MASTER'S THESIS

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**COX, Heather Nowell. FROM HIGH SCHOOL
PUPIL TO UNIVERSITY STUDENT: A STUDY
OF UNDER AND OVER ACHIEVEMENT AMONG
FIRST YEAR STUDENTS AT A CANADIAN
UNIVERSITY.**

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FROM HIGH SCHOOL PUPIL TO UNIVERSITY STUDENT:
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CANADIAN UNIVERSITY

Thesis submitted in partial fulfilment
of the requirements of the degree of
Master of Arts

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ABSTRACT

This study was concerned with the adaptation of first year university students to the impact of college life. It took one measure of adaptation, the change in academic performance as measured by Senior Matriculation and first year university results, and looked at the way in which two extreme groups, the under and over achievers, had adapted to the new environment.

It looked at the student in the light of the pupil sub-culture of the high school, and the possible carry over in values when several of the local students attend a home town university.

It examined the students' definition of their role, the emphasis and amount of time they allocated to academic and social activities, their attitudes to success and failure, and their inter-action with the staff.

The students' future orientation was considered in relation to choice of major and occupation, the certainty of choice and the factors affecting it.

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PART I

INTRODUCTION

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

During recent years there has been an increase in the number of sociological and social psychological studies on the high school and the university. One area of interest has been the formal and informal organization of these institutions and the interaction between them. Studies which have attempted to describe the environment of the student and the influences of the institution on his learning processes and academic performance for example have recognized the need to look at the ways in which the policies and practices of the formal organization are mediated to the student through the channels of the informal organization. Similarly, studies of the culture of educational institutions have taken into account the values, beliefs and prescribed forms of behaviour in the sub-cultures of faculty and students. A considerable amount of work, if only at a descriptive level, has been done on campus sub-cultures and on their effects on the student's attitudes and behaviour. It has come to be recognized that certain of the student sub-cultures encourage high academic performance while others denigrate academic success.

The present study was concerned with the effects of the student sub-cultures of the high school and the university on the academic performance of a group of first year students at a Canadian university.¹ Many of the reported studies have been concerned either with the high school or with the college, this study combined information on the student's experiences in the university with information on his reported high school behaviour. It aimed to find out why, of two groups of students with similar academic performance in the past, i.e. at Senior Matriculation, one group can make a successful adjustment to the academic requirements at university and the other group fails. The terms under and over achiever will be used throughout the report, the former indicating the group who has made a poor adjustment to the academic requirements of the university as compared to their performance at Senior Matriculation, the latter to the group, who in terms of their high school performance, are doing well.

¹The pseudonym of Dorchester College will be used throughout the body of this report.

Theoretical Framework

In reported studies there appears to be consensus on the abstract definitions of under and over achievement, but divergencies in their operational definition.

Theoretically an over achiever exceeds an aptitude-based expectancy of academic performance; conversely, an under achiever falls below his expected performance. In this thesis under and over achievement are determined by a comparison of the students' academic achievement in university examinations with their senior matriculation results. Under achievers fall in the bottom 10 per cent in university examinations of the group of students with similar senior matriculation results; over achievers in the top 10 per cent. (For a more detailed discussion of under and over achievement see the following section on Methodology.)

Several studies have been undertaken dealing with achievement in the high school. While meeting minimum academic standards is necessary merely to maintain formal membership in school, it would appear that one of the factors determining the level of academic attainment is the norm of conformity set by the peer group to which the individual belongs. Dehaan and Havighurst suggest that the desire for peer acceptance where peer group norms do not favour academic excellence causes the able student to throttle down, so to speak.² As Brim suggests reviewing

²R. F. Dehaan and R. J. Havighurst, Educating Gifted Children (University of Chicago Press, 1957.)

the literature in this field:

One premise of the studies of student culture is that the socializing effect of participation in such a culture is very great, and is a less well recognized but perhaps a more important influence on the student's character than is the formal instruction in the classroom. Hence, descriptions of the different social climates of educational institutions and of the student roles therein helps to predict the informal learning by the student.³

Gordon in his study of the high school concludes that the basic motivating factor in the high school student is to achieve a satisfactory social position within the school and specifically within his peer group. He argues that the student's behaviour towards the formal aspects of the institution are best predicted from knowledge of his position in the informal student social system.⁴ Coleman also found the informal peer groups to be of major importance in the high schools in and around Chicago.⁵ On the basis of his study of ten varied types of high schools, he concludes that "the relative unimportance of academic achievement suggests that the adolescent sub-cultures in these schools exert a rather strong deterrent to academic achievement."⁶ Membership in the leading crowd in these

³O. G. Brim, Sociology and the Field of Education (New York: Russell Sage Foundation, 1958), p. 60.

⁴C. W. Gordon, The Social System of the High School, a Study in the Sociology of Adolescence (Glencoe: The Free Press, 1957), pp. 1-2.

⁵J. S. Coleman, The Adolescent Society. The Social Life of the Teen-Ager and Its Impact on Education (Glencoe: The Free Press, 1961), p. 11.

⁶Ibid., p. 265.

schools was achieved on the basis of prowess in athletics, extra-curricular activities, or in the field of personality or appearance rather than academic success. And yet, Coleman found that in general the members of the leading crowd more often intended to go to college than did the students as a whole. The question may be asked whether these students who have valued social success rather than academic achievements carry this over when they attend university. This thesis attempts to answer the question for a selected group of first year students.

