessary to collect biographical information in order to form a *picture* of adult students in general.

(4) In order to determine this, I am asking all adult students at this school if they would volunteer to complete this questionnaire. The information given by you will be confidential. While your name is required, this is only for identification at this stage, and the cover sheet will be removed and throughout the study a code number will be used in place of your name.

(5) From the results of the questionnaire, a group will then be approached by me and asked to participate in the study during the remainder of the year.

(6) Have you any questions?

(7) Therefore, I have two questions to ask of you. Would you agree to volunteer to complete the questionnaire? If you were to be approached for the remainder of the study, would you be interested in taking part?

Standard Reply to Questions Regarding Nature of Research Involvement
The research involves my being present with you at school throughout the year, talking with you, listening to you, and recording your comments about all of your experiences - inside and outside the school. It will also involve some interviews, questionnaires, and the keeping of a diary. However, as most of it will involve the situation where I am present during normal gatherings in the Commonroom, it will hopefully not take up to much of your time. Indeed, should you find that I am taking up your time you should always feel free to point this out to me. As the research progresses, you will be provided with the details of what each phase involves and your continuing agreement to participate will be sought. Does that explain it, at this stage, satisfactorily?

APPENDIX 2

Contents of Letter of Consent

Barry Cocklin
Department of Education

Massey University

13 February 1984

Dear [Insert Name]

Thank you for agreeing to participate in the remainder of my research investigation of adult students at day-time secondary school.

As the research progresses I will endeavor to answer any questions you may have regarding the study, myself, or your part in the investigation. At any stage, should I ask a question which you would prefer not to answer, I would appreciate your giving reasons for not replying to it, these reasons I will respect. The interviews and comments you make will be recorded and then transcribed under your code name and should you wish to see the written version I can make such arrangements. All the written records relating to you will be given the confidentiality of a code name and, due to the time lapse, will not appear in my thesis until late 1985.

Throughout the research, should you have any suggestions to make, questions to ask, information to give, or for any reasons wish to contact me, you may either do so at school or you are very welcome to phone me at home during the evening at 80-952.

I look forward to our working together.

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Cultural Choice - A Reply to my Critics

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In recent papers on differential attainment and cultural studies I have tried to work within a materialist theory of culture and have employed the term "cultural choice" in an attempt to grasp the taken-for-granted way in which class-cultural trajectories are managed by school-leavers. The welcome critiques of Hughes and Lauder (1988) and Shuker (1988) raise some pertinent questions which do call for a response. Some words, perhaps all the *keywords* (Williams, 1970), acquire so many distinct shades of meaning in the process of conceptual contestation that their use threatens to become an actual obstacle to communication.

Notwithstanding the proclaimed unimportance of definitional enquiries by one influential philosopher (Popper, 1972) it is impossible to get far in social theory without looking to the meaning and reference of our central concepts. Moreover, it is hardly possible to advance the view that one has been misunderstood without trying to say more clearly what one means. The response is divided into two independent sections as I have found it necessary to develop my thoughts about working class culture and the concept of choice separately.

Section One: Working Class Culture

I have criticised the work of the Birmingham Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies on working class culture (Nash, 1987) and have no wish to revise any part of that paper, but in view of Shuker's observations a brief additional comment may be appropriate. Hall's authoritative introduction to **Culture, Media, Language** (Hall, et. al. 1980) is a good place to start. As Hall systematically unpicks the complexly interwoven theoretical strands which have influenced debate about "culture" within the Centre it is apparent that successive definitions of culture, have typically been generated *post hoc* (and even *ad hoc*), in an attempt to formalise the implicit problematics of work actually in progress. The CCCS group grafted on to its original literary-humanistic concept of culture an "anthropological" concern which gave ethnographic research an essential methodological role. That now already imprecise and over-loaded concept was successively influenced by

Althusserian structuralism, semiotic deconstruction, Gramscian cultural-politics, and, at the last, Foucaultian discourse theory. Given this eclectic history it is hardly a matter for astonishment that the resulting heady and undigestible mix has led to some confused minds. What has happened at the CCCS has much the nature of a tragedy in that the original intention to develop a materialist, less textually focussed, non-elitist concept of culture - able to grasp the nature of social life as ordinary people live it in an era of late capitalism - has been destroyed from within by the foreign and idealist character of the theories it chose to privilege in place of the robust and realist common sense it would have found on its doorstep. Be that as it may, the CCCS constructed a collective understanding of culture as a code or a system, as a set of inventories, or folk taxonomies, through which social life is "classified out". In fact, as Hall fails to distinguish between the classifications and taxonomies of people themselves, as they know them, and the structural codes or unconscious forms through which historically definite modes of consciousness are produced, one cannot even regard their concept of culture as coherent let alone realist.

This is not to say that the substantive productions of the CCCS have not contributed to our knowledge of working class culture. Perhaps most helpful, and much more helpful than any formal "cultural" theorising, are those three distinct problematics of class culture (which I was needlessly generous to attribute to Johnson) implicit in their writing:

(i) the traditional cultural-anthropological understanding of working class culture as the way of life of close-knit working communities;

(ii) the political view of working class culture as a more or less organised tradition of popular radicalism; and

(iii) the structuralist understanding of working class culture as forms of "lived", commonsensical, resistance to capitalist domination.

The definitive contribution of the CCCS to the theorisation of working class culture is, in fact, their insistence that the "key elements" of that culture must be found in the relationship of the working class to capital. The Hegelian idealism of this last interpretation is a source of great difficulty but it is important to understand that this difficulty arises from a genuine attempt to find a materialist answer to a major theoretical-practical problem for cultural-anthropological studies of contemporary working-class communities.

How is the nature of the "lived" culture of a community to be expressed by an appropriate concept? Cultures, that is the distinctive ways of life characteristic of a community, can be identified in purely nominal terms (hippie culture, "Bohemian" culture, Pakeha culture), in terms of the causal conditions which supposedly give rise to that way of life (culture of poverty, culture of oppression), or in terms which attempt to express its central psycho-social characteristics (for example, respectable, rough, fatalistic). If it is maintained that the culture, the actual way of life, into which the children of a community are socialised, has profound consequences for their future (for their progress in the educational system, for example), then the psycho-social character of their "culture of socialisation" is precisely the object of study. The task is to investigate and describe the most consequential psycho-social characteristics of the cultural environment which people produce and live. Regardless of the nominal designation applied to cultures of socialisation what is required from cultural-anthropology (from "cultural studies" generally) is a rich ethnographic account of the psycho-social nature of the way of life (or ways of life) of the community studied. The key points which ought to be held on to at all costs are simply these:

(i) only communities of people living together can develop a way of life;

(ii) cultural-anthropological ethnographic studies of ways of life can only be made of communities;

(iii) classes are not communities (but some communities can be recognised a producing a class culture); and

(iv) in as much as the people of most communities have a national or ethnic sense of identity the study of the way of life of such a community characterises that "culture of identity" only in a nominal sense.

It follows that where an actual community (that is a group which lives together as a group rather than a physically dispersed collection of people constituted as a group only by certain beliefs about identity) can be characterised as much by a culture of socialisation produced in response to its distinctive relations to economic production as by its culture of identity, it is extremely difficult determine whether the characteristic way of life produced by that community should be designated a class culture or an ethnic culture. Semiotic analysis

promises the possibility of relating the forms of a modal culture to their origin in a deep level structure, but there are intractable problems in demonstrating the objective character of such analyses. Historical and comparative analysis offers another approach since if it can be shown that certain modal practices are commonly found, for example, in communities which share a similar relation to production but a different ethnic identity, then certain conclusions are plausible. The same is true if it can be shown that central practices (of family organisation, child-rearing, status allocation, and so on) existed within a community at some time when it had a completely different mode of economic existence. The question of how to express the central themes or characteristics of a culture, as recorded in ethnographic description, in an appropriate concept and to relate those themes and characteristics to their internal material determinants is extraordinarily difficult and may not be capable of resolution.

The question of cultural generation, that is what material relations cause a given way of life and its psycho-social character to arise, is the core theoretical problem of cultural anthropology and is why, of course, the CCCS writers attempt to show how working class culture is causally generated as a product of specifically capitalist relations of production. Their solution, to recognise as class cultural elements those and only those practices of a working class community which can plausibly be shown to be generated by its defined relation to the means of production, is, in its *jejune* over-formalism, idealist and unsatisfactory; but the problem itself remains unsettled and is, incidentally, as directly relevant to the discussion of "ethnic culture" as of "class culture".

Culture, Ideology and Hegemony

In the work of many influential contemporary theorists the terms culture and ideology have become virtually synonymous, and no discussion of class (or ethnic) culture can afford to ignore the impact of their work. Hegemony refers in its most straightforward Gramscian sense to class systems of domination in their totality: to an order characterised by relations of ideology and by relations of physical force which together constitute a cultural facticity to which dominated classes can see no alternative. The very possibility of "alternatives" becomes unthinkable, beyond the boundaries of common sense, and thus consent, if reluctant, to domination is given. In this analysis the task of overthrowing the dominant capitalist order calls for a process of involvement in the apparatuses of the state and civil society; a war of position, a long march through the institutions of the state and civil society. In typical neo-Gramscian

formulations the state is actually theorised as constituted in depth; understood not only as the formal apparatuses of the state but as effective in all structures regulated by the economic, cultural and political relations which constitute the order of domination. Because hegemonic relations are understood to be lived at deeper levels than ideological relations, lived as "culture", as "common sense", the political task becomes not that of breaking through false consciousness but that of reconstructing the discourse of lived culture. It is thus no longer appropriate to engage in "consciousness raising", rather it is a question of learning how to work within the culture, on the cultural ground, of the dominated strata as "organic intellectuals" with a dedication to reorganise the disjointed and fragmentary common sense of the masses and bring it into a close relationship with the concepts and discoveries of marxist science: in Gramsci to make proletarian science (marxism) the good sense (science) of the actual proletarians. Put rather starkly this is the political project of contemporary marxist political and cultural praxis and its influence on the most widely discussed texts in the marxist sociology of education is obvious. But we should attend to the fact that hegemony is a political concept which refers to a particular system of social domination.

Williams (1980), has been as responsible as anyone for developing this line of argument and, I will suggest, for weakening and dematerialising the concept of hegemony. For Williams "hegemony" has come to signify the existence of a truly total system of thought, not merely secondary or superstructural, like ideology in its sense of false ideas, but an entire system of conceptualisation which is lived at such a depth, and which saturates society to such an extent, that it constitutes the substance and limit of common sense for most people under its sway. To Williams in this mood the notion of hegemony as something deeply saturating the consciousness of a society is fundamental: "in any society," he says, "in any particular period, there is a central system of practices, meanings and values, which we can call dominant and effective." (p. 37) A central effective system of meanings and values is lived as whole body of expectations and reciprocally confirming practices and thus comes to constitute a sense of reality for most people in a society which, just because it *is* experienced as reality, is difficult to transcend. Socialisation into the selective tradition of meanings and practices of a culture constitutes those meanings and practices as hegemonic in that they exclude alternative meanings and so help to ensure the effective power of the dominant culture. Williams, it seems, has discovered the power of socialisation. And what he and others have

done is shift the reference of hegemony from a system of political domination to a central mechanism of that system of domination, "common sense" as it is constructed and constituted. Once on this plane of thought hegemony starts to blur into an equally idealist conception of culture. In the hands of more extreme thinkers (Aronowitz and Giroux, 1985: 95) "culture" is not only inadequately distinguished from ideology and hegemony but actually reified as an oppressive force, an object (and a subject!) which functions like a concrete entity:

> Culture is, however, both the subject and object of resistance; the driving force of culture is contained not only in how it functions to dominate subordinate groups, but also in the way in which oppressed groups draw from their own cultural capital and set of experiences to develop an oppositional logic.

'Culture and ideology', they say (p.125), 'become primary determinants in the shaping of human behaviour.' My reaction to this reification as a materialist is unsympathetic. In fact, Western societies (in sharp contrast to "traditional", closed, tribal societies) have long been accommodating to alternative forms of thought and ways of life and, moreover, widespread literacy, established long before state elementary schooling, (Graff, 1979) has further contributed enormously to the propagation, the "thinkability" of alternative forms of thought. This entire conceptual framework is highly vulnerable to precise analytical dissection, for example by Geuss (1981) and Elster (1985), and it is doubtful that as many people are trapped in an unreflective consciousness as these "critical thinkers" want to believe. Quite apart from the difficulty of working out what they really mean, it is such a disagreeably *elitist* position.

The thrust of this revisionism, which violates the principles of materialism, is to oppose socialisation to freedom. On that point I accept Lindgren's (1973: 56) pointed observation:

> when and to the extent that individuals govern their conduct according to criteria which they accept because they are the prevailing conventions of a society with which they genuinely identify they surrender neither their identity nor their autonomy.

If the notions of common sense are in themselves ideological, because they help sustain hegemonic relations, culturally embedded relations of class domination and subordination, and if those common sense notions are understood as cultural productions, which all sounds reasonable, then we have

an argument that forces the identity of culture and ideology. But if culture is ideology then one of those concepts is redundant and it seems necessary to reject this conclusion. My own preference is to restrict the concept of ideology to the area of intrinsically unsupportable or false ideas which maintain relations of domination or exploitation (of course, this requires a realist ontology, a correspondence theory of truth, and a non-relativist ethics all of which are anathema in the discourse of the contemporary left), and to retain the materialist cultural-anthropological concept of culture. There can surely be little difficulty in recognising that dominant groups may disseminate and exploit inadequate, misleading or false information, whether they know it to be so or not, in the furtherance of their interests. If a member of a subordinate group acts on such information accepting it as truthful knowledge, then that individual possesses, in that sense and to that extent, a consciousness which is inadequate, incomplete, misled or false. Considering the historical confusions around the term "false consciousness" it might be better abandoned, but if it means no more than this it is harmless enough.

The "good ideas" people have about what they want and how to get it are culturally derived. Since people live in *social* groups which are only such because they are also *cultural* groups with conceptions about what is the appropriate way of living life as a social group this is virtually a tautology. If these "good ideas" are a positive acceptance of conceptions derived from social relations of structural inequality in the private ownership of productive resources, which arguably *is* a form of exploitation, then they are ideological in form. But if they are based on an acceptance of the structures of positional facticity, in the sense of taking them into account as real, that does not imply acceptance of the ideological foundation of those relationships, it is merely acceptance of the real structures of opportunity and constraint. People have only to take these *facticities* into account and "do their best" as individuals, as families, as groups of workers, and so on, within those facticities in order for the structures of unequal relationships, of which such facticities are an instance, to be reproduced.

If there is a reluctance in my thought, and there is, to accept the promise of *conscientisation* and such like notions it is because I believe it is not the ideologised or hegemonised consciousness of people which perpetuates their exploitation and oppression, and their economic exploitation in particular, but the grim clarity of their knowledge, learned in a hard school, of what can be

and what cannot be otherwise. There is a characteristic mood, to "keep buggering on", from necessity, and with a determination that transcends hope, which is well understood within working class communities. There are authentic traditions which prefer to struggle without hope rather than to struggle with false hope. Consciousness raising, that is working to be free from false beliefs that keep people in a state of more or less consented subordination, is, of course, essential work. Working people (millions of them) who struggled for self-education, for enlightenment, had precisely that end in mind. This is why I have argued that if what is taught and learned in schools *is* education, if it is useful and truthful knowledge, then it cannot but offer one of the necessary conditions for democratic and socialist progress. To be free of false ideas is liberating in itself to that extent and in that sense. I don't deny that. But here, in this context, I do want to say that economic systems like capitalism (a considered phrase because "actually existing" socialist systems are like capitalism in these respects) are probably sustainable even though but tolerated by many, perhaps even a majority, of working people who, like me, cannot see any way of creating an *economic* democracy, that is genuine socialisation of the means of production, not because we are trapped in ideology but because we have learned what is politically possible in our time and what is not. This is *not* defeatism for I've insisted that we have learned what is possible as well as what is not. This, I think, is as true in New Zealand as in Poland: what prevents Solidarity from creating a democratic civil and political society is not lack of consciousness. And one can already hear the Labour Party activists in 1990: "but look at the alternative..."

Gramsci's concerns, more realist altogether than the neo-Gramscians, the hegemonites, were to develop a theory of revolutionary practice through which the proletariat could establish its moral and political leadership in an alliance for socialism with other class fractions; that is to impose its hegemony through the constitution of a corporate bloc with other social forces in opposition to capitalism. Gramsci's concept of hegemony stresses the importance of creating and maintaining popular consent and gave a new and crucial importance to the role of cultural-politics. Although hegemonic relations are not entirely to be separated from relations of force, such was Gramsci's awareness of the importance of cultural and ideological relations that he did frequently distinguish and emphasise the moments of hegemony and coercion, but there is no justification in that for the all-embracing over-expansion of his concept, more rather than less precise, of hegemony. The hegemonic state, Gramsci

argued, is constituted in depth making impossible an outright, insurrectionary, revolutionary attack and these conditions impose on the revolutionary movement a necessity to develop new approaches - for a political war of strategic position rather than a war of tactical maneouvre - and in preparation for that Gramsci recognised the imperative of educational and cultural development within the working class.

Section Two: The Concept of Choice

My teenage daughter and her friends describe anything "splendid" or "first-rate" as "choice", the idea being, I suppose, that such things are worth choosing. Perhaps they, at least, recognise that choice is a reality in their lives. This is worth a thought, but it would be better not to make it the basis of a conceptual analysis. "Choice" is a fundamental concept in several related but by no means integrated intellectual disciplines. We can find important theoretical discussions in set theory, moral and political philosophy, the psychology of decision-making, micro-economics, and individualist sociology. These discussions have surrounded "choice" with an extensive set of cognate and related concepts - "decision", "preference", "freedom", "action", "reason", "opportunity", "will", "intention", "constraint", "habit", "goal", "value", "rational", "interest", "need", "utility", "ideology" and so on. We must recognise that "choice" has been adopted as a theoretical term by many writers in these and other disciplines and that it would therefore be pointless to attempt to formulate some global and authoritative meaning without reference to the context of a particular discipline. But I have given "choice" a place in my contributions to the sociology of education and, in the light of the comments by Shuker and Hughes and Lauder, some clarification and development of the concept, as I want to use it, seems appropriate.

Following Bindra (1976) and Bunge (1979) I maintain that an actor may be said to make a choice where the actor selects, on the basis of some value preference, one of two or more possible courses of action and carries out that action. Choosing need not be preceded by any process of decision-making. Where a choice is made as a result of decision-making based on adequate knowledge and with some understanding of the likely outcome of the action, that is with foresight, then we may speak of rational action in a minimal but perhaps sufficient sense. A couple of illustrations will fill in the shape of the concept.

1. Just after summer time began this year I missed a bus because all day I had been reading the time from the dashboard clock of a rental car which had not been put forward. It is wrong to say that I "chose" to believe the clock - the possibility of the implicit alternative course of action, not to believe the clock, was not explicitly identified and thus the psychological conditions for choice did not exist.

2. Someone asks me why I emigrated to New Zealand. Leaving aside how I answer this (I can't remember!) it would be absurd to suppose that anyone could emigrate without being aware of the alternative. In such a case an actor is deemed to have chosen between alternative courses of action even though one might have no access to the processes of consciousness.

Although I have been careful to point out that "choice" has acquired some technical definitions the meaning I've tried to bring out here is one that might not provoke much dissent. With this clear I should like to address a few substantive remarks on some key issues the concept of choice raises for contemporary sociology.

On "having a choice"

We should avoid, I think, the careless habit of saying that people do not have a choice when we really mean that the quantity of some good available to those who desire it is limited and that the resources necessary to obtain that good are socially distributed in such a way that those least well resourced have little opportunity to obtain it. This is obvious enough and can be fully explained without introducing the concept of "choice" where it has no real function. These comments can be extended to cover notions of "limited choice" and so on. There is no intention to deny that the courses of action open to people are a function of the availability of desirable goods and possession of the resources necessary to obtain them. If because of these structural properties of a society certain courses of action do not arise as actual alternatives for some people then those courses of action cannot be chosen by them. This is obvious and strictly speaking it is not the "choices" which are limited but resources and possible alternatives.

On "ideology"

The classical problem of ideology is contained in the notion of "false-consciousness". I have already outlined my position on ideology and only the

briefest comment is required here. People cannot be identified as the prisoners of a dominant ideology, as having been denied information about alternatives, and so left without any choice over their actions, simply by pointing to what they have done. Despite extensive theoretical criticism this remains a highly popular thesis. Let me quote a plain refutation (Pain, 1987: 5):

> I got married because I wanted to and I had two children because I wanted to. (...) Feminism appears at present to shun the woman in the home especially if the woman has the courage to admit that she likes to be at home with her children.

Mrs Pain asserts that she was aware of certain alternatives (to marry or not to marry), that she was knowledgeable about the consequences of those two courses of action and she made a choice (to marry) after due deliberation on the basis of considered preference. In other words she made a rational decision. That the process of deciding is rational does not imply that the course of action chosen is rational in any other sense. There is an extensive literature, of course, which investigates the rationality of action with reference to the character of the values and preferences in which it is embedded. Whether it is actually rational in this sense for Mrs Pain to want to get married and stay at home with her children (and presumably make herself financially dependent on a man) when she has other alternative is open to dispute. I am here concerned with the issue of rational choice not with the more difficult issue of rational action. However, notwithstanding attempts at the highest level of theoretical production to ground the rationality in the ontology of communicative action, the concept of rational action itself may be based on a conceptual over-extension which cannot adequately be justified. The concepts of value and rationality may, after all, better be kept apart.

On subject choice and leaving school

Students certainly choose, but their choices need not be rational and they need not be deliberated. There is no difficulty with the concepts of irrational choice and non-deliberated choice. It is a matter for empirical investigation what degree of accurate knowledge and sensible reasoning informs the selection of subjects and the formation of destination trajectories generally. There can really be little doubt that students differ in the degree to which they are knowledgeable about the consequences of various courses of action and in the quality of the deliberations which they bring to their decisions in this area. The degree to which students are thus able to make rational choices may vary a

great deal. However, selecting a course is rather more like emigrating than unreflectively reading a clock, enough directed consciousness must be given to the matter to enable us to assume that a reasoned decision has been made unless we have good evidence to the contrary.

On cost-benefit models

Cost-benefit models ought to be used cautiously in sociology. They have a limited use in predictive studies but they tend to generate confusion between the epistemological assumptions of the model and the actual processes of choosing, which may not involve much decision-making, let alone rational decision-making, at all. This confusion is by no means limited to rational-action sociologists. A recent highly praised "culturalist" ethnography, McLeod (1987: 104), states of one group of boys he studied:

> Their unwillingness to partake of the educational system stems from an assessment of the costs and benefits of playing the game.

Maybe. This is, however, an imputation for which there is no textual evidence and Mcleod has simply read back from the manifest effects of their actions to the assumed reasons for it. There are no short-cuts. It is necessary to isolate for investigation the values on which preferences are based; the processes of socialisation and learning by which they are acquired; the nature of those preferences; the psychological and logical character of the processes of choosing; the alternatives which actors explicitly identify; the causes of their awareness or lack of it; the alternatives structurally available; the causes of that structural availability or otherwise; the resources necessary to pursue alternatives; the availability of those resources; and so on. It simply isn't good enough to fall back on the "obviousness" of the cost-benefit metaphor any more than on the "obviousness" of the *habitus* metaphor.

Interestingly, there is suggestive evidence that the over-attainment of middle-class students is partly due to the fact that they do not follow the rational cost-benefit imperative. Gambetta (1987: 99) observes:

> It is among the upper class that a high school diploma, possibly from the *liceo*, and a university degree can be felt as mandataory achievements and pursued at all costs, even when the probability of success may be extremely low.

Nash and Harker (1988) analysed data from Hughes and Lauder (1988) and from McCreanor (1988) which indicate that this may well be true in New

Zealand. It appears that the cut-off point for students from Elley-Irving SES 1 entering higher education is a mean TOSCA (IQ) score of just 101. It is also worth noting that virtual open-entry to university may, in New Zealand as in Italy, work to the distinct advantage of the middle-class.

On Cultural Choice

It might be best to drop the term "cultural choice". I have used it in an effort to grasp the cultural embeddedness and taken-for-grantedness of certain actions. Preferences, at least when it comes to what school courses to study and what occupations to enter, are quite necessarily "cultural" in the sense that they have been learned. However it is not preferences and the values from which they are derived that are refered to by the term "cultural choice" - rather I mean a kind of non-choosing. What are casually (and of course quite improperly) called "instinctive" choices, responses of the habitus as Bourdieu would say, are deliberate actions but not deliberated actions made with knowledge of alternatives. Quite extensive areas of action are in this way removed from the sphere of "choice" altogether and, of course, this restriction of the sphere of choice is a strongly class linked practice with clear reproductive effects. Many students as they move through school perform so many day-to-day actions on this basis (like spending time on the 'phone rather than on homework) that when it comes to major and inescapable decision points, such as what subjects to study, they find they have actually limited their alternatives because they no longer possess the resources necessary to provide them with a reasonable possibility of considering a formal "option" actually open. Moreover, some students and their parents may lack awareness not of certain formal alternatives, like subjects available, but of those alternatives which can be created by parents with sufficient social resources, like persuading the principal to move a student from the class of an inadequate teacher to one more competent. It is in this area that we hear some people say, 'I didn't know you could do that.'

Conclusion

To make a choice means in its most fundamental sense to select between two or more possible courses of action and to carry out the one selected. We say "there is no choice" when the alternatives to some course of action are extremely unattractive but, strictly speaking in such circumstances there are alternative courses of action usually recognised as choices by those in such situations. Socrates did *not* say, 'Hemlock or renounce my errors - not much of

a choice - I renounce my errors.' But in a not entirely dissimilar position Galileo did. They made different choices. Of course, if people cannot make certain choices because others will not let them, as a prisoner cannot choose to go home for the weekend, then one of the necessary conditions for choosing a course of action, does not exist. But this is banal.

I am aware that many readers will think this a hard and unsympathetic position. They suspect that I do not understand "how little choice" many in our society really have and that I fail to appreciate the "constraints of structure". I am accused of having an 'over rationalistic' view of action and of 'privileging rational decision-making' as the paradigmatic form of human action. In truth none of these charges stand up to examination. My critics have, in reality, themselves neglected to analyse the terms of their discourse and fallen back on some bottom-line suspicion that since our desires are necessarily reconstructed by culture we are so much the products of socialisation that our preferences, and therefore the choices we make, are structured almost to the point of being determined. In my view cultures vary considerably in the degree of psychological intensity with which they shape desires and create preferences and even more so in the extent to which they strive for homogeneity and closure of cultural preferences. We live in a society in which the psychological intensity of the socialisation process in this area and the degree of homegeneity socially imposed on normative behaviour has been declining for generations. It is perverse in such circumstances to re-adopt an "over-socialised" theory of human development. The whole thrust of modernity is to impose frontal-lobe thought, the bringing to consciousness of alternative courses of action, on an ever-expanding area of social behaviour. Nothing in what I have written can justify the view that I have neglected the importance of resources and goods and the social mechanisms which control their unequal distribution. I have always attempted to identify and analyse the actual social processes involved in the generation of socially differentiated attainment. Finally, it is becoming increasingly clear to me that it is through such close-grained empirical work, rather than theoretical disputation about "models", that we will discover the nature of social reality.

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Mental Test Differences As Matthew Effects In Literacy : The Rich Get Richer And The Poor Get Poorer

Mark Olssen (ed.) **Mental Testing in New Zealand.** Dunedin, New Zealand: University of Otago Press, 1988.