The high school studies have been quoted because part of this study is concerned with the respondents' recent high school experiences. It also appears that the influence of the peer group is important at the university and the high school level equally. Cartwright and Robertson, after studying a group of students taking a business management course at college, conclude that:

In the ordinary academic setting, work groups are certainly not very visible. Nevertheless it seems highly likely that some grouping may exist among a body of students, and that different groups may set different norms. In particular, the norm of one informal group may be consonant with that of the institution; the norm of another may be at variance with it. . . . It is concluded that social factors may be as important as factors of individual difference in influencing academic performance.⁷

In view of this, it was hypothesized that over achievers would tend to emphasize the more serious academic aspects of their

⁷D. S. Cartwright and R. J. Robertson, "Memberships in Cliques and Achievement", American Journal of Sociology, Vol. LXVI, No. 5 (March 1961), pp. 441-442.

role as students and would tend to identify with the norms of the formal organization, e.g. placing a value on academic success. They would also tend to associate with other students of similar outlook. On the basis of Coleman's work, one would expect that the over achievers would not consider themselves to be part of the leading crowd at high school, a distinction which would be more applicable to under achievers. It is difficult to extrapolate from this to a prediction of activity at university. One would expect on the basis of Coleman's findings that the over achievers at college would tend to give priority to the academic requirements, and might consequently be less active in social events. However, certain studies have shown that campus leaders receive higher grades than non-leaders and have higher academic aptitude test scores.⁸ Similar differences have been found between participants and non-participants.⁹ Malleson speaking of students enrolled at University College, London, said that there was a considerable group of students who seemed to take very little part in university life at all. However, it was found that these students had a higher failure rate

⁸H. M. Hodges, "Campus Leaders and Non-Leaders", Social Science Res., Vol. 37 (1953), pp.251-255.

E. H. Wilkens, "On the Distribution of Extra-Curricular Activities", School and Society, Vol. 51 (1940), pp. 651-656.

⁹J. L. Stright, "Some Factors Affecting College Success", Journal of Educational Psychology, Vol. 38 (1947), pp. 232-240.

than the more active participants: "At University College successful students tend to be all-rounders."¹⁰

It would appear that the evidence is not conclusive one way or the other; but it is suggested that though there may be students who can make a successful combination of academic achievement and extra-curricular activities, for many students there will be a conflict, and in this situation it will be the over achievers who will tend to give priority to the requirements of their academic role.

Burton Clark and Martin Trow have developed a four-fold typology for studying student sub-cultures, and for classifying individuals at university.¹¹ They dichotomize students on the basis of their involvement with ideas and their identification with college. The academic sub-culture is composed of students who identify with college and are positively involved with ideas. These are the serious students who identify with the intellectual concerns of the serious faculty members, and consider their main goal at college to pursue knowledge and to gain a general education. In the face of the demands of the occupational world, the academic sub-culture is often over-shadowed by the

¹⁰W. Malleon, "Student Performance at University College, London", University Quarterly, Vol. 12, No. 3 (1958), pp. 299-300.

¹¹B. R. Clark, Educating the Expert Society (San Francisco: Chandler Publishing Co., 1962), Chapter 6.
M. A. Trow, "Administrative Implications of Analyses of Campus Cultures", The Study of Campus Cultures, Fourth Annual Institute on Collegiate Self Study (University of California, Berkeley, July 24-27, 1962), pp. 81-94.

vocational sub-culture in which the student neither identifies with the college nor is he involved with ideas, being resistant to intellectual demands beyond those required to pass courses. Clark concludes that for several reasons this has become the dominant mode of many campus cultures, particularly in the larger centres. In contrast to this conforming pattern stands the non-conformist sub-culture whose members pursue the quest for their own identity, and who are variously labelled "intellectuals", "radicals", "alienated", and "bohemians". They are concerned with ideas both inside and outside the formal organization but do not identify themselves with the college, often showing a critical detachment to it. The fourth group, the collegiate, identifies with the college but is not involved with the ideas circulated in it; it is associated rather with the fun cult and the social life. Clark suggests that the individual's primary orientation is to one of these four types. One assumes that they are not mutually exclusive for the individual, e.g. the student who is mainly involved with the academic sub-culture might also be concerned about his vocational future, and the hard working student, as all the popular American magazines tell a new class of freshmen every fall, needs time out for recreation. One would hypothesize that the over achieving student would be more inclined to the academic, and to some extent, the vocational sub-cultures rather than to the collegiate which might hold more attractions for the under achievers. However, several

factors need to be borne in mind in making such a generalization. In the first place, partly due to the growing emphasis on training and qualifications, the vocational sub-culture is coming to be the dominant campus sub-culture, and the academic, with its association with the cultivated man, is losing ground, as is the collegiate sub-culture bent on fun and not taking life too seriously. One would expect then that this trend away from the collegiate cult would hold true for both under and over achievers although possibly in varying degrees. Secondly, it may be a little difficult to speak of the possibility of identification with the college in a largely commuting college. Riesman and Jencks speaking of the students at State College, California, comment that: "they had not come to State in order to be its alumni, nor did they regard their undergraduate years as a stage of life through which they passed on the way to adulthood. Education did not appear to be an initiation rite but a consumer good."¹²

And thirdly, there is some evidence to suggest that the perceived image of the successful student may vary between faculties in the college itself. Brown and Dubois made a study of two groups of high ability freshman men drawn from the Engineering faculty and from Sciences and

¹²D. Riesman and C. Jencks, "The Viability of the American College", The American College, ed. N. Sanford (New York: Wiley, 1962), p. 174.

Humanities at Iowa University.¹³ They concluded that the type of behaviour which was highly rewarded in the Engineering faculty, where the students had already made a vocational commitment to a profession, was an inclination for hard work, effective study methods, energetic action and a tendency towards conformity. The successful Science and Humanities students who were in faculties where no occupational commitment was required at the outset of their university career, could be more flexible, and accept the aims of acquiring a general education. Using Clark's typology, one would suggest that the group of engineers were oriented in terms of the norms of the vocational sub-culture, while the Science and Humanities students were more inclined to adopt the attitudes of the academic sub-culture; and yet both groups of students rated high on achievement.

As well as being a member of a peer group which may influence the student's behaviour in certain prescribed ways, he is also an individual with his own values, attitudes, ambitions and motivations. One area in which the student has to make some positive decision in line with his attitudes and ambitions, as far as possible, is that of occupational choice. Closely related to this, as Sanford points out, is the student's choice of major, for:

¹³F. G. Brown and T. E. Dubois, "Correlates of Academic Success for High Ability Freshman Men", Personnel and Guidance Journal, Vol. 42, No. 6 (February, 1964), pp. 603-607.