Review Essay by William Tunmer, Education Department, Massey University

This book arose out of the controversy surrounding the publication of the Test of Scholastic Abilities (TOSCA) by the New Zealand Council of Educational Research. It contains contributions by twelve New Zealand scholars which are critical of mental testing in general (Part I of the book) and of the TOSCA in particular (Part II of the book). Although not explicitly stated, it is clear that the contributors to the volume are arguing against the practice of assessing children's *general* level of mental ability (if indeed there is such a thing). Mental tests of a more specific nature, such as tests which assess children's (tacit) knowledge of various syntactic rules of spoken language, would presumably be acceptable. The critical difference is that on the basis of both theory and research we know that listening comprehension ability is causally related to reading achievement and can be improved by instruction. This is in sharp contradistinction to the notion of some general mental ability, or "capacity for learning", that is relatively resistant to change and is *assumed* to be causally related to academic achievement.

In this review essay I extend the arguments presented in the Olssen volume against mental testing by demonstrating that mental test differences primarily reflect ever increasing differences in literacy achievement and associated spinoff skills (referred to as Matthew effects) rather than differences in basic learning capacity. I further suggest that differences in preschool literacy-related knowledge and skills are the primary catalyst for the development of Matthew effects in literacy achievement and that these skills vary considerably across cultural and social class groups.

Two Big Questions

The book focuses on two fundamental and interrelated questions. Firstly, why were IQ-type tests developed, and secondly, what do they *really* measure? The first question concerns primarily sociological issues, whereas the second

concerns issues of a more conceptual and psychological nature, the answer to which, however, would certainly have important ideological implications.

Four contributors (Mark Olssen, David McKenzie, Keith Ballard and John Codd) discuss the international historical and social context that gave rise to the widespread use of IQ-type tests, beginning with the eugenics movement which aimed to prevent biologically "inferior" peoples from lowering the quality of the gene pool. Much of this work was based on an extension of Darwin's views on natural selection to the social domain: social class differences were thought to reflect innate biological differences in the underlying cognitive capacities of human beings. All that was needed was a test that provided a measure of this genetically preordained potential. As noted by Olssen, however, it was necessary to assume that any such test tapped a unitary underlying quality that was unlearned and remained relatively stable over time. Not making these assumptions would have allowed the possibility that performance differences on IQ-type tests reflected differences in learning opportunities rather than differences in inherited potential, a very real possibility since it was known then as it is now that access to knowledge and opportunities for learning are not distributed equally across racial and social class groups.

The eugenics movement along with other factors led to demands for restrictive immigration policies in the United States, and the use of intelligence tests provided the scientific legitimization for the adoption of these policies. As noted by Ballard, the "data" obtained from administering intelligence tests to immigrants to America in the early 1900's were used to prove the "racial inferiority" of southern and eastern Europeans.

A few years later intelligence tests began to be used by school systems for stratifying increasingly diversified school populations into homogeneous ability groups. Rate of learning was assumed to be slower in lower ability groups and instructional pace was adjusted accordingly, a necessary consequence of which was lower levels of academic achievement for the (already disadvantaged) children placed in these groups. The rise of meritocracy (see Codd's chapter) was a major factor leading to the emphasis in education on selecting children who would profit most from (middle class oriented) schooling. Group administered intelligence tests provided an extremely convenient and "scientifically" acceptable procedure for identifying

children with the greatest "potential". At the same time, the idea that inherited potential determines rate and level of academic achievement provided an "explanation" for differences and deficiencies in scholastic performance: poor academic performance could be attributed to (vague) constitutional shortcomings of children rather than to failures of school systems to respond to the special educational needs of children from different cultural and social backgrounds. Positive correlations between intelligence test scores and scholastic performance reinforced the notions that level of academic achievement was the result of personal merit (i.e. basic ability plus effort) and that the poor, who tended to perform less well on these tests, occupied appropriate positions within society.

In addition to providing a brief overview of the international context within which mental testing developed, the book includes several chapters which critically examine the development and use of IQ-type tests in New Zealand. Logan Moss discusses the role of the New Zealand Council for Educational Research in the development and marketing of mental tests; David McKenzie examines the political and administrative needs of the Department of Education in the 1920's which led to the large scale use of the Terman tests; Glennys Faulds presents a case study that describes how a junior high school used intelligence and attainment tests for the purpose of "ability" streaming; Roy Shuker discusses the development and use of the Otis Test of Mental Ability in New Zealand schools; and Keith Ballard (who contributed two chapters to the volume) identifies several difficulties in using the Stanford-Binet and WISC-R intelligence tests in clinical and educational settings. The final section of the book, which contains four chapters (one each by John Diorio, Keith Ballard, Tim McCreanor, and John Codd), focuses on theoretical and empirical issues relating to the development and use of the TOSCA, a general ability test that was designed specifically for use in New Zealand schools.

The Question of Test Bias

To a large extent the strength of the argument against the use of general ability tests rests on the claim that they measure learned competencies rather than a permanent constitutional trait. If general ability tests do in fact measure learning capacity independently of academic achievement, then they could justifiably be used in "carrying out the democratising task of identifying capable students whose capabilities have been obscured by poor teaching and

environmental deficiencies "(see Diorio's chapter, p.214). However, if such tests measure differences in knowledge attainment rather than learning potential, then using them for "ability" streaming would discriminate negatively against students who have had unequal access to the skills and knowledge necessary for succeeding in school. Placing already disadvantaged students into low ability streams would only compound the situation since capable but poor or culturally different children who are misclassified to lower streams would be further deprived of the chance to do well in school. Research on ability-composition effects indicates that a child of any level of ability who is surrounded by a relatively high concentration of low ability students is much less likely to progress at a normal rate. As Stanovich (1986, p.383) so aptly puts it:

> Disadvantaged children are most often exposed to inferior ability composition in the schools that they attend. Thus, these children are the victims of a particularly perverse "double whammy".

These considerations suggest that general ability tests may be *class* biased: the scores from these tests may reflect in part the unequal distribution of learned competencies across existing divisions in society. This could be true even if general ability tests are not biased in the narrow technical sense; that is, even if the individual items of ability tests can be shown to act in a similar manner across different groups. As Codd argues in his chapter, "mental measurement is not a domain of facts so much as a social practice ..." (p.256). The critical question, then, is what do general ability tests measure? The argument that they are essentially measures of learned competencies will require a satisfactory environmental explanation of why mental ability test scores vary across different ethnic and socio-economic groups. In the sections below I offer a detailed description of the processes which I believe give rise to the differential test performance of children of varying cultural and social backgrounds. I illustrate this discussion with reference to psychological and sociological research on the acquisition of literacy skills.

What *Do* Mental Ability Tests Measure?

The use of general ability tests in schools is predicated on the assumption that they provide a measure of "learning capacity" (or "underlying ability") which is causally related to future academic achievement. The expressions "learning capacity," "general ability", "verbal intelligence," etc are therefore being used by psychometricians as hypothetical constructs to "explain" individual

differences in academic achievement. Given that a theory of mental ability is clearly implied in the construction and use of general ability tests, Roy Nash, in his chapter, asks the following fundamental question: "What sort of theory does it logically have to be in order to explain and predict individual educational attainment?" (p.154). To put the question another way, what minimal level of *explanatory power* must the theory possess to be regarded as a theory of anything?

Until fairly recently a common response was simply to avoid this question by denying that mental ability referred to any material thing located in the brain. This view reflected in part the prevailing behaviouristic metatheoretical perspective in philosophy and psychology. In philosophy logical behaviourists such as Ryle (1949) argued against dualism (with the aim of eliminating the "ghost in the machine") by attempting to express the meaning of psychological predicates (expressions referring to mental states and events) in terms of dispositions to behave in certain ways. This effort encountered major difficulties and was eventually abandoned. For example, it could not handle the situation in which one intended to do X but forgot, since there is no overt behaviour to which the formation-of-the-intention-to-do-X (a mental event occurring in the brain) may be logically connected.

In psychology radical behaviourists, in rejecting introspectionism, adopted the position that theoretical discussion should be limited to that which could be directly observed with no references to mental states or processes. Accordingly, intelligence became viewed as a trait, or disposition to respond in certain ways (which included one's performance on an intelligence test). This led to the notion that intelligence is what the intelligence test measures, a view that is essentially circular: What is intelligence? It is what the intelligence test measures. What does the intelligence test measure? Intelligence.

More recently an increasing number of mental testers have argued that general mental ability is a construct that *does* refer to an underlying biological reality (some of the early mental test theorists also held this view). This development seems to have coincided with the emergence of cognitive psychology in the 1960's. Cognitivism rejects the methodological strictures of behaviourism by allowing the introduction of hypothetical constructs that refer to mental operations the effects of which can be observed (iconic memory, echoic memory, etc.). Further, cognitivism assumes that the operations performed by

the various postulated mental mechanisms depend on an intact nervous system, and that the neurological processes underlying these mechanisms will eventually be independently specified. Cognitivists maintain that this approach to theory construction is not unlike what occurs in other branches of science, such as biology, where the hypothetical construct of gene enabled theorists to establish quite subtle relationships between genes (dominance, recessivity, connectedness, etc.) prior to the discovery of the double helix.

If psychology is now willing to hypothesise underlying entities, this raises the question of "why then should psychology not be prepared to work with the concept of 'general mental ability'" (Nash, p.155)? In addressing this question Nash offers several analogies and examples of "sort of" explanations which illustrate the point that mental test theory is devoid of explanatory power: the construct of "underlying mental ability" is so vague and poorly defined that mental test theory cannot yield falsifiable predictions.

This is in contrast to the kind of theory construction that normally occurs in other areas of cognitive psychology. For example, in developing models of sentence comprehension, psycholinguists have proposed a mental mechanism called a parser which assigns structural representations to incoming strings of words through the application of various parsing strategies and rules. It follows from this that, *ceteris paribus*, sentences which require a greater number of parsing operations will be more difficult to process, a hypothesis that has been tested experimentally by a variety of techniques (picture verification tasks, probe latency studies, transition error probabilities in sentence recall, etc.) in an effort to obtain convergent evidence in support of the proposed mental mechanism. Further evidence pointing to the existence of such a mechanism comes from clinical studies which suggest that the parser (or something like it) is located in Wernicke's Area of the left dominant cerebral hemisphere. Similar procedures have been used to investigate other aspects of language processing (speech perception, lexical access, semantic memory, proposition encoding, discourse processes, etc.). The essential point is that mental test "theory" is not like this.

In an attempt to salvage mental test theory, psychometricians often argue that predictive correlations between ability test scores and scores on various achievement measures attest to the validity of the construct of general mental ability. As pointed out by Ballard, however, "predictive validity" fails to show

anything. To illustrate his point, Ballard notes that "parental income predicts both IQ and school success but could not sensibly be called a measure of child intellect" (p.222). A further difficulty is that predictive correlations do not preclude the possibility that some third factor (such as *prior* academic achievement) is responsible for a spurious correlation between ability test scores and school achievement. Finally, although ability test scores provide information on the expected performance of *groups*, they fail to provide meaningful information on expected outcomes for *individuals* (see Ballard's two chapters for detailed discussions of this point). This is not surprising for two reasons. Firstly, as Ballard notes, research shows that ability test scores for individual children vary considerably over the school years. Secondly, even if mental tests did provide valid measures of learning potential, there are many other factors that contribute to individual differences in academic achievement (motivation, academic self-concept, parental interest, educational attainment level of parents, parental income, early learning environment, quality and appropriateness of teaching, cultural differences, school attendance, general health, emotional adjustment, home environment, oral language proficiency, sensory deficits, neurological disorders, etc.).

In addition to the evidence documenting changes in ability test scores for individuals over time, research by James Flynn (reviewed in his chapter) has revealed large gains in ability test scores between generations. Flynn argues that such gains cannot be attributed to increases in general intelligence since there is no evidence of a recent "intellectual renaissance" or of a dramatic increase in the proportion of highly gifted children in schools. These findings strongly suggest that performances on mental tests are based largely on learned, developed abilities rather than on fixed potential. Such a possibility would pose a major conceptual problem for mental test theory as it would suggest that the arguments in support of the theory are (yet again) essentially circular: differences in learning are "explained" in terms of tests that measure differences in learning.

Recent efforts in mental test theory have focused on identifying the component processes within test tasks that contribute to individual differences in performance (Curtis & Glaser, 1981). As Nash argues, however, redefining intelligence as efficient cognitive processing does not answer the question of what causes differences in component processing skills, use of strategies, organisation of knowledge bases, etc. It cannot be assumed that the poor performances of "less intelligent" children are caused by inherent limitations in

the architecture of their cognitive systems. It is more likely, as I shall argue in the next section, that these processing skill differences are spinoff effects of academic achievement, especially reading achievement.

Mental Test Differences as Matthew Effects in Reading

The ability to read is a traditional criterion of academic achievement and is basic to success in almost every aspect of the school curriculum. It is a prerequisite skill for nearly all jobs and the primary key to lifelong learning. Because of the obvious importance of being able to read, reading researchers have devoted most of their efforts toward discovering how children acquire reading skills and why some children encounter unusual difficulty in learning to read. More recently, however, researchers have begun to examine the *consequences* of literacy acquisition for further cognitive growth and academic achievement. The effects are profound: relatively small differences in reading ability at the beginning of school often develop into very large *generalised* differences in school-related skills and academic achievement (Stanovich, 1986). These effects have been referred to as Matthew effects, or rich-get-richer and poor-get-poorer effects, after a passage from the Gospel according to Matthew: "For unto every one that hath shall be given, and he shall have abundance: but from him that hath not shall be taken away even that which he hath" (XXV:29).

As this passage suggests, Matthew effects are a combination of two types of effects, positive ones for the advantaged and negative ones for the disadvantaged. On the positive side, children who have had advantageous early reading experiences not only progress at faster rates but derive enormous benefit from reciprocally facilitating relationships between reading and other skills: the process of becoming a fluent reader itself produces spinoff skills (increased vocabulary, syntactic knowledge, general knowledge, metalinguistic abilities, verbal processing skills, ability to generate orthographic images, ability to form and maintain a phonetic code in short-term memory, etc.) that provide the basis for further growth in reading and other areas, a phenomenon referred to as reciprocal causation. On the negative side, poor readers not only receive less practice in reading because of their deficient word recognition skills, but soon begin to confront materials that are too difficult for them. Consequently:

> Reading becomes less and less pleasurable as the poor reader spends an increasing amount of time in materials beyond his or her capability. He or she

> avoids reading, and the resultant lack of practice relative to his or her peers widens achievement deficits. (Stanovich, 1986, p.394).