Often it is the first time that he consciously commits himself to long-range goals. . . . The choice usually has implications respecting his future vocation, and thus he approaches, perhaps for the first time, a socially defined identity that has an aspect of being irreversible.¹⁴

There is some controversy as to the desirability of an early choice of major and of vocation. Erikson suggests that: "In general it is the inability to settle on an occupational identity which disturbs young people."¹⁵ This inability to choose may manifest itself in the development of a sense of self-diffusion characterized by purposelessness, unwillingness to be productive, and an inability to get involved which, from the educator's point of view, is undesirable.

Caplow cautions against an early occupational choice as he suggests that the bases for choice in adolescence are often trivial, and made at a time when the individual is remote from the world of work.

Increasingly then, occupational choices are made in the schoolroom, under the impersonal pressure of the curriculum, and remote from many of the realities of the working situation. In these circumstances, it is hard for many people to choose at all, and difficult for many to be certain of their choices once they have been made.¹⁶

¹⁴N. Sanford, "Student Society and Student Culture", The American College, p. 66.

¹⁵E. H. Erikson, "Growth and Crises of the Healthy Personality", Personality in Nature, Society and Culture, eds. C. Kluckhohn, H. A. Murray and D. M. Schneider (New York: Kropf, 1956), pp. 185-225.

¹⁶T. Caplow, The Sociology of Work (University of Minnesota Press, 1954), p. 220.

Ginzberg suggests that occupational choice is not a once-for-all decision but that the growing child passes through several phases, being differently motivated in his occupational choice at each stage.¹⁷ At first, in the fantasy period, which generally lasts from early childhood to puberty, the child chooses occupations which are most spectacular and unchildlike in an effort to identify with adults. In early adolescence, he passes into the tentative period when he realizes that he has got to make a choice on his occupational future. At this stage, there is little knowledge of what the occupations entail, even though they may be given serious concern. Finally, the individual makes a choice with the intention of realizing it in actuality and the choice becomes crystallized. Although these stages are chronologically progressive, it is possible for there to be backwards and forwards movement between adjacent stages. Case, for example, expands Ginzberg's thesis at one point and suggests that it is not sufficient to accept ostensibly direct and overt indications by a respondent that an occupation is crystallized as, subsequently, frequent shifts in choice may take place, indicating that it was not a "true" but a "pseudo" crystallization.¹⁸ As far as relating this to the thesis, it was hypothesized that over achievers

¹⁷E. Ginzberg, S. W. Ginsburg, S. Axelrod and J. L. Herma, Occupational Choice; An Approach to a General Theory (New York: Columbia University Press, 1951).

¹⁸H. M. Case, "Two Kinds of Crystallized Occupational Choice Behavior", American Sociological Review, Vol. 19, No. 1, 1954, pp. 85-87.

would be more likely to have made a realistic choice in the Ginzberg sense, i.e. one based on knowledge and consonant with aptitude which would give them some goal to motivate action. On the other hand, there are indications that successful students maintain a certain flexibility rather than a rigidity as far as occupational choice is concerned. Malleeson suggests, for example:

It seems that where students claim to have chosen a career at a very early age, in some cases long before they can have any idea of its implications, they do less well than those who come to university with an apparently open mind.¹⁹

One would expect then, that over achievers would be more likely than under achievers to make occupational decisions in the light of their present knowledge and ability but maintain a certain open-mindedness on the subject.

As far as sexual differences are concerned, there is some evidence to suggest that men and women regard college and their occupational future rather differently. Beardslee and O'Dowd suggest that only a small percentage of women are motivated to succeed in the academic aspects of college life as they are rarely motivated by the possibility of a long term career which would justify a modicum of rational planning.²⁰ The majority of women expect to

¹⁹N. Malleeson, "Student Performance at University College, London", University Quarterly, Vol. 12, No. 3 (May 1958), p. 299.

²⁰D. C. Beardslee and D. D. O'Dowd, "Students and the Occupational World", The American College, pp. 527-626.

marry and become dependent on their husbands for their status and style of life; they are not generally prepared for independent economic activity outside the home. Alice Leopold, in an extensive national survey of women graduates in 1955, 1956, 1957, found that the largest group expected to leave the labour market when marriage or family responsibilities required.²¹ Of the remainder, a small core, varying from one-quarter to one-fifth in the various years, were the career minded graduates; the others expected to work indefinitely, but were not interested in a career. This contrasts with the attitudes of the men, the majority of whom regard college as preparation for a life-time's career.

Although it may be argued that the attitudes to women's employment has been and is changing, Hewer and Neybeck conclude, on the basis of their survey of the freshman class at University of Minnesota in 1959, that:

Entering College freshmen in a large mid-western university most frequently accept the traditional and nurturant role for women. There is little evidence of a cultural change. In fact, there may be a denial of it. The majority of these women believe their place is in the home. They seem to want it that way, and agree to venture out only when they can earn money to increase the comfort and well-being of their families.²²

²¹A. K. Leopold, "Today's Women College Graduates", Personnel and Guidance Journal, Vol. 38, No. 4 (December 1959), pp. 280-284.

²²v. H. Hewer and G. Neubeck, "Attitudes of College Students Toward Employment of Married Women", Personnel and Guidance Journal, Vol. 42, No. 6 (February 1964), p. 591.

The survey on What College Students Think found that for most of the women, family life decidedly took preference over working at a career.²³ Six per cent of the women expected the most important satisfactions in life to come from their professional activities, as compared to 28 per cent of the men at all the colleges polled.

In view of this, it would seem that the woman who does well at college is going against the dominant norm of her sex. It may be that she identifies with the men more than the women and takes them as a reference group. There may be several reasons for this "deviance" including a high native intelligence, encouragement from home, or failure socially. It was hypothesized that over achieving women would be more likely to define the university in academic or vocational terms, and approach their studies more seriously than the under achieving women, who, in conformity with the norms of their female peer group, had more leeway to participate in the social activities of college and possibly use the university as a marriage market place. This latter point is suggested by Douvan and Kaye, particularly for the lower middle class girl who may see this as a form of social mobility.²⁴

²³R. K. Goldsen, M. Rosenberg, R. M. Williams and E. A. Suchman, What College Students Think (Princeton: D. Van Nostrand Co. Inc., 1960), p. 48.