What began as a relatively small difference in basic reading skills soon develops into what Stanovich (1986) describes as a downward spiral of achievement deficits and negative motivational spinoffs.

A longitundinal study by Bishop and Butterworth (1980) on the nature of the relationship between verbal intelligence and reading achievement underscores the importance of considering the consequences of literacy development. Since reading requires verbal skills it had long been thought that problems in reading were due largely to deficits in verbal intelligence. Poor readers tend to perform less well on tests of verbal intelligence than on tests of nonverbal intelligence, and performance differences between good and poor readers are greater on the Verbal Subscales of the Wechsler Intelligence Scale for Children (WISC) than on the Performance Subscales (see Vellutino, 1979, for a review). The question that arises, however, is whether the relatively low verbal IQ of the poor readers is a cause or a consequence of reading difficulty. Normal readers read more than poor readers and are therefore exposed to more verbal material, a possible consequence of which is the development and practice of the normal readers' general verbal abilities.

To explore this issue Bishop and Butterworth administered the Wechsler Preschool and Primary Scale of Intelligence (WPPSI) to a sample of 4-year-old children. Four years later these children were administered the WISC and a standardised measure of reading achievement. The data obtained from the children when they were 8 years of age replicated the findings of earlier studies: performance on the verbal subtests of the WISC was more closely related to reading achievement than was performance on the nonverbal subtests, and the poor readers performed less well on the verbal subtests than on the nonverbal subtests. However, examination of the 4-year-olds' scores revealed that the verbal and nonverbal scores were equally related to later reading achievement, and that *the children who subsequently became poor readers were not at the time particularly weak in the verbal subtests of the WPPSI.* These findings suggest that the general verbal deficits observed among poor readers are most likely a consequence of reading failure rather than a cause of it.

It is easy to see why this would be true. A major spinoff effect of reading development is vocabulary knowledge which, research has shown, is strongly related to verbal intelligence. The vocabulary subtest of the WISC, for example, is the single best predictor of total verbal intelligence. Recent research indicates that vocabulary growth occurs primarily through learning new word meanings from context during reading rather than through direct instruction, and that the major determinant of vocabulary growth during the school years is amount of free reading (Nagy & Anderson, 1984). Since good readers not only read more than poor readers, but also read more difficult materials, their opportunities for expanding their vocabulary are much greater. Nagy and Anderson estimate that the in-school reading of the least motivated student in the middle grades is around 100,000 words per year compared to 1,000,000 words for the average child, and possibly as many as 10,000,000 words for the voracious middle grade reader (the differences would be even greater if out of school reading was included). These enormous differences in amount of reading experience probably also account for other differences observed between good and poor readers, such as differences in organisation and extent of general knowledge, ability to comprehend more syntactically complex sentences, and speed of verbal encoding and semantic memory access, all of which would further contribute to the superior performance of better readers on verbal IQ tests. Consistent with this suggestion is the finding that the strength of the correlations between verbal intelligence and reading ability steadily increases up through the grade levels.

Research by Biemiller (1977-1978) indicates that differences in reading practice begin to emerge as early as the first year of formal instruction. Biemiller found that by the middle of first grade the in-school exposure to text of the least able groups of readers was less than half that of the average ability groups and only one fifth that of the most able readers. This lack of practice further disadvantages poor readers by preventing them from developing sufficient speed and automaticity in word recognition to free up cognitive resources for allocation to higher order cognitive functions, such as gaining meaning from text and determining the meanings of unknown words. As words are recognised, their phonological representations are stored in short-term, or working, memory until sufficient information has accumulated to permit assembly of the lexical entries into larger units of relational meaning called propositions (Perfetti, 1985). Since proposition encoding takes place within the limits of working memory, lexical access that is inefficient and

capacity draining disrupts the temporary representation of text in working memory, and comprehension suffers as a result. Poor readers are thus prevented from taking advantage of the "bootstrapping" relationships between reading comprehension and other aspects of development (such as vocabulary growth, syntactic knowledge, general knowledge) which facilitate *further* growth in reading comprehension. In contrast, better readers, as a consequence of their greater reading exposure, have learned the meanings of more words, can comprehend more syntactically complex sentences, and have developed richer and more elaborated knowledge bases, and are therefore able to cope with more difficult textual materials which, in turn, promotes further growth in vocabulary knowledge, syntax, and general knowledge, and so on.

Another major consequence of reading development is greater ability to maintain and operate on verbal material in working memory, an ability that is measured (crudely) in most intelligence tests (e.g. the digit span in the WISC). Research indicates that not only are poor readers unable to use their phonetic short-term memory efficiently because of slow word recognition, but their short-term memory capacity appears to be unusually constrained as well. Poor readers perform less well than normal readers on tasks requiring the ordered recall of strings of digits, letters, nameable objects, nonsense syllables, and words, even when the poor readers are matched with the normal readers in age, grade level, and intelligence. These differences in performance appear to be limited to the language domain, as other kinds of materials, such as nonsense designs and faces, can generally be retained in working memory without deficit by poor readers (see Liberman & Shankweiler, 1984, and Mann, 1986, for reviews).

The greater reading exposure of better readers appears to improve the efficiency of their verbal working memory in at least two ways. First, it has been found that idea units in written language are significantly longer and more syntactically complex than those of spoken language (Chafe, 1985). Since better readers are exposed to more written language than poor readers, they receive more practice in maintaining complex linguistic structures in working memory, a likely consequence of which is an improvement in their ability to make effective use of phonological representations in working memory. Second, it is likely that repeated occurrences of reflecting on spoken words and sentence structures to discover the orthographic cipher of English improves children's ability to maintain a phonological code in memory. That

is, improved efficiency in verbal working memory is most likely a spinoff effect of the metalinguistic operations which children must perform to become skilled readers (see Tunmer, in press a, b, d for further discussion and supportive evidence).

An important consequence of greater verbal working memory capacity is that it enables students to monitor more effectively their ongoing comprehension processes. Comprehension monitoring is an executive function that skilled readers use to make sense of incoming textual information (Wagoner, 1983). Students whose verbal working memory processing capabilities are such that they can maintain larger amounts of verbal information in working memory for longer periods of time are better able to *think* about what they are reading; they are better able to reflect upon recently processed material to check that it is consistent with what they have already read or know.

Matthew effects and the TOSCA

The question that can now be addressed is how do these reciprocally facilitating spinoff effects of literacy acquisition cause performance differences on a general ability test like the TOSCA? The single most significant feature of the TOSCA is that it draws heavily on *verbal* processing skills. As the authors of the test themselves note:

> Since most school work is presented through verbal symbolism, the relevance of verbal reasoning tests for educational prognosis is apparent; traditionally such tests have always been among the best ways of measuring and predicting educational progress. (Reid, Jackson, Gilmore, & Croft, 1981, p.4)

The second most significant feature of the test is that it measures *speed* and *efficiency* of processing verbal information: the items of the test must be completed within a limited time period. Although the TOSCA is not a *direct* measure of academic attainment (since the skills tapped by the test are not, for the most part, directly taught to children), performance on the test clearly depends greatly on the spinoff skills of reading achievement.

Consider the following specific examples.

First, the TOSCA includes several items which directly or indirectly measure vocabulary knowledge (e.g., "To *menace* means to: (A) alter (B) threaten (C) benefit from (D) help (E) be sorry for"). As noted earlier, research indicates

that the major determinant of vocabulary growth during the school years is amount of free reading. Since good readers read more than poor readers, their vocabulary knowledge tends to be greater. Second, the time limit on the test greatly advantages better readers whose superior speed and automaticity of lexical access enables them to process printed information more quickly and efficiently than poor readers and thus free up more cognitive resources for allocation to higher order cognitive functions, such as solving verbal reasoning problems. Third, the test includes several items which tap general knowledge (e.g., "Which of the words below *best* fits the description given? A BIRD THAT CANNOT FLY: (A) kaka (B) cormorant (C) vulture (D) emu (E) quail"). As noted earlier, good readers read more than poor readers and as a consequence develop richer and more elaborated knowledge bases. Fourth, the test includes anagrams and "disemvowelled words" (a rather cute expression referring to words with deleted vowels; e.g., "_rch_str_"). Good readers, because of their greater exposure to print, have developed stronger orthographic images of words than have poor readers (Ehri, 1986). When attempting to spell a difficult word, accomplished readers are better able to determine whether what they write "looks right" (which is one reason why spelling ability correlates so highly with reading ability). The ability to generate orthographic images of words would clearly be an advantage in responding to items which require the manipulation of letter order or the determination of missing letters in words. Fifth, the wording of several test items involves rather complicated syntax, as the following item illustrates (in reference to a 3 X 3 letter matrix): "Which one of the words can be made by joining letters in order with straight lines without going through a letter that is not in the word? (A) QUIT (B) SUIT (C) PANT (D) SNAP (E) THIN". Good readers would have an advantage over poor readers in responding to such items since research has shown that good readers are more proficient in processing syntactically complex sentences, even when vocabulary knowledge, general intelligence, and background knowledge are held constant. Sixth, many items such as those involving sentences that are written backwards (e.g.,"? RALLOD A NI STNEC YNAM WOH") or in scrambled word order (e.g., "FINDS OWN WATER LEVEL ITS") require the student to manipulate verbal material in working memory to solve the problem. As noted earlier, the verbal working memory processing skills of good readers are superior to those of poor readers. Seventh, items involving run-on sentences (e.g., "Write the *first* letter of the *second* word of the sentence: THEIRONLYHOPEWASGONE") and hidden words (e.g., "In the sentence in capitals, a group of consecutive

letters spells the name of an animal: SHE FEARED ELSE ALL WOULD BE LOST") require close attention to *word-level* information, which again favours the better reader. Research has shown that regardless of the method of instruction by which children acquire reading skills, good readers demonstrate superior knowledge of orthographic structure and grapheme-phoneme correspondence rules, both of which would be helpful in responding to items of the above sort.

Reid et al. (1981) present concurrent correlations between the TOSCA and various achievement tests (most of which are literacy related) as evidence in support of the validity of the TOSCA. They then conclude the following: "Clearly, on the basis of this evidence, it is reasonable to suggest that those abilities being measured by the TOSCA are reflected in the various academic achievement criteria." (p.27). However, in view of the above considerations this argument can be turned on its head: the positive correlations between academic achievement measures and the TOSCA demonstrate that the spinoff skills of academic achievement are *reflected* in the TOSCA.

In an earlier section of the manual to the TOSCA reference is made to longitudinal studies which are planned to establish the predictive validity of the TOSCA by obtaining correlations between the TOSCA and future academic success (Reid et al., 1981, pp. 24-25). Such correlations, however, would not be convincing evidence that scholastic abilities are independently "driving" future academic performance since the correlations would not preclude the possibility that differences in *prior* academic achievement are responsible for both performance differences on the TOSCA and future academic success. If one also obtained significant predictive correlations between reading achievement and future performance on the TOSCA, as I am sure one would, then, using the same logic as that used by the developers of the TOSCA, it would suggest that reading achievement causes performance differences on the TOSCA.

Fortunately, there are more appropriate techniques available for determining the nature of the relationship between performance differences on tests of general verbal processing skills like the TOSCA and reading achievement. A longitudinal study incorporating a cross-lag panel design (where reading achievement and scholastic ability are assessed at multiple points) would allow the examination of partial time-lag correlations between ability and

achievement and then between achievement and ability. That is, one could determine the partial correlations between ability at T_n and achievement at T_{n+1}, holding achievement at T_n constant, and compare these with the partial correlations between achievement at T_n and ability at T_{n+1}, holding ability at T_n constant. The results would, I believe, reveal a pattern of partial time-lag correlations consistent with the claim that the TOSCA is primarily a measure of the spinoff skills of literacy achievement (increased vocabulary knowledge, greater speed and efficiency of processing verbal information, greater ability to maintain and operate on verbal material in working memory, greater knowledge of the orthographic structure of English, etc.).

Social Class and Cultural Differences in Emergent Literacy

If mental test differences primarily reflect ever increasing differences in literacy achievement and associated spinoff skills, then why do children from working class and culturally different backgrounds tend to do less well in literacy achievement? As noted earlier, there are many factors which contribute to individual differences in achievement, and many of these are directly related to social class and culture. One of these, emergent literacy, is probably the primary catalyst for the development of Matthew effects in literacy achievement.

Emergent literacy refers to the development of literacy-related skills in children prior to their entry into formal schooling (Mason & Allen, 1986; Teale & Sulzby, 1986). Research in this area indicates that these prereading skills have a profound effect on the course of literacy development, that children from working class and culturally different backgrounds enter school with less knowledge of these skills, and that the parents of these children do not foster or support the acquisition of these skills to the same extent that middle class parents do.

Research shows, for example, that amount of preschool story listening is significantly related to later progress in reading. Story reading is thought to ease the task of comprehending written, or *decontextualised*, language. Preschool speech is highly concrete and bound to the specific situation. Young children are relatively effective communicators when language is embedded in familiar perceptual and social contexts. The language of text, however, is a more context independent, elaborated form of code. Idea units in written language are longer and more syntactically complex than they are in spoken

language (Chafe, 1985). Such linguistic devices as nominalisation, subordination, and modification are used to pack many idea units into a single sentence. In addition, cohesion, the process of linking together the sentences of running discourse, is lexicalised in written language; the sentences of text are tied together by cohesive elements (*however*, *therefore*, *because*, *since*, *so*, *moreover*, etc.). In contrast, spoken discourse cohesion is accomplished primarily through context and paralinguistic and prosodic cues.

Wells (1985) has suggested that listening to stories during the preschool years facilitates the development of decontextualised language use which, in turn, helps beginning readers acquire reading comprehension skills. In support of this suggestion, Wells found that of three preschool activities - drawing, looking at picture books, and listening to stories - only the latter was significantly related to later reading comprehension performance. Other studies have reported strong relationships between amount of story listening and rate of linguistic development (see Mason & Allen, 1986, for a review). In addition, close observation of parent-child interactions during bookreading sessions has revealed that parents directly engage their children in activities that foster language development (e.g., by asking questions, providing labels, extending children's remarks, directing children's attention to features of the text, introducing metalinguistic concepts, responding to children's questions, inviting children to provide descriptions and to tell stories themselves, etc.) and promote understanding of basic concepts about print (such as the ideas that what the adult says depends on those funny marks on the page and that print maps onto the structural features of spoken language in a particular way). Measures of the latter, such as Clay's (1979). Concepts about Print Test, have been shown to be highly predictive of later reading achievement (Tunmer, Herriman, Nesdale, 1988).