²⁴E. Douvan and C. Kaye, "Motivational Factors in College Entrance", The American College, pp. 199-224.

There is some suggestion that parents tend to see daughters realizing their position in society through marriage rather than through their career. In an exploratory survey conducted with twenty families in a suburb of Boston where the majority of parents had both had college education, Aberle and Naegele discovered differences in parental attitudes to the futures of their sons and daughters.²⁵ While the fathers, without exception, planned on college education for their sons, they were more willing to recognize that their daughters might not want to go or might drop out. In any case, they did not see their daughters occupying positions in the occupational structure for any length of time.

When initially questioned about their childrens' occupations the fathers said they had no plans for their future. However, further questioning revealed that "no plans" meant that the occupation would be acceptable provided it was a middle class occupation, i.e. in the professions or business. The influence of parents' wishes or attitudes on the children may have a pronounced effect; partly because of the influential role of the parent, particularly in the formulation of the children's ideas, and partly because the influence is so subtle, possibly unknown even to the parents unless they stop to question their motives or ideas. It may be that even in general

²⁵D. F. Aberle and K. D. Naegele, "Middle Class Fathers' Occupational Role and Attitudes Towards Children", The Family, ed. Bell and Vogel (Glencoe: The Free Press, 1960), pp. 126-136.

discussion about neighbours and colleagues the parents are conveying their attitudes toward occupations and delineating prescribed and proscribed occupations to the children.

There are several ways in which the parents', particularly the father's, occupation and attitudes may influence the children. As Hill concludes after a four year longitudinal study of high school pupils: "one of the most potent determinants of college proneness are in the cultural and educational traditions, ambitions and hopes of the family. A history of college attendance in the family . . . is a strong determiner of proneness."²⁶

On the other hand, it has also been suggested that parents may realize their ambitions through their children and compensate for their own failure through their children's success. "Almost all middle class parents," as Caplow points out, "expect that their children will not select menial, unskilled, or semi-skilled occupations, and a considerable proportion pursue the conscious goal of raising their children--through education--to a status higher than their own."²⁷ In a college in which many of the students are in daily contact with their homes, the parental hopes, expectations and values may be of considerable importance to the student because of continued reinforcement. It was hypothesized that there would be a greater likelihood for the

²⁶G. E. Hill, "College Proneness, a Guidance Problem", Personnel and Guidance Journal, Vol. 33 (1954), p. 71.

²⁷T. Caplow, The Sociology of Work, p. 215.

parents of over achieving students to give support to, or at the least, not stand in opposition to the student's choice of occupation, or even his lack of decision.

The entering student is in a unique position; he is uninitiated in the ways of the college but comes as a graduate of another educational institution, the high school. He has to learn the subtle nuances of difference in his role as a university student to that of his role as a high school pupil. This involves adjustment to the academic, social and intellectual norms as he perceives them and as they are mediated to him through the faculty and the peer group. This thesis is concerned with two groups of first year students at Dorchester College, those who are achieving well in terms of their high school performance and those who are not doing as well. It aims in the light of recent research to examine the factors involved in academic success at college and the reasons for failure.

CHAPTER 2

METHODOLOGY

The respondents were selected from full time students enrolled in first year at Dorchester College in the academic year 1963-64. In order to fall within the universe the student had also to satisfy the following criteria:

- 1) Successful completion of Senior Matriculation
- 2) At a high school in Ontario or Quebec
- 3) During the past academic year

The following table gives a detailed breakdown of all first year students and the reasons for their inclusion in or exclusion from the universe.

TABLE I

FIRST YEAR FULL TIME STUDENTS ENROLLED AT DORCHESTER
COLLEGE 1963-1964 AND THE REASONS FOR THEIR
INCLUSION IN OR EXCLUSION FROM THE UNIVERSE

TYPE	#	INCLUDED	COMMENTS
Completed Senior Matriculation 1963 in Ontario or Quebec	360	**	Universe
Dragging subjects from Senior Matriculation, 1963	140	X	Only partial completion of Senior Matriculation. Excluded to allow comparability with other universities where this is not the picture.
Into Year I, not from Ontario or Quebec	30	X	Difficulty of comparison of grade point average on Senior Matriculation with that of Ontario or Quebec.
Into Year I from other universities	37	X	Not attending high school last year.
First year students repeating first year	53	X	Not attending high school last year.
Returning Year I, changed major	15	X	Not attending high school last year.
Previous Dorchester students, not attending last year	24	X	Not attending high school last year.
Returning Year I, into Engineering from other faculties	6	X	Not attending high school last year.
Mature matriculants	8	X	Not attending high school last year.
Qualifying year into Year I	125	X	Not attending high school last year.
TOTAL	798		

Figures obtained from the Registrar's office, Dorchester College.

In order to arrive at a measure of under and over achievement two results were used, the student's Senior Matriculation results and his grade point average on the Christmas examinations. The students were divided into ten groups on the basis of their Senior Matriculation results, e.g. 57-60 per cent, 60-62 per cent. Within each group the students were ranked on the basis of their Christmas examination results. A decision was made to sample within the top 10 per cent and bottom 10 per cent of each group, the former to be called over achievers, the bottom group to be called under achievers. Under and over achievement therefore was a measure of performance at university compared to performance at high school. Although the high school average has certain limitations it has been found in several studies to be the best single predictor of the first semester's performance, more reliable even than intelligence.¹

As there were 360 students in the initial sampling frame a list of approximately seventy students was drawn up divided evenly between under and over achievers from which a sample of fifty students (twenty-five under achievers and

¹F. G. Brown and T. E. Dubois found high school average and scores on the Math. placement test were the best predictors of high academic success in a study at Iowa State University as brought out in "Correlates of Academic Success for High Ability Freshman Men", Personnel and Guidance Journal, Vol. 42, No. 6, (1964), pp. 604-607.