Children from non-mainstream backgrounds typically do not have these experiences. Feitelson and Goldstein (1986), for example, found that middle class homes contained five times as many children's books as working class homes, and that middle class parents read to their children upwards of half an hour each day, whereas sixty percent of the working class parents did not read to their children at all. Heath (1983) conducted a detailed ethnographic study of the variety of ways that children are introduced to language and literacy in different cultural and social class groups and the consequences of these differences for later literacy development, especially the transition from oral to

written language. She found that culture significantly affects prereading children's socialisation into language and literacy and that children from different backgrounds have quantitatively and qualitatively different experiences with language and print. With respect to the three communities that Heath studied in detail, she states that "the language socialisation habits of the three groups differ greatly, and only those of the mainstreamers seem to fit the expectations of the schools and other mainstream institutions" (1986, p.159).

Two other prereading skills which strongly affect the ease with which children acquire basic reading skills are letter-name knowledge and phonological awareness (Mason & Allen, 1986). The latter refers to the ability to reflect on and manipulate the phonemic segments of speech (see Tunmer, in press c, for a recent review). Research indicates that phonological awareness is often the most potent predictor of reading success. In a longitudinal study of 543 children, Share, Jorm, Maclean, and Matthews (1984) found that of 39 individual attributes measured at school entry, phoneme segmentation was the strongest predictor of reading achievement after two years of reading instruction ($\underline{r} = .62$), followed closely by letter-name knowledge ($\underline{r} = .58$). Other studies have demonstrated that phonological awareness in causally related to reading development (e.g., Bradley & Bryant, 1983) and that phonological awareness and letter-name knowledge have a positive interactive effect on reading achievement (Tunmer, Herriman, & Nesdale, 1988). Letter-name knowledge and phonological awareness also provide prereaders with the means of exploring the writing system through invented spellings, such as KLR for colour, HKN for chicken, FRE for fairy, etc. (Ehri, 1986; Liberman, Rubin, Duques, & Carlisle, 1985; Read, 1971).

As noted earlier, children from working class and culturally different backgrounds tend to perform less well on tests of these skills at school entry than do children from middle class backgrounds. As part of the literacy socialisation process, children of parents of higher social class and educational attainment are exposed to activities in the home (learning nursery rhymes, playing various word and letter games, listening to "linguistic" jokes and riddles involving puns and homonyms, etc.) which help them to become aware that spoken words can be broken down into smaller units. Families with greater incomes can also afford to buy more materials which promote the development of these skills, such as plastic letters, ABC books, rhyming games, books of nursery rhymes, riddle books, chalkboards, writing materials, etc.

As a result of social class and cultural differences in emergent literacy, middle class children are generally in a much better position to derive maximum benefit from formal reading instruction than non-mainstream children. On average, they can use language more effectively, they are more familiar with text-like language, they know more about the basic concepts and conventions of print, they are more phonologically aware, and they know more about English orthography. These differences, I suggest, provide the catalyst for Matthew effects in reading achievement which, in turn, give rise to performance differences on general verbal processing tests like the TOSCA.

Gun Manufacturers: a parting shot

If tests like the TOSCA do little more than provide indirect measures of academic achievement, then it is difficult to see any reason for their use. It is trivially true that the best predictor of future academic attainment is present level of academic attainment. Teachers must build on existing skills and knowledge to advance knowledge. Unfortunately, tests like the TOSCA were not designed as diagnostic instruments to help teachers determine the specific educational needs of children. Rather, they were designed to measure underlying abilities that are *assumed* to be causally related to children's academic performance. The authors of the TOSCA define scholastic abilities as "*those verbal and numerical reasoning abilities which are judged to be essential components in school-related intellectual functioning*" (Reid et al., 1981, p.5). But exactly *how* these abilities are supposed to facilitate academic learning is not specified. This is not surprising since it is extremely difficult, if not impossible, to imagine how solving "disemvowelled" words, hidden words, run-on sentences, anagrams, etc., is related to learning anything. In planning the construction of the TOSCA, the authors searched for a theoretical framework to serve as the basis for developing their test but could not find one: "The search yielded no clear-cut theoretical formulation which the test developers judged to be entirely suitable" (Reid et al., 1981., pp.4-5). The reason for this failure, I suggest, is simple: no such theory exists.

A potential danger in using tests like the TOSCA is that they can lead to self-fulfilling expectations about what children are capable of achieving, especially if it is incorrectly assumed by teachers that the TOSCA measures some underlying capacity for learning that determines ultimate level of academic attainment. As was noted earlier, using tests like the TOSCA for "ability" streaming discriminates negatively against students who have had unequal

access to the skills and knowledge necessary for succeeding in school: capable but disadvantaged students may be misclassified to lower streams and consequently be further deprived of the opportunity to do well in school.

The authors of the TOSCA clearly recognise the potential misuse of their test in stating that the test should only be used if it can be assumed that "all pupils have been exposed to, and have had substantially the same opportunity to learn those behaviours incorporated in the test..." (Reid et al., 1981, p.4). However, as Ballard argues in his chapter, "To accept such an absurd assumption would be to refute both common sense and the research evidence that learning opportunities are not equal across families ..." (p.226). In discussing the same point, Codd remarks that, "By simply stating a caution, which if taken seriously would render the test useless, the test developers appear to believe that none of the problems of test use/abuse can be laid at their door" (pp.255-256).

I am reminded of the slogan used by gun manufacturers in the United States in their (never ending) campaign against proposed legislation to restrict the use and sale of firearms:

> Guns don't kill people, people do.

Yes, but ...

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Problems in the Introduction and Co-ordination of Sociology in New Zealand Sixth Form Certificate Classes

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Abstract
Sociology has indirectly influenced the secondary school curriculum for over a decade and is now taught at sixth form level as a discipline in its own right. The nature of the discipline at school level and the range of teachers who teach it varies considerably but a common feature is isolation from Sociology Departments in tertiary institutions and from professional sociologists.

Introduction[1]

A 1988 survey of all New Zealand schools teaching sociology (N=12) revealed several problems in the introduction and co-ordination of this new subject for sixth form certificate classes. Respondents (N=11) provided information about their sociological backgrounds (or lack of one), problems faced in introducing the subject in their schools and the nature of their contacts with the sociology profession.

Sociology has been taught in British schools for some time (Wormald, 1974) and this has not been without problems (Abrams, 1968). In Australia Hickman (1970) argued that:

> "...sociology, either as a separate subject, or as an important contribution in a wider subject, will be taught at some level in most secondary schools in the next decade. This prediction is made on the basis of the support from various groups in society for such a development".

To date. Hickman's prediction has not been fully realized in Australia although this theme has been supported by others in that country (Davies 1979), in the USA (Sklar, 1973) and in New Zealand (Garrett 1972; Stevens, 1975).

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1 An earlier version of this paper was presented at the New Zealand Association for Research in Education Conference, Massey University, December 1988.

The Survey

The recent introduction of sociology as a sixth form certificate option in twelve New Zealand secondary schools has met an enthusiastic response from students and some schools will be increasing the number of classes in this subject in 1989. All schools at present offering Sociology as a sixth form certificate option are in the North Island and over half of these are in Auckland and Wellington.

Three of the eleven teachers had sociology as a major in their degrees, five had sociology as a minor subject (mostly only to first year level) and three had never studied sociology at all. Most Sixth Form Certificate Sociology teachers therefore do not have strong sociological backgrounds from which to develop this new subject. Most respondents stated that history and geography were the most useful subjects (other than sociology) in developing this new aspect of the Sixth Form curriculum.

Most of the eleven teachers had become Sixth Form Sociology specialists after developing interests in third and fourth form social studies and several took over existing liberal studies courses in the sixth form and provided a new sociological orientation. Sociology as a discipline has in many cases been introduced to sixth forms from this background.

Sixth form sociology teachers consistently pointed out their lack of professional contacts with other teachers in this field and the professional isolation that they experienced. Most Sixth Form Sociology teachers do not, at the present time, know what their colleagues are doing in the same subject in other schools.

The teachers were asked about five aspects of the content of their Sixth Form Sociology courses: the topics they covered, use of theory, the range of methodologies they taught, the practical work undertaken by students and what they, as teachers, thought were the most successful aspects of their new courses.

By far the most popular topic in Sixth Form Sociology courses was the sociology of the family followed by the sociology of education and aspects of deviance. A wide variety of other topics were covered: socialization, urbanization, social organisation and stratification, role theory, aspects of social class (with particular reference to New Zealand) and race relations.

Theory proved to be a difficult aspect of sociology to teach to sixth formers and most teacher stated that they approached theoretical matters "indirectly" as part of the study of an aspect of society. Marx was the most widely discussed social theorist although, as one teacher noted, "superficial Marxism" was a more accurate description. The other theorist who appeared in several of the sixth form certificate sociology classes was Durkheim.

A wide variety of methodologies were introduced to Sixth Form Sociology students and these often formed the basis of practical work that was undertaken. Methodologies introduced to students included: survey methods, interview techniques, questionnaire design, participant and non-participant observation, the use of case studies, sampling and basic statistics. Only two schools reported that no methodologies were taught and in each case the teacher had no sociology in his or her degree. Practical applications of studies of methodology were often focussed on interviews with other students in the same school or an aspect of the local community. Teachers who encouraged classes to undertake practical work were consistently enthusiastic about the results. Sixth form sociology teachers frequently noted in their responses to the questionnaire that they faced a problem gaining recognition for the subject as an acceptable field of study by their colleagues. While many students found sociology interesting and wished to continue it to form seven, this option is not yet available. Teachers (of other subjects) and Sixth Form Sociology students, it was found, view the introduction of the subject differently.

A major problem noted by all respondents is an acute lack of resources available for teaching sociology in New Zealand Secondary Schools at the present time. This problem is compounded by the professional isolation that Sixth Form Sociology teachers face. Two teachers who have been teaching sociology for longer periods than most respondents indicated that they had resourced other schools with their own notes but still lacked adequate teaching materials themselves. A lack of New Zealand orientated school sociology textbooks has been only partly met by using British school texts and introductory university sociology texts. Neither of these were found to be particularly suitable and, consequently, most New Zealand Sixth Form Sociology teachers compiled their own notes and resources, often from newspapers and magazines.

A feature of sociology as a sixth form option is that most classes contain few males. Sociology, it appears, is more popular with sixth form girls than boys, but no teacher offered an explanation for this.

An issue that emerged from the survey was the gap between school and university sociology. While sociology is well established in New Zealand universities, even those teachers who had majored in the discipline found that its concepts and literature do not fit easily into sixth form classes. No pattern could be discovered in the use of sociology texts in sixth form sociology classes although Robertson 1981, Berger 1963 and Worsley 1976 were all used and Pitt 1977, Willmott 1978 and the writings of Felix Donnelly were cited as examples of New Zealand texts. All the Sociology texts cited by teachers are several years old.

Teachers were asked about three professional links : the ways in which sociology integrated with other sixth form subjects, the extent of their contacts with university Sociology departments and the links students perceived between the study of sociology and their vocational futures.

Sixth form sociology teachers perceived links with virtually all of the humanities and the social science subjects available to students in New Zealand sixth forms and several respondents noted a particularly strong relationship between sociology and the demographic aspects of Geography. Several other teachers whose main orientation was English, also noted sociology's compatibility with that subject. One teacher noted that the study of sociology by sixth form students "develops independence in work habits and confidence in expressing views about society ... in this way it helps the study of all other subjects".

Most Sixth Form Sociology teachers did not have any contact with university Sociology departments, but the few she had, noted that academics had usually been sympathetic and helpful. Massey and Waikato Universities were cited most often as sources of assistance by teachers.

Students of Sixth Form Sociology, according to their teachers, found little difficulty relating the study of sociology to their vocational futures. Sociology is largely related to "people orientated jobs" according to most teachers and many students (the majority of them are girls) perceived links with nursing, social work, teaching and police careers.

A conflict of perceptions of the place of Sixth Form Sociology exists in many of the schools that offer it as an option. The enthusiasm of the students was, in many of the schools surveyed, met by indifference, disdain and mild opposition by other staff. Teachers of Sixth Form Sociology are at present having to struggle to have their subject recognised and understood while coping with a growing demand (by students) for more courses. Some teachers noted parental and even inspectorial ignorance of the subject as a problem in promoting it in their schools.

At present few patterns can be discovered in the content of Sixth Form Sociology courses. This is not surprising considering the isolation within which sociology teachers are currently working as they devise and then teach the subject. At present Sixth Form Certificate Sociology courses differ considerably from each other in content and in theoretical and methodological orientation.

In 1989 more schools will be offering sociology as a sixth form option and, with this expansion of the subject, it is likely that young people will in future enter Universities with an increased understanding of the social sciences in general and Sociology in particular. It is therefore likely that in the next decade, School Sociology will influence the level at which introductory courses in the discipline are presented in Universities; at present, however, University Sociologists are having little influence on the development of the subject in New Zealand Schools. Perhaps the most outstanding feature of the introduction of sixth form certificate sociology is its lack of co-ordination with the discipline in New Zealand Universities.

A Reply to 'Problems in the Introduction and Co-ordination of Sociology in New Zealand Sixth Form Certificate Classes'.

Steve Maharey
Department of Sociology, Massey University

Over recent years the Department of Sociology at Massey University has become interested in supporting the teaching of sociology in schools. This interest grew out of an awareness that sociology was being taught without the kind of professional contact needed to improve teaching methods and course content. The situation was probably inevitable given the way sociology appears to have gained entry to the schoolroom through the back door, via the enthusiasm of individual members of staff. However, as Stevens' survey results suggest, the time for greater co-ordination seems to have arrived. The following remarks are intended to encourage such a process.

It is worthwhile beginning by acknowledging that the development of sociology as a school subject is likely to be associated with problems. Sociology can attract controversy because it often deals with issues which are the object of heated debate amongst protagonists who are convinced that they have the only answer. Indeed, even the most apparently benign sociological topics can cause controversy. The Department of Sociology first year extramural courses have been blamed for the break up of families, violent arguments, turning daughters against fathers and a variety of other personal troubles. I have come to the conclusion that such outcomes may well be unavoidable for a discipline which deals with so many sensitive issues. However, there is a very real need to think through how controversy can best be handled. In Britain the credibility of sociology has suffered in the face of accusations of political bias. While I do not think it is possible to do sociology without taking sides, a commitment to a disciplined investigation of issues may ensure that the same problems are not repeated in New Zealand.

Problems aside, there is no denying that sociology should be taught in schools. There can be no more pressing case for this development than the condition of New Zealand society today. Over the past decade, as New Zealand has moved into a period of extraordinary change, the sociology of our society has become a topic on everyone's lips. Each year the members of the Department of

Sociology talk to some five hundred secondary school students visiting Massey University. With each group we make the point that the importance of sociology is confirmed by the daily newspaper. A casual flick through any newspaper will reveal an enormous range of issues of significance to a sociologist. When I first started sociology courses, I read an article by Cora Vellekoop which argued that class did not exist in New Zealand. As a result of such advice, I spent a good deal of my undergraduate sociological training wondering if sociology had any direct relevance to New Zealand, a question which was reinforced by the preference for teaching students about the sociology of anywhere *but* New Zealand. Vellekoop later revised her opinion when it became clear that relations of production were important and did structure New Zealand society. Indeed, we have been forcefully reminded by the events of the past decade that all of the issues which once we studied vicariously are right here on our doorstep.

It is, then, a matter of urgency that school students have access to a discipline that will help them understand their society. The first step must be to ensure that there are enough adequately trained teachers to meet the interest of students. And here we strike a major obstacle. As Stevens reports, most current sociology teachers do not have a sociological background. This is not a situation which should be allowed to continue because, like biology, geography, accounting or any other subject currently taught in the schools, sociology needs to be taught by people who have been trained in the subject. These comments should not be taken as an indictment of current teachers. On the contrary, every new development has to start somewhere and they are to be commended for their hard work. However, it is clear that there is a pressing need for those teachers who need training to be given the opportunity to gain relevant qualifications.

Training will not, of course, answer all the issues Stevens raises. His discussion of the topics covered, range of methodologies taught, the practical work undertaken by students and the most successful aspects of courses, raises many questions relevant to the discipline wherever it is taught. Sociology in New Zealand draws largely on the work of American and British sociology. This dependence is beginning to change as more material is written locally and we think about how to study our own society. This trend needs to be co-ordinated and broad agreement reached on perspectives, methodologies and assessment. A great deal of this work has already been undertaken within the

British school system where sociology is an examination subject. However, we need also to think about our own situation. As Stevens points out, teachers often find that the theories and concepts of overseas textbooks are difficult to use in the classroom. I suspect that this may, in some cases, be a result of the lack of relevance of work which has been developed in social situations that have nothing in common with New Zealand. To develop local sociology we will, then, need to focus on ourselves.

A local focus may have the beneficial effect of producing more of the resources all sociology teachers lack. Because sociology has been oriented to America and Britain it is only recently that we have seen a decisive increase in locally produced material. The Massey University Department of Sociology is now involved in publishing two journals (**New Zealand Sociology** and **Sites: A journal for radical perspectives on culture**) and its staff are trying hard to find the time to do the research upon which local writing can be based. Unfortunately, the combined output of all the university departments, given that approximately sixty staff are employed, is unlikely to be able to satisfy demand. If there is to be enough material, one of the outcomes of co-ordination must be to put pressure on the Department of Education to provide resources for the development of materials suitable for schools and other institutions.

With the development of teaching materials, the place of sociology in educational institutions will become more clear. Sociology, as Stevens' results suggest, relates very well to all social science and humanities subjects. It also has something to offer students taking subjects with less immediately obvious connections. Whether students take business, agricultural or law courses, they will find a 'sociological imagination' helpful to their personal understanding of society and to their professional work. Once it is clear what sociology has to offer in relation to all other subjects, the parents, staff and school inspectors noted by Stevens as being indifferent and even hostile, may change their opinions.

Stevens closes his paper by looking at the way in which school sociology may effect universities in the next decade. This has been a central concern of the Massey University Department of Sociology. If there is to be more sociology taught in schools, the university curriculum will need to change dramatically. To encourage dialogue, we have, in recent years, run one course with teachers from the central North Island and tried to mount two other courses drawing on

the whole North Island. These latter courses did not take place due to a lack of enrolments. Despite these setbacks, we are still convinced of the need to assist the process of developing sociology and are greatly encouraged by Stevens' survey. Indeed, we believe we have a real responsibility in this area, because, as Stevens points out, at least sociology is now established in the universities. Perhaps it is time to pose some suggestions as to what might be done in the near future.

First, members of the Department of Sociology at Massey University would be willing to help contribute to a workshop for the twelve teachers comprising the sample for the survey. If other interested teachers could be contacted they would be welcome to attend. However, rather than the university becoming the catalyst for such a meeting as in the past, it may be best if the impetus came from teachers themselves.

Secondly, there is clearly a need for ongoing contact and coordination between teachers. In addition, teachers may find it useful to have the opportunity to meet with social researchers, university, polytechnic and community college staff. Perhaps this could best be handled through the Sociological Association of Aotearoa. The annual conference would provide a meeting ground and teachers could easily organise a sub-grouping of the overall organisation.

Thirdly, there is a need for a regular newsletter to be produced. Newsletters are cheap and provide a means of regular information which makes all the difference to people who are trying to 'establish a new area of study in the face of indifference or hostility.'

Fourthly, the Ministry of Education needs to be involved in any developments. There is an urgent need for at least one person to be given the time to begin preparing teaching materials. Perhaps such a person could be seconded to the Department of Sociology at Massey University for a period of one year.

In closing, let me reiterate my enthusiasm for the project of developing sociology in the schools. Sociology is not just an interesting subject, it is a vitally important one. Each year we explain this importance to our first year students by asking how it is that people make sense of their society. Of course, they point to common sense (that wonderful mixture of tradition, habit and partial truths), religion and parental authority. But they soon learn to appreciate

that sociology allows individuals to situate their lives in the context of socially and historically constructed institutions. Such an insight can be liberating and lead to an awareness that New Zealanders make their future - albeit not under circumstances of their own choosing.

Recently Completed Theses

In May 1987, New Zealand Sociology (vol.2, no.1) published a list of thesis work in Sociology, and sociology of education, completed during 1985 and 1986. The following is an up-date of that list, covering work completed since February 1987.

Massey University

McIntyre, Ann. **Women's Perceptions of Their Health, Family and Personal Needs in a Rural Area: Some Implications for Social Work Practice.** M.Phil; Social Work. 1987.

Mataira, Peter J. **A Study of Alcohol Consumption on Maraes and of Contemporary Drinking Patterns in Ruatoria.** M.Phil; Sociology. 1987.

Oliver, William Hugh. **The New Zealand Labour Party and The Rise of "Rogernomics" 1981-1984.** MA; Sociology. 1987.

Needs, Andrew P. **New Zealand Aid and the Development of Class in Tonga: An Analysis of the Banana Rehabilitation Scheme.** MA; Sociology. 1988.

Sims, Andrew C. **Acres of Rare Centricity: An Historical Narrative of The Railway Land Ownership and Development Disputes.** Extracts from an uncompleted MA; Sociology. 1988.

Soler, Janet. **Drifting Towards Moral Chaos: The 1954 Mazengarb Report - a Moral Panic over Juvenile Immorality.** MA; Education. 1988.

Shannon, Alison. **Strategies in the Struggle For Fitness: The Social Practice of Women's Aerobics.** MA; Education. 1989.

Victoria University

Department of Sociology and Social Work

Zwage, W. **Marketing the Millennium: The Revivalist Ethos and the Electronic Church in the United States of America.** MA. 1987.

Opie, M.A. **Shared Parenting After Separation and Divorce in New Zealand.** PhD. 1988.

Caton, A. **Child Abuse Decision Making.** MA Applied. 1988.

University of Auckland

Lesie, S. **Disturbances on the Set: Making Feminist Films in New Zealand.** MA; Sociology. 1988.

University of Canterbury

Department of Sociology

Hall, R.R. **Te Kohurau: Continuity Change in a New Zealand Rural District.** PhD.

McDonald, D.J. **The Governing of Children: Social Policy for Children and Young Persons in New Zealand 1840-1982.** PhD.

Pearce, Geoffrey. **Where is New Zealand Going?** PhD.

Waikato University

Department of Sociology and Social Anthropology

Aitchison-Windeler, Z.C.A. **To be Believed: The Social Construction of Lesbianism From Kraft-Ebing to Cruikshank.** M.Soc.Sci. 1987.

Sayer, S.M. **Subject Autobiography.** M.Soc.Sci. 1988.

McArthur, W. **The Antinomy Behind the Metaphor: Adam Smith's Concept of "The Invisible Hand": From a Sociological Perspective. Social Control in the New Zealand Media.** M.Soc.Sci. 1987.

Winter, Pamela. **The Dialectics of Childbirth: Professional and Lay Interpretations of Childbirth in the Hamilton Community.** M.Soc.Sci. 1988.

Tiong, Frederick C. **Towards a Better Measurement of the Nineteenth Century New Zealand Non-Maori Fertility Trends and Differentials - 1878 to 1921.** M.Soc.Sci. 1988.

Reviews

Charisma, History and Social Structure. (1986) Edited by Ronald M. Glassman and William H. Swatos, Jr. New York. Greenwood Press. 240 pages.

Charisma and Social Structure: A study of love and power, wholeness and transformation. Raymond Trevor Bradley. (1978) New York. Paragon House. 365 pages.

Reviewed by L.D. Oakes
Department of Psychology, University of Auckland.

Max Weber intended the concept of charisma to be a relatively unambiguous tool with which to analyse social change. He defined it not only as a quality of an individual personality but also of a normative order and he described the process of routinisation by which it becomes transformed into rational or traditional authority. Despite Weber's intent no other aspect of his Sociology of Domination has provided such fertile ground for debate by succeeding sociologists. These two books attempt in different ways to clarify some of the problems of Weber's treatment of charisma as a force for change and its relationship to social structure.

In the introduction to the Glassman and Swatos book the editors introduce four of the main debates concerning Weber's use of the concept of charisma. They then provide reprints of two important early expositions of Weber's usage by Gerth and Mills, and Bendix, and present a further ten essays covering an extremely diverse range of settings and personalities - Hitler, Washington, Khomeini, Sun Moon, Peron and Mao - in which they explore and highlight these debates.

The aim is to clarify by example, to summarise and elaborate the category of charisma as a source of social change, rather than to develop new ideas. Consequently the book really represents a useful starting point, an orientation to the field, and as such is timely and successful. It is also, as a retrospective ought to be, highly readable throughout.

However the introduction is far from being a comprehensive review of the problems arising from Weber's usage of the concept of charisma, nor is such a review undertaken elsewhere in the book. Crucial topics are omitted, eg.: a comparison of the utility of charisma as an explanatory tool with alternative approaches to understanding social change would have been welcome. The essay by Peter Klvisto discusses the perspective of Horkheimer and Adorno but does not evaluate the relative strengths and weaknesses of their approach.

The high point of the book for this reviewer was the essay by Swatos on the charisma of John Calvin which neatly linked up with Weber's work on the rise of the Protestant Ethic. However seven of the twelve essays in the book are reprints of previously published material already available in New Zealand. While the quality of the remainder is high it is likely that only the specialist will be prepared to pay the $139.00 price of the book when imported into New Zealand.

The next book presents a completely different approach. Raymond Bradley is a graduate of Victoria University and completed his doctoral studies at Columbia under Benjamin Zablocki. He is currently Director of the Institute for Whole Science at Menlo, California. This study formed part of Zablocki's Urban Communes Project which looked at 57 communes in American cities over the period 1974-1978.

After an initial (and not entirely convincing) dismissal of some of Weber's main theses concerning charisma, Bradley goes on to define it in three ways: as a social category which identifies certain qualities of an individual as charismatic; as a social relationship based on the leadership of an exceptional individual; and as a social form, a distinctive pattern of social organisation. His book primarily addresses the third category and is an attempt to operationalise the concept of charisma by extensive sociogram analyses contrasting 28 charismatic with 29 non-charismatic communes.

The essence of the book is contained in three tables in Chapter Five which quantify the presence of love and power in the communes. Bradley is able to demonstrate the higher density of love (defined as communion and comprising unity, optimism and excitement) in the charismatic groups. Love is a potentially destablising factor however, and Bradley also measures power relations in the communes, concluding that the charismatic groups 'are

distinguished by a strong well-ordered structure of power relations' which is necessary to contain love. This is practically demonstrated when Bradley reports the survival rates for the communes. Those groups with low levels of communion (mostly non-charismatic) have high survival rates whereas of the groups with high levels of communion only those with a coherent power structure survive; but these actually have the highest survival rates of all.

To explain the relationship between love and power Bradley advances a 'holonomic' hypothesis derived from the work of neuropsychologist Karl Pribram and physicist David Bohm. Bradley argues for the 'discovery of a one-to-one correspondence between the orders of love and power (which) suggests that... they are conjoined at the deeper level of the whole'. This is an exciting hypothesis but it would probably be better explored in a single large well-established commune led by a resident charismatic leader.

Unfortunately over half the communes studied by Bradley had less than eight members, the average being ten and the smallest having five. Only four communes were actually led by resident charismatic leaders and three of these had been in existence less than two years. Also, as Bradley's sample is a subset of the Zablocki sample we must bear in mind that only one sixth of the subjects in Zablocki's communes were over age thirty. Bradley's methodology is very thorough but to what extent his conclusions apply to phenomena we more commonly call charismatic, that is, to large, diverse, durable groups led by charismatic leaders is unknown.