J. H. McCormick and W. Asher, surveying the studies of university achievement quote several in "Aspects of High School Record Related to First Semester Grade Point Average", which all suggest that the high school average is better than any other predictive measure including intelligence. Personnel and Guidance Journal, Vol. 42, No. 7 (March 1964), pp. 699-704.

twenty-five over achievers) would be drawn. This allowed a drop-out or refusal rate of around 30 per cent. It was felt that there might be a high refusal rate for several reasons, the most important being that the students were being asked to give approximately an hour of their time only a few weeks before final examinations. (The interviewing could not proceed until the Christmas examination results had been made available and the grade point average calculated.) In fact there were no refusals to be interviewed and only one student who said he would attend did not arrive. The respondents were not told the exact nature of the study, i.e. that it was a comparison between under and over achievers, but they were told that the interviewer was in the Sociology Department and would be submitting the findings in a thesis.

This unanticipated high response rate had an effect on the characteristics of the resulting sample. It was thought that the under achievers, particularly those who were failing everything would be less willing to be interviewed at this time than the over achieving students. Special care was taken to contact the under achieving students at the bottom of the list first, i.e. those who had the lowest grade point average at Senior Matriculation. In fact these students generally showed a welcome willingness to be interviewed. The result can be seen in Table 2. In fact the students are not equally distributed with the same number of under and over achieving students falling in each group, but there is a tendency for the under achieving students to be over-represented in the

bottom groups at Senior Matriculation, and for the over achieving students to be more highly represented in the top groups at Senior Matriculation.

TABLE 2

BREAKDOWN OF FIRST YEAR STUDENTS ON THE BASIS OF
THEIR SENIOR MATRICULATION RESULTS, AND NUMBERS
EACH GROUP INCLUDED IN THE SAMPLE
(by men and women and under and over achievers)

Senior Matriculation Average %	No. of students in universe	UNDER ACHIEVERS			OVER ACHIEVERS		
		Total	Men	Women	Total	Men	Women
	#	#	#	#	#	#	#
57 - 59.9	(60)	5	4	1	4	3	1
60 - 61.9	(44)	3	3	-	1	1	-
62 - 64.9	(44)	3	1	2	-	-	-
65 - 66.9	(39)	4	3	1	3	2	1
67 - 69.9	(44)	4	2	2	2	1	1
70 - 71.9	(24)	1	1	-	3	2	1
72 - 74.9	(31)	3	1	2	3	2	1
75 - 76.9	(13)	1	1	-	2	1	1
77 - 79.9	(26)	-	-	-	4	2	2
80 plus	(17)	1	1	-	3	1	2
TOTAL	(342)	25	17	8	25	15	10
Withdrawn	11						
Absent	7						
	(360)						

It might be argued that the differences reported in the body of the report between under and over achievers might in effect be merely a reflection of the sampling bias. That this is not the case can be seen from the following examples which are drawn from the findings which showed a significant difference between under and over achievers. If the differences are due to a factor associated with high grades at Senior Matriculation a comparison between the upper and lower 50 per cent on Senior Matriculation results should also show a significant difference; if there is no significant difference one must assume that there is some other factor operating.

One of the areas in which there were considerable reported differences between under and over achievers was that of study habits. The following table gives a comparison of the under and over achievers, and the upper and lower 50 per cent in Senior Matriculation results on their reported work habits.

Whereas there was a significant difference at the .01 level between under and over achievers who reported working consistently hard all term, there was no significant difference between the upper and lower halves at Senior Matriculation.

TABLE 3

COMPARISON BETWEEN UNDER AND OVER ACHIEVERS AND TOP
AND BOTTOM FIFTY PER CENT AT SENIOR MATRICULATION
ON THEIR REPORTED WORK HABITS

	Under achievers #	Over achievers #	Senior Matriculation	
			Bottom 50% #	Top 50% #
I worked hard most of the term	5	16	10	11
I worked quite hard but mainly round exam time	9	4	7	6
I worked fairly hard on occasion but not very much of the time	6	3	4	5
I didn't do very much work	5	2	4	3
Number of students	25	25	25	25

Two areas in which the under achieving students were more active were in leading crowd activities at high school, and dating practices as compared to their friends.

TABLE 4

COMPARISON BETWEEN UNDER AND OVER ACHIEVERS AND TOP
AND BOTTOM FIFTY PER CENT AT SENIOR MATRICULATION
IN PARTICIPATION AT LEADING CROWD ACTIVITIES
IN THE HIGH SCHOOL

	Under achievers	Over achievers	Senior Matriculation	
			Bottom 50%	Top 50%
	#	#	#	#
In leading crowd	19	9	15	13
Not in leading crowd	5	11	7	9
Don't think there was a leading crowd	1	5	3	3
Number of students	25	25	25	25

It can be seen from the above that the differences between under and over achieving students are not attributable to differences in Senior Matriculation.

Similarly when one compares dating practices among under and over achievers, one under achiever admits dating less than his friends compared to ten over achievers. When the students are dichotomized on the basis of Senior Matriculation results six of the lower half report that they date less than their friends compared to five of the upper half.

Other examples could be given which also suggest that differences in the characteristics of the sample do not account for the differences which are reported in the text between under and over achievers.

A further question which must be considered concerns the validity of the students' response. In general the

interviewer found that the students were cooperative and not reticent in venturing information. The majority of students appeared to identify the interviewer as someone they could talk to freely, rather than a distant figure requiring "prestige" answers. For some of the under achieving students it may be that they regarded the interviewer as someone they could talk to about the problems of failure without being criticized or ostracized. It seems unlikely from the interviews that the respondents gave exaggerated responses. However, if there was any over-reporting it is interesting the direction which it took, under achievers tending to emphasize social activities, over achievers academic activities.

As under and over achievement were based on the results of Senior Matriculation and Christmas examinations, both of which were known to the student, it may be that part of the findings of this thesis are the students' subjective reaction to experiencing a large change upward or downward in the marks they are getting. A study in which the measure of expected achievement was unknown to students might yield different results.