The book is extensively illustrated with figures and sociograms. There is also an extensive bibliography, making this a very expensive production. Yet it imports into New Zealand at $50.00. Well worth it.

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"Educating Hilda"

People and Enterprises: Human Behaviour in New Zealand Organisations by Roy McLennan, Kerr Inkson, Stephen Dakin, Philip Dewe and Graham Elkin (Holt, Rinehart and Winston, $31.85).

Reviewed by Nick Perry,
Sociology Department, University of Auckland.

Its a pity that F.Scott Fitzgerald never met Auntie Hilda. It might have shaken his confident claim that 'the mark of a first class mind is the ability to hold two incompatible ideas in one's head at the same time without going crazy'. Hilda was neither particularly cerebral nor obviously disturbed - but nevertheless a Whitmanesque tolerance for inconsistency was one of her routine accomplishments. As the most memorable character in Keith Ovenden's political satire, *Ratatui*, she was described by her nephew as 'the authentic New Zealander, perhaps from the pages of a novel by Maurice Gee... She supported SPUC *and* the women's movement; Patricia Bartlett *and* freedom of expression; the Springbok tour *and* the anti-apartheid movement; conventional sexual mores *and* homosexual reform.... The fact that her ideas, like a giant, random and impossible jigsaw puzzle did not fit with each other, was neither implausible, nor, he guessed, unusual'.

Inasmuch as undergraduate textbooks - such as People And Enterprises - are conditioned by the problem of combining academic discrimination with cultural accessibility, then they tend to be shaped by the contrasting imperatives which Fitzgerald and Hilda represent. Seen one way, he is manifestly elitist and she is splendidly democratic. Seen another, he gives expression to the traditional academic expectation of conceptual clarification and logical coherence, whereas she confuses the maxim of being fair to every opinion with the notion that every opinion happens to be fair. Its rather like the distinction between a BBC documentary and an American talk show; between a definite and definitive ranking of points of view and one that assigns the same moral and intellectual weight to everything. The hierarchy based principle of a privileged and authoritative interpretation contrasts with the market based principle of catering to the widest possible audience.

There is a culturally induced tendency, shaped and mediated by national differences in the structure of higher education, for British social science

textbooks to gravitate towards the former model, and for American textbooks to exemplify the latter. Such national influences articulate with those variations which derive from differences in, and struggles over, the socio-political location of the various academic disciplines. The position of each discipline can be mapped, both in terms of its distance from market relations and in relation to its ranking within academic hierarchies. If academic subjects are plotted in relation to these two dimensions, then the humanities, such commerce faculty subjects as marketing and organisational behaviour, and the social sciences, can be expected to cluster in discrete locations. This differential positioning of disciplines within an academic cartography is associated with differences in text book pedagogy. That is to say, the variations between local textbooks from different disciplines express differences in the notion of how students should be taught as well as what they should be taught.

That such pedagogies are not politically innocent is now an educational commonplace - and it is, of course, lecturers who decide *which* textbooks are to be purchased - leaving students only to decide how many. Where the latter do exert some influence (albeit within the limits not just of the market, but of an imperfect market at that) is in their choices between disciplines - and thus between the different conceptions of pedagogy which local textbooks enshrine. It is in this sense that **People and Enterprises**' effective competitors can be said to include the **Oxford History of New Zealand** and the **Penguin Book of New Zealand Verse**. For like them, it is scheduled to become the standard local text. This is because, given both the small size of the relevant domestic market and the small number of relevant producer hierarchies, it is likely to be the **only** local text. Securing the participation of authors from each of the different university centres ensures not just the full use of thinly distributed expertise but the commercial viability of the text (by providing a near guarantee that it will be chosen). Maximising the market is facilitated by combining the producers, and the resulting control over production is integrated with *de facto* control over distribution. This strategy is perhaps more evident in **People and Enterprises** than in other local texts, but it is not peculiar to it. The general popularity of such a procedure amongst local academics and publishers is understandable. Not only does it engage with the economic problem of market size, but it also addresses the political problem of collegial relations and the psychological problem of career advancement.

What merits investigation, however, is how such a judicious combination of professional control and commercial advantage relates to specifically educational problems, especially the kinds of problems which the example of Auntie Hilda helps to make specific. Must 'Educating Hilda' depend upon either the American talk show model or the BBC documentary model? Just where is the line to be drawn between textbooks which deploy a market-based populism and those which display an hierarchical distancing; between an approach which replicates Hilda's confusions and one which is precluded from engaging with them? This is where disciplinary differences in location and in pedagogy become pertinent. The criteria of textual and explanatory adequacy in a subject like organisational behaviour are an expression of its pragmatic concentration on the achievement of organisational efficiency. This is accompanied by an expectation that this can best be accomplished by humanistic means and sanctioned by the trappings of empiricism. It is the tension between these tendencies which structures the subject's internal debates. It derives from and expresses its ambivalent location between the (expanding) social power of the corporate interests which it serves, the (declining) cultural power of the liberal tradition within the educational organisations which house it, and the cognitive power of the scientific disciplines which it seeks to emulate.

People and Enterprises' solution to these tensions is characteristic of the genre it represents; a tendency to fudge questions of power and inequality, a confident proclamation of the scientific status *and* humanistic bias of organisational behaviour, and a somewhat "folksy" unity of tone. Each of these merits a brief comment. That the book is "soft" on power is signalled by the way in which the first of the text's many stories is handled. It tells how the Erebus crash was due to communication failure, yet there is no suggestion that the subsequent pattern of events might be interpreted as a deliberate attempt at communication control. It should have been an opportunity for five academic authors with an interest in organisational affairs to produce an orchestrated litany of whys. One further example of this kind of default will suffice - the research evidence is that the very pattern of networking that is viewed as exemplary management practice in one chapter, actually provides the basis for excluding women and minorities from attaining those management roles which subsequent chapters assert ought to be available to them.

The rhetorical coupling of "scientific" and "humanistic" seems no less contradictory. Some 25 years ago the Director of the Manchester Business School was prompted to refer to the humanistic claims of organisational behaviour theories as an 'orgy of avuncular pontification'. By the mid 1970s the Professor of Organisational Behaviour at the London Business School, concerned to advance the scientific character of the field, described it as 'an emergent quasi-independent sub-discipline'. In their very different ways such remarks do seem to signal difficulties. There is a tendency for the field to draw disproportionately upon the social science literature and theories of the 1960s and earlier, rather than upon more contemporary work. Findings which derive from an era of full employment, high growth and social consensus do not easily translate into the present. The stable verities have become galloping variables. One result is that the tacit assumptions and theoretical foundations of the study of organisational behaviour have been weakened and the present text's (undertheorised) attempt to tackle questions of ethnicity and gender is a visible testimony to this. The Great New Zealand Swear Words - social class - rate only the briefest mention.

The book is at its best where it doesn't run ahead of the research findings in order to construct - or invent - a rapprochement between liberal pieties and corporate efficiency. There is, for example, a careful resume of local empirical studies on ethnic differences in work group behaviour which, together with a number of the brief, highly readable and potentially instructive case studies scattered throughout the text, is available for a range of possible interpretations. Such material seems well suited to the task of getting students to think for themselves. My judgement is that at least some sections of New Zealand business value such critical independence and that those who do not are badly in need of it. The dilemma is that such thinking requires students to read against the dominant tendencies and inconsistencies of **People and Enterprises**. The question of just how such critical faculties are to be nurtured is where we, and Auntie Hilda and Scott Fitzgerald, first came in. A place to start might be to make Fitzgerald's own **The Last Tycoon** required reading for students of organisational behaviour, in order that they can imaginatively explore the depth of the tensions between individual ambition and a society of large powerful organisations.

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A Foreign Egg in Our Nest? American Popular Culture in New Zealand. Geoff Lealand. Victoria University Press, Wellington, 1988, $19.95, (126pp.).

Reviewed by Roy Shuker.
Education Department, Massey University

Geoff Lealand has produced a timely book that goes some distance towards meeting an important absence in the study of local popular culture: the impact of American popular culture on New Zealand. In his considerations of the impact of American film, television and popular music in New Zealand, Lealand also provides some thoughtful comments on the nature and significance of popular culture generally. His readable account welds together a broad range of interesting material, from audience research data and production economics, to considerations of particular products and performers. Amongst all this, however, the theoretical core of the book is more problematic, particularly Lealand's conception of cultural imperialism.

Lealand concentrates on popular film, television, and popular music, seeing these as 'sites of collision', areas of popular culture where long-established American domination is being challenged by attempts to create indigenous culture. This necessitates the exclusion of other American popular culture, such as McDonalds, Levis, and breakdancing, though, as he notes, popular culture frequently embraces a variety of such elements.

The central aim of the book is to consider the significance of the fact that 'imported American popular culture dominates New Zealand social life.' Popular culture is defined as products produced for, and consumed by, a mass audience. In explaining the "meanings" of such culture, Lealand draws on both American and British cultural studies, seeking to marry the two traditions while expressing reservations about both. His own emergent critical perspective 'is based on a functionalist stance, favouring "uses and gratifications" constructions of human motivation, encompassing both the cognitive (intellectual) and affective (emotional) dimensions of experience.' (p.11) Lealand concedes that his comments about the state of the field (the study of popular culture), are 'obviously oversimplified and probably unfair.' (p.13) Given that there has been so little written about popular culture in New Zealand, however, it would have been useful for **A Foreign Egg** to devote rather more attention to establishing its theoretical parameters and approach.

Lealand views British Cultural Studies (BCCCS; Screen) as 'fixated with the idea of the production and consumption of popular culture as a predetermined political process', while he appears rather unhappy with a conception of culture as ideological. This links up with a critique of 'the Cultural Imperialism Thesis', which is equated with 'the proposition that national cultures are being held in thrall by one dominant (American) culture' (p.19), with negative effects on indigenous, more "authentic" local culture. This thesis, strongly associated with the work of Schiller, is, claims Lealand, found wanting when tested against experience. In relation to the mass media for example, while the United States does have a dominant market share in areas such as television exports, the generally assumed negative effects of such dominance is hard to sustain, and ignores different cultural readings (or decodings) of particular programmes.

While Lealand is correct in exposing the difficulties associated with too-simplistic a version of the cultural imperialism thesis, his analysis sets up too easy a target. He equates ideological criticism with "hidden messages", to be decoded by the initiated, whereas ideology in fact tends to operate most effectively when presented in the guise of the taken-for-granted, constituting a cultural hegemony. Thus, American *forms* of popular culture dominate, even where they may contain local content. At the same time, however,this dominance is challenged, making culture a site of ideological struggle, - Lealand's 'sites of collision'. For example, while most films are produced in a "Hollywood" format, standard genre and narrative structures are open to reinterpretation. It has obviously proven difficult to marry a more extended discussion of the book's central theoretical concerns to what is essentially a more populist account aimed at a wider reading public. Indeed, Lealand's first chapter, dealing largely with theoretical starting points and problems of definition, frequently seems oddly jumbled and lacking in depth; (suggesting some heavy editorialising?).

The remaining three chapters, dealing respectively with television, popular music, and popular film, reflect the limitations of the earlier theorizing. Frequently, there is a tendency to downplay the significance of indigenous attempts (eg. Flying Nunn) to rework the dominant American cultural forms. This aside, however, these case studies combine a good deal of very useful source material, (particularly some of the empirical data), and some provocative analysis of *why* particular American products/performers (eg.

Bruce Springsteen) have been so successful in New Zealand. As Lealand suggests, it is this qualitative aspect of the impact of American popular culture which requires further exploration. **A Foreign Egg in Our Nest?** is a significant attempt to develop a critical area in cultural studies in New Zealand, but must be regarded as only a useful starting point towards a fuller examination of New Zealand as an example of American cultural imperialism.

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New Zealand Aid and the Development of Class in Tonga. Andrew P Needs. Studies in Development and Social Change Series (General Editor: Brian A. Ponter), Department of Sociology, Massey University, pp. 140, 1988.

Reviewed by A. Crosbie Walsh
Department of Geography, Massey University

New Zealand, intent on getting its aid money to the rural "grassroots" who comprise the bulk of Third World populations, frequently targets small projects for assistance. Needs's study, which is a fine example of a Masterate thesis, considers the effects on one such project : the Banana Export Scheme in Tonga. His conclusions are supportive of the general academic rejection of modernization theory (upon which New Zealand aid policies are broadly based) and the more recent focus on modes of production as a means of interpreting social structures. He found that the :

> redistributive aims of New Zealand aid [had] been undermined by a greater concern with productivity. Emphasis upon the latter ... meant that the project [had] been reorientated in favour of giving greater assistance to those who can produce bananas most easily, those who already had access to land, capital and labour.

In these circumstances it was not surprising to learn that:

> Although through the banana scheme large amounts of money are being pumped into the Tongan economy, its redistributive effects are minimal. The structure of the scheme is such that many of the major benefits accrue to the already advantaged.

His further claim that the aid programme had been a factor in the emergence of a modern bourgeoisie and a labouring class provides support to the notion of new class formation. I wonder, though, how much this is a recent development?

There was some evidence of modern class in this traditionally most stratified of Polynesian societies 25 years ago but we then called the bourgeoisie "innovators" and the labourers "peasants". Yesterday's "bourgeois" had accommodations with the nobility similar to those described by Needs, they were also often bureaucrats and only part-time entrepreneurs, and their activities were restricted, as they are today, by the small scale, only partly monetised nature of the Tongan economy and the limited penetration of the capitalist mode of production. Needs concedes that the new classes are 'as much a product of the indigenous social structure of Tonga as of forces impinging from outside'. Could not the new classes, then, be more a question of a changing "mix" of indigenous and modern forces, or even merely a reflection of change in our terminology and theoretical approaches, or has there really been a qualitative change in Tonga?