The Representativeness of the Study Sample

A comparison of the sample with statistics contained in another student survey at Dorchester College in the 1963-64 session (which covered approximately 80 per cent of the students in first year and qualifying year) shows a high degree of comparability. As the study sample was confined to first year students who had completed their Senior Matriculation in Ontario or Quebec, a similar group was selected from the student survey, the tables which follow give comparative data for the two groups. Approximately 9 per cent of the students are excluded from the student survey as they had graduated from high school outside Ontario or Quebec. Of the 9 per cent, 6 per cent had graduated from high schools outside Canada.

TABLE 5

COMPARISON BETWEEN THE PERCENTAGE OF MEN AND WOMEN
IN THE STUDY SAMPLE AND THE STUDENT SURVEY AT
DORCHESTER COLLEGE, 1963 - 1964

	Student survey*	STUDY SAMPLE		
		Total	Under achievers	Over achievers
	%	%	%	%
Men	67	64	68	60
Women	33	36	32	40
TOTAL	100	100	100	100
Number of students	399	50	25	25

*For purposes of comparability with the study sample, only students from Ontario and Quebec are included in the student survey figures in this and the following tables.

TABLE 6

COMPARISON BETWEEN THE FACULTY ENROLMENT OF STUDENTS
IN THE STUDY SAMPLE AND THOSE IN THE STUDENT SURVEY

	Student survey	STUDY SAMPLE		
		Total	Under achievers	Over achievers
	%	%	%	%
Arts	56	58	60	56
Science	21	20	16	24
Commerce	7	8	12	4
Engineering	13	12	12	12
Other	3	2	-	4
TOTAL	100	100	100	100
Number of students	399	50	25	25

TABLE 7

COMPARISON BETWEEN FATHERS' OCCUPATIONS ON THE
BLISHEN SCALE IN THE STUDY SAMPLE
AND IN THE STUDENT SURVEY*

	Student survey	STUDY SAMPLE		
		Total	Under achievers	Over achievers
	%	%	%	%
Class I	7	12	12	12
Class II	58	46	40	52
Class III	10	14	16	12
Class IV	5	10	12	8
Class V	15	10	16	4
Class VI	3	6	4	8
Class VII	1	2	-	4
No answer	1	-	-	-
TOTAL	100	100	100	100
Number of students	399	50	25	25

*Based on B. Blishen, "The Construction and Use of an Occupational Scale", Canadian Society, eds. B. Blishen et alia (Toronto: MacMillan & Co. of Canada, 1961), pp. 477-485.

TABLE 8

COMPARISON BETWEEN HOME TOWN RESIDENCE OF STUDENTS
IN STUDY SAMPLE AND STUDENT SURVEY

	Student survey	STUDY SAMPLE		
		Total	Under achievers	Over achievers
	%	%	%	%
Ottawa	57	66	68	64
Ottawa Valley, Ontario	14	6	4	8
Ottawa Valley, Quebec	1	-	-	-
Other Ontario	28	28	28	28
Other Quebec	*	-	-	-
TOTAL	100	100	100	100
Number of students	399	50	25	25

* - less than 1 per cent.

P A R T I I

STUDENT IN TRANSITION FROM HIGH SCHOOL
TO UNIVERSITY

PART II

STUDENT IN TRANSITION FROM HIGH SCHOOL TO UNIVERSITY

Introduction

The study is concerned with students after two important decisions have been made. In the first place they have remained in high school to the point where they have successfully obtained Senior Matriculation. In the second place they have entered university. Chapter 3 is concerned with some of the factors in the students' environment which predispose him towards selecting university education.

Chapters 4 and 5 are more specifically concerned with the pre-university experiences of the student at the high school. Chapter 4 draws on the findings of those who have studied the culture of the high school and compares their findings with the results of the present study. Particular attention has been given to the influence of the peer groups in the high school as they have been found to be of considerable importance in influencing not only the pupil's social activities, but also his academic performance, a factor which is of considerable relevance in a study of under and over achievement.

Chapter 5 is concerned with the degree of contact the high school pupil maintains with others of his peer group who have come to Dorchester College. It has been suggested, for example, that the continuing contact with the home and the peer group may limit the liberalizing influences of the college by reinforcing the students' pre-university attitudes and values.

CHAPTER 3

THE ENTERING FRESHMAN

Some Social and Socio-Economic Characteristics

It was estimated in 1963 that of all students entering Grade 2 in Canada approximately 13 per cent would continue till their Senior Matriculation year, just under 10 per cent would enter university, and between 5 and 7 per cent would graduate.¹ This chapter is concerned with the select group of those who have made successful application to university, and examines some social factors which pre-dispose certain of the high school cohort toward university education. It concentrates in particular on socio-economic status of the parents and sexual differentiation of the students, factors which have been found to be closely associated with university application and attendance. Some consideration is also given to the local selectivity of the student population.

Given the aim of "educating the expert society",² the ideal solution is for the most able students who can profit from college education to go on to university. There are several indications that this is not always the case. In his foreward to one of the reports in the Atkinson Study

¹Based on figures given in Canada Year Book, 1963-64, Dominion Bureau of Statistics, p. 335.

²Title of a work by Professor Burton Clark.

on the Utilization of Student Resources, the Director of the Department of Educational Research in Ontario comments that: "Of our most able students in some aspects of aptitude and achievement, for example, little more than half go on to university; of our less able students, it is embarrassingly evident that too many do go on to university."³ Hall and McFarlane, studying the post high school careers of a group of pupils in an Ontario community, conclude that two-thirds of the students who went to university from Paulend were less than brilliant as far as I.Q. was concerned (i.e. had a measured I.Q. of less than 120), whereas, of all the brilliant students in the survey (i.e. I.Q. over 120), one in five reached university.⁴ This possibly accounts, to some extent, for the officially accepted drop-out rate from Canadian universities of approximately 30 per cent.⁵

One of the factors which appears consistently in studies of university pre-disposition is the social class of the parents, the higher the social status the greater the

³Atkinson Study of Utilization of Student Resources, Report No. 4, "Ontario Grade 13 Students: Their Aptitude, Achievement and Immediate Destination", Department of Educational Research, Ontario College of Education, (Toronto, 1958), Foreward iii.

⁴O. Hall and B. A. McFarlane, "Transition from School to Work", Department of Labour, Report No. 10 (December 1962), p. 38.

⁵This estimate was quoted by T. H. Matthews, the Registrar at McGill University in his address on Academic Failures to the National Conference of Canadian Universities (November 12th to 14th, 1956). Published as "Canada's Crisis in Higher Education", ed. C. T. Bissell.

likelihood of university attendance.⁶ There are several possible reasons for this, one of these being the considerable financial outlay required for university education. At Dorchester College the fees for an average first year student in the 1963-64 session, ranged between \$400 and \$500. This figure does not include books and instruments, meals, clothes, lodging or entertainment, which need to be taken into consideration in assessing expenditure. Although the majority of students take paid summer employment, this is often insufficient to cover all expenses. Less than one in ten of the respondents interviewed said that they received no financial help from their parents during their first year at college, slightly over one in five said that their parents were paying for everything. Many of the parents of college students have to be prepared to support their children through college to some extent or, at the very least, to supply free room and board. For the higher social classes with larger incomes and smaller families this is less of a strain than the lower classes where the children's earnings may be required to supplement the family income.

As well as the positive advantage of financial support where necessary, the student of parents of high

⁶N. Rogoff in a nationwide survey of over 35,000 seniors in 500 schools, found that the percentage of students planning to go on to college ranged from a high of 72 per cent of all the students in the top socio-economic group to a low of 24 per cent among the bottom group, with the others ranged in between. "Local Social Structure and Educational Selection", Education, Economy and Society, eds. A. H. Halsey, J. Floud, C. A. Anderson (Glencoe: The Free Press, 1961), p. 246.

socio-economic status is more likely to have grown up with, and internalized, the value that education is desirable. Douvan and Kaye suggest that university may be such an "obvious" choice for the upper and upper middle class children that one has to look at why the children choose not to go.⁷ To quote Caplow's salient comment again: "Almost all middle class parents expect that their children will not select menial, unskilled or semi-skilled occupations, and a considerable proportion pursue the conscious goal of raising their children--through education--to a status higher than their own."⁸ Maintenance of the parental status or mobility to a higher position often requires university education.

In assessing the social class of the parents in the sample, occupation was taken as a major indicator of the parent's rank in the society, in line with many of the objective studies of socio-economic status.⁹ All respondents were asked their father's occupation in some detail; in two cases the mother's occupation was obtained where she, due to death

⁷E. Douvan and C. Kaye, "Motivational Factors in College Entrance", The American College, p. 200.

⁸T. Caplow, The Sociology of Work, p. 215.

⁹For Canada: B. Blishen, "The Construction and Use of an Occupational Class Scale", Canadian Society, eds. Blishen, Naegle and Porter (Toronto: MacMillan Co. of Canada, 1961), pp. 477-485.

For United States: "N.O.R.C. Jobs and Occupations", Class Status and Power, eds. Lipset and Bendix (Glencoe: The Free Press, 1951), pp. 411-425.

For United Kingdom: J. Hall and D. C. Jones, "Social Grading of Occupations", British Journal of Sociology, Vol. 1 (1950), pp. 31-55.

or divorce, was the functioning head of the household. The occupations were classified using the Blishen scale designed for use in Canada.¹⁰

There is a very clear association between social class of the parents and attendance at college. Among all students in the sample, 65 per cent come into Classes I and II on the Blishen scale, whereas Classes I and II account for only approximately 12 per cent of the labour force. Conversely only 4 per cent of the sample fell into the bottom two classes although almost half of the labour force falls into these two categories. (For a more detailed breakdown by occupational class see the section on Methodology.)

The over-all incidence of high status occupations among the parents of the respondents is partly due to the numbers of college educated fathers among them. Out of the fifty respondents, twenty-one of the fathers (42 per cent) had received university education, a gross over-representation when one considers that the proportion of the parents' age group attending college was only 8 per cent.¹¹ That these parents had been successful in their careers can be seen by the fact that all of them had occupations falling within Classes I and II of the Blishen scale. While it is known that university educated persons have better life chances

¹⁰Blishen, op. cit., p. 85.

¹¹Figures obtained from Census of Canada, 1961, Vol. 2-1-9, Table 80. Estimating that fathers of respondents fell in age bracket 45-54 in 1961, of this age group 4.6 per cent completed college, with a further 3.3 per cent having some college education.

in the work world generally, it is not known whether the successful university graduate is more likely to encourage his children to attend university than his less successful college confrere.¹² Out of the twenty-one fathers in the sample who had received college education, only three were reported to have left university before completing their studies, even though they would in all probability, have been attending college during the depression years when funds were scarce. It would be interesting to know, in general, if there are any significant differences between college educated fathers who completed their courses, and those, who for one reason or another dropped out, in terms of the positive encouragement that they give their children with regard to university education.

There were no significant differences between under and over achievers in the level of the mother's education, but there did tend to be differences between the men and women in reported education of the mothers beyond the high school level. Ten out of the thirty-two men had mothers who had taken some additional form of vocational training after high school, business courses, nursing school and teachers'

¹²E. Havemann and P. S. West in They Went to College found that 84 per cent of their sample of 9,000 college graduates could be classified as professionals and proprietors, managers and executives, while only 16 per cent of male non-college graduates could be put in this category. (New York: Harcourt Brace, 1952), pp. 26-27.

Similarly, W. L. Warner and J. C. Abegglen found 57 per cent of a sample of 8,000 business leaders were college graduates, although only 7 per cent of male population over 30 at that time were college graduates. Occupational Mobility in United States Business and Industry (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1955).

college being most frequently mentioned. Only two out of the eighteen women had mothers with similar training. On the other hand, five women (four of them over achievers) had mothers with university education as compared to three men. Although the numbers are too small to draw any conclusions, a larger sample might demonstrate that the mother's university education is a critical factor in influencing the daughter's orientation toward college, and in determining her progress once at college.