The answer to these questions, of course, depends largely on one's assessment of the adequacy of Needs's theory, the soundness of his research methods, and his knowledge of Tongan society. It is not to dispute the value of theory to note that not too long ago Antipodean scholars sought (and generally failed) to find "economic man" in the Pacific, and that modernization and dependency theories were successively in vogue. Currently popular theories may also expect brief life spans if they do not satisfactorily bridge gaps between explanation at macro and micro levels. Rather too many theories applied to the Pacific Islands which purport to be of Marxian origin collapse at the micro level. At a high level of generalization bordering on the inanely self-evident, they are seen to work (of course), but we learn little about the nitty-gritty workings and ramifications of the society studied or, in the development arena, of the complexities of how development is to be achieved. Significantly, in the Pacific at least, such theoretical applications gain most support from those who know least about the local scene. Fortunately, Needs's application of theory does not fall in this category. He makes a very creditable attempt to link grand theory to Tongan practice ... but a rather different interpretation could be forthcoming with a different theoretical model.

With regard to research methods, Needs borders on the apologetic in defending his use of a purposively, stratified sample, and of case studies to 'illustrate the reality of people's lives'. He has no need. He interviewed 20 growers, 16 ex-growers, a labourer (sic!), and a further 34 people, including village and district officials. The sample seems perfectly adequate, except for the labourer! The selection of four villages belonging to the estate of one noble also seems acceptable, given his purposes. Overall, Needs's endeavour and research design are commendable for a masterate thesis, but the conclusions drawn from such brief field experience could perhaps be more modestly made. He was only three months in Tonga. His previous knowledge of the language and society were slight. Interviews were generally conducted through an interpreter. His work makes too little overt use of official or other published work on agricultural systems or social change in Tonga or other Pacific Island countries, and, being a study of one locality at one point in time, it is a-spatial and lacks historical depth. Somewhat more local knowledge, and a little more time and space, are needed before a researcher can confidently make a major theoretical pronouncement on class in Tongan society.

These forebodings apart, there is much of value in Needs's work. His brief descriptions of the New Zealand-Tonga aid connection, Tongan social structure from pre-contact times to the present, the central importance of land tenure, and the workings of the Banana export scheme are useful introductions to the uninitiated. The main value of Needs's study to students of development, however, lies less, in the reviewer's opinion, with its answers or descriptions than with the questions it raises. How can aid "get through" to the grassroots? How can aid not further entrench a social order and exacerbate its inequalities? How well advised is the Ministry of Foreign Relations and Trade in its aid policy? How far can a government, even if it wished, divorce aid altruism from aid as an adjunct to foreign policy? What sorts of aid should non-government organisations (acting as the self-appointed consciences of the nation) support? What sort of "development" is possible in micro-states such as Tonga -- or meso-states such as New Zealand! -- and how relevant are concepts such as "class" and "nation" within the context of a highly integrated world order dominated politically by the superpowers and economically by multi-nationals? What room is there to manoeuvre?

Needs, his editor and publishers have provided us with an insight into the interplay between the "traditional" and "modern" in an Island society, and a useful account of some of the implications of New Zealand aid. We should seek answers to the questions raised if our Government is to maintain or seriously contemplate increasing its aid expenditure.

Postscript: *Despite promises to increase foreign aid, and after having poured $6 million into a programme to improve Tonga's banana industry, the New Zealand Government has changed its mind in a move policymakers admit will wreck Tonga's second-largest export industry. In July 1990 a preference scheme for Pacific Island bananas will end, and a 1987 Foreign Affairs report says the Tongan banana industry will end with it.* **(The Dominion)**

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Bruckner,Pascal. **The Tears of the White Man: Compassion as Contempt.** New York: Free Press. (Translated with an introduction by William R. Beer.) 1986. pp 244 + ix. £10.95.

Reviewed by Brian A. Ponter,
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'...to fight Third Worldism today is to continue the anti-colonial struggle of the past.' (p.132) This quotation comes from near the end of Bruckner's powerful, polemical and fascinating book. It presents very succinctly the nub of it and, *ipso facto*, the profoundly sympathetic political position of the author vis à vis the present plight and future of developing countries. The latter is important to remember because Bruckner savagely indicts attitudes and institutions in the Third and First worlds alike in his attempts to redress them.

The book was first published in 1983 under the title **Le sanglot de l'homme blanc.** Its purpose is to 'uncover the devious chicanery of the virtue professed by self-appointed partisans of the Third World, their self-admiring sophistry, their selfish alibis, and their dishonest bombast.' (p.6) The author, a French journalist, novelist and critic and an active member of International Action Against Hunger, succeeds admirably. While based largely upon French material much of it is readily applicable to similar phenomena elsewhere in the developed world.

The ears of non-Francophones are not yet accustomed to hearing the phrase, 'Third Worldism'. Writing like this from Bruckner will ensure that they will be before too long. Third Worldism is a reductionism, in which the economic poverty, disrupted social structures and wilting cultures of Third World societies are seen as resulting solely from the impact of Western capitalism, the agents of which include multinational corporations and foreign aid. In this book Bruckner identifies three types of Third Worldism which have flourished in Europe since about 1960. They are characterized by solidarity with, pity for and imitation of the Third World. He devotes a chapter to each of them.

In the formation and propagation of the first kind, solidarity, adherents emphasise that, "their fight is our fight". The fight is the struggle against capitalism, reified into a single, omnipresent and rampant ogre which oppresses all but those demonic few who hold its reins. This was achieved with the same ***léger de main*** used by dependency theorists for similar purposes. By expanding the concept of capitalism historically and geographically, by shifting its essential base from wage labour to profit, Parisian housewives, Bedouin camel drivers, Brazilian coffee pickers, Indian dobis, Hong Kong prostitutes, Greek sponge divers and Polynesian copra cutters become a 'homogeneous mass fighting against a handful of pot-bellied robbers with American accents.' (p.17) The second type attempts to trace a direct causal correlation between wealth and poverty: the price for the well-being and liberty enjoyed by people of the First World is the misery and oppression of people in the Third.

The third type of Third Worldism maintains that people in developing countries have a wisdom which those in the first have lost. Their lives are simple, wholesome and good, their social relationships loving, caring and sharing and close to nature. This idyllic picture is contrasted with the complex, individualistic, synthetic formality of the West. These three forms are closely interwoven. They are expressed by, 'a minority of intellectuals, militants and school teachers,' but largely ignored by most people who view the whole issue with 'placid indifference, if not hostility.' (p.6) Bruckner shows that this is not really a paradox: they are two faces of the same coin.

What, according to Bruckner, are the origins of Third Worldism? He identifies two general factors: a deep-seated and long established European belief in a Golden Age and, more recently established, a widespread guilt over

colonialism and attendant exploitation. But, as Bruckner notes, these phenomena have a much longer history than Third Worldism: it is necessary to be more precise.

In searching for the origins of the solidarity type of Third Worldism Bruckner pinpoints attempts by the French Left in general to salvage its platform - the main "worker" parties, the Socialists and the Communists, being the more moderate in this regard. (p.14) Throughout much of its history the French Left was not Third Worldist. Marx offered little ideological base for such a programme: colonization and imperialism were for him part of the maturation process of capitalism which would hasten the international establishment of socialism. In more recent times the French Communist Party supported the French Government's attempts to reassert its power in Indochina, opposed the liberation of Algeria and, much more recently, justified the invasion of Afghanistan by pointing to the feudal customs of that society. With the failure of the French working class to rally behind the banner of class revolution and the dissipation of their energy by, among other things, State welfare provisions, the Left externalized the class war, projecting it onto the international scene: the erstwhile colonies became a new world proletariat. The denunciation of Stalinism, Russian aggressive posturing and the fading of the Soviet model as a society to be imitated have all reduced the appeal of the classic Communist formula. This is the first of two ways in which the Third World has inspired the notion of renewal in the West. Bruckner labels this 'universalist'. (The second is 'differentialist' and will be mentioned below.)

With regard to his second, pitying, type of Third Worldism, Bruckner notes that at the same time as the world's people are being increasingly differentiated economically, rapidly improved communications throw us together more closely. The media, particularly television, nightly draw attention to the monstrous poverty which exists in some developing countries. The constant parade of gaunt, skeletal forms across our screens, together with frequent and heavy statistical bombardment (e.g. "In India someone dies of tuberculosis every minute;" "The price of a night in a hotel room for American tourists in Cancan is equivalent to twice the annual wage of the average citizen of Bangladesh;" "When I eat a pound of steak I could feed 30 people with the protein that was used to feed the animal") may convince us that our comfort is an abominable privilege. Empirical commonsense, as it so frequently does, triumphs over situational analysis. No mention is made of the differing bases

of socio-economic production in these societies which would go far in explaining the huge differences in consumption. Our threshold of tolerance gets raised higher and higher. Horror escalates long past the point of didactic usefulness because those whose lives are financially dependent upon the media are generally more concerned with impact than with influence. We become inured, if nor bored, by the continuous spectacle of abject poverty and brutality. 'The more widespread hunger is the greater is our indifference to its ravages ..... When catastrophe becomes an everyday thing, it ceases to be catastrophic.' (p.49-50)

According to the pitying formula the less the West suffers the more it must be responsible. '...the West is the great and only guilty party to all the evils of the world. In sum, Westerners are inhumane and criminal because they do not want others to exist and the causes of famine lie before us on the dinner table.' (p.65) It makes no difference that this accusation cannot be proved. Guilt is an easy way of bridging distinctions and doing away with intermediaries, because it draws a pitiless red line between their poverty and our sated appetites. This guilt has three vectors: history, the West is responsible for the exploitation and genocide of imperialism; contagion, Westerners are the direct descendants of the direct oppressors of the Third world and confirmation, if Westerners do not react with overwhelming remorse at every new third world tragedy or degradation. But 'pity becomes a form of hatred when it is the only basis for the image we have of the far-off other' (p.45): compassion becomes contempt.

The 'religion of compassionate sympathy' constructed on this guilt assumes that, as long as people are dying, children are hungry or prisons are full, no one has the right to be happy. It is a categorical imperative that imposes on us the duty to love our fellow human beings in the abstract, preferably when they are far away. This thinking contaminates all organisations providing assistance to the Third World. '...where suffering does not exist, it has to be created, and where it exists it has to be accentuated.' We must love our neighbour but misfortune is essential otherwise Earth would replace heaven.

In a chapter entitled, 'Imitation; or, Getting High on Paradise', Bruckner attempts to explain the significance of the concept of cultural relativism, still a near universal value among involved liberals, in current attitudes to the Third World. Because we have no measure of cultural values, let alone cultures; because we have allowed cultural legitimacy to be determined by cultural

uniqueness and because of the transfer to cultural units of the notion of respect for individual differences, we find ourselves defending customs that are cruel and barbaric. This is "differentialism", the second way in which the third world holds out the promise of renewal to the first. The stoning of adulterous women and the cutting off of thieves' hands in the Middle East; the sexual mutilation of young women in Africa and the massacre of untouchables in India have all been justified by the necessity of showing respect for individual differences, 'because they show a richness and otherness that are regarded as good in themselves.' (p.106) It is revealing that such arguments are rarely used in defence of the contemporary barbarities of European societies - except in South Africa where the segregation of Blacks, Coloureds and Whites is consistently presented in terms of respect for ethnicity. Bruckner similarly attacks the philosophy of cosmopolitanism - a variant of cultural relativism.

Such arguments lead Bruckner into his fourth chapter, 'Thou Shalt Hate Thy Neighbour as Thyself,' in which he discusses and deplores the ambiguity of Western masochism. Bruckner claims that the consequences of these attributes will be disastrous. 'It is futile to hope that the systematic cultivation of shame will miraculously open us up to far-off societies, and wipe away misunderstanding.' (p.147) He rebukes those who claim that the cultivation of guilt in first world people is the last chance to instill in them a degree of respect for the oppressed. To feel guilt is to be estranged from oneself and to the extent that we loathe ourselves and our own cultures we cut ourselves off from others and are thus less, not more, likely to appreciate the nature of their lives and ours and the influences which, sometimes separately, sometimes together, mould them. Bruckner quotes Nietzsche: 'He who hates himself must be feared, because we will be the victims of his vengeance. Let us therefore take care to teach him to love himself.' Here is one of the many points at which this book offers a particular lesson for New Zealanders. Maori and Pakeha alike need to deepen their awareness and understanding of their own cultures, more especially of the processes by which they evolved, if they are to draw closer to each other in mutual appreciation and respect.

What way forward does Bruckner offer? Westerners are enjoined to reject both a dishonestly clear conscience and a sterile self-denigration. They must become defenders of a 'two-fold tradition, that of solidarity and criticism', (p.140) allegiance and scepticism.

> Today, to ignore our own history, or to falsify it, is the way to ignorance of other peoples, to denial of their contribution ..... Any undertaking that sidesteps the balance between loyalty and disloyalty [to one's own history and culture] would revive the arrogant ethnocentrism of the Empire or the foolish masochism of Third Worldism. (p.157)

Bruckner's advice is to shun the

> absurd dilemma that would equate a love of the West with ignorance of the customs of the Southern hemisphere. Through reconciliation with the West as a culture, rather than a militant and imperialist master, we will be able to open a way toward other societies. (p.156)

But a

> universal and angelic and limitless fellowship would be disembodied, insufficient to deal with the misfortunes of any particular category or group of people....To be effective, solidarity has to be circumscribed and channeled... Universal brotherhood ... makes for cool relationships. (p.162-163)

To love all is to love only oneself.

Until it has been proven otherwise Westerners are not guilty of starving people of the Third World in the sense that murderers are guilty of their crimes. That does not, however, absolve them of responsibility for assisting in the process of correcting the gross global injustices of which famine is a part. Bruckner's final section is entitled, 'Love for Our Fellow Man'.

I appreciated this book immensely. It is penetrating and profound, polemical and provocative, courageous, yet also witty and amusing. It helped me considerably to put into a more sensitive and intelligible framework many of the doubts I have had regarding contemporary approaches to the Third World, my own and others. Free of academic jargon and moral platitudes it offers a most valuable critique of, and corrective to, current approaches based upon ill-founded and stunted liberalism, wayward sentimentality or simplistic socialism, or some amalgam of all three, which so often hijack discussion of First World-Third World relations and of inter-ethnic relations in general. I would strongly recommend this book to students of both.

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   Able, P. and Collins, S. 1961. 'Structuralism and the concept of class.' **Journal of Social Class**, 24(3), 138-159.

   Baker, R.S. 1948. **Sociology and Social Change**. London, Charles Publishing Co.

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