The sexual inequality in college attendance among the parents of the respondents was also present among their children, the representation of men to women among Dorchester College first year students being in the ratio of three to two. This is not a reflection of the relative ability of men and women, as it has been found at the high school level that girls tend to have a better academic record than boys.¹³

The sexual differentiation in university attendance depends to some extent on the occupational openings available for men and women, and the attitudes towards women's role in society. On the first point, Hall and McFarlane

¹³Hall and McFarlane found, for example, that among the girls who went on to university from Paulend, an Ontario community, all but one had perfect academic records, i.e. five years in high school, and a successful Senior Matriculation. Among the twenty-five boys going on to university from Grade 13, fifteen passed after spending five years in high school, six passed after spending six years in high school, and four failed the grade after spending varying numbers of years at school. P. 36.

Gordon found that girls had a consistently higher record of achievement through the high school than the boys. Pp. 36-37.

found that nursing and public school teaching were occupations selected by a number of girls in the interviewed sample, both of which are respected professions for women which can be entered without the cost of a university education.¹⁴ When the female respondents in the Dorchester study were asked what their two best friends from high school had done after leaving school, the majority said that they had also gone on to university, but several mentioned teachers' college.

On the second point regarding the attitudes to the women's role in society, there is evidence to suggest that many students and their parents tend to hold to the traditional view of women's place being in the home and raising the family. Middle class parents tend to expect that their sons, through their occupational career, will maintain or possibly improve on their social status. They do not think of their daughters occupying a similar position in the occupational world, but rather acquiring a social position through their husbands.¹⁵ Parents who hold this attitude are consequently loath to make a financial outlay on a daughter who will be gainfully employed for only a few years after graduating.

Fourteen out of the eighteen women students expected that they would be married within three years of graduation,

¹⁴Ibid, p. 31.

¹⁵D. F. Aberle and K. D. Naegele found this difference in attitude among a group of middle class fathers. They give their findings in "Middle Class Fathers' Occupational Role and Attitudes towards Children", The Family, eds. Bell and Vogel, pp. 126-136.

most of them thinking that they would only work a year or two after they were married as they anticipated having a family, and generally disagreed with the idea of mothers with young children going out to work. This orientation to their future primarily in terms of getting married and setting up a home affects both their decision to apply to college, and their attitude to university itself. There was a greater tendency for the women to come from a home in which one or both of the parents had received a college education, and where there was possibly a tendency to emphasize the general benefits of college education.

Another factor predisposing the high school pupil toward university attendance is the proximity of the university. In fact, 51 per cent of Dorchester College's first year full-time enrolment in 1963-64 came from the town itself, with a further 11 per cent drawn from the surrounding community and within week-end travelling distance of home. Only 9 per cent of the students came from provinces other than Ontario or Quebec. One of the consequences of this local selectivity in the student population is a tendency for the high school crowd to come en masse, as it were, and for the student to experience little difference from the high school environment. This will be discussed more fully in the following chapter.

In summary, there are processes of selectivity which appear to influence the high school pupils towards university attendance, socio-economic status, sexual differentiation and local selectivity have been examined in this section.

Parents of the respondents were better-educated, particularly as regards university education, and enjoyed higher occupational status than their generation as a whole. Men and women and over and under achievers did not show any significant differences with respect to the proportion of college-educated fathers; however, proportionately more of the women, and particularly the over achievers, had mothers with college education and proportionately less women had mothers who had gone in for some other form of additional training.

Proportionately more men than women were enrolled in first year full time at Dorchester College. The majority of women expected to get married within a few years after graduation, and tended to disagree with the idea of a woman working with a family of young children. Whether they would in fact work when they had children is, of course, another matter; what is important is that for most of them their occupational role was perceived as temporary terminating on marriage or after the birth of the children.

Both male and female respondents were drawn predominantly from the local community, and it was suggested that this might have several effects including the possibly deleterious one of perpetuating the high school sub-culture into the university years, and thus lowering the student's resistance to change, or to the impact of different values.

CHAPTER 4

THE STUDENT'S PERCEPTION OF AND PARTICIPATION IN THE HIGH SCHOOL CULTURE

The term culture as used in this context is similar to that used by Sanford in his review of student society and student culture.¹ It refers to the pattern of values, beliefs and prescribed ways of behaving. In this sense it could be used to designate the overall high school or college culture, including staff and students; in order to distinguish the subject of study from the overall culture, the latter will be referred to as the student sub-culture. Similarly, while student society can be used to refer to the constellation and structure of social roles of the educational institution as a whole, the term student sub-society will be used to refer to both the formal and informal structures at the student level. In order to make the distinction between the high school and the university member, the former will be termed pupil and the latter student.

The types of high school that the student had attended depended to some extent on the size of community in which he had lived. The majority of students came from the town in which the university was situated and had graduated from one of the large suburban high schools. Of those from out-of-town,

¹N. Sanford, "Higher Education as a Field of Study", The American College, pp. 57-59.

the majority had come from smaller centres in the surrounding community, and had attended the small town high school. However, in spite of the differences in the size and type of institution attended, there was a similarity of response to questions dealing with the high school sub-culture.²

The students were asked specifically about the pupil sub-culture and pupils' activities. One such question, designed to elicit general information, is reproduced below with the students' responses.

TABLE 9
QUALIFICATIONS FOR LEADING CROWD STATUS AT
THE RESPONDENTS' HIGH SCHOOLS

	All students #	UNDER ACHIEVERS			OVER ACHIEVERS		
		Total #	Men #	Women #	Total #	Men #	Women #
Personality	22	11	8	3	11	8	3
Sports	21	13	9	4	8	5	3
Academic	10	4	2	2	6	4	2
Teacher's pet	3	3	1	2	-	-	-
Money, clothes, car	14	4	3	1	10	8	2
Taking part in out- side activities	13	7	5	2	6	3	3
Students' Council-- being member of "right" clubs	10	6	4	2	4	3	1
Being a Senior	1	1	-	1	-	-	-
Didn't think there was a leading crowd	6	1	1	-	5	2	3
TOTAL	100	50	33	17	50	33	17
Number of students	50	25	17	8	25	15	10

NOTE: Some respondents mentioned more than one item.

²Coleman's study of the high school culture was conducted in ten schools of varying size in different communities, ranging from the small town to the city. In some parts of his analysis he examines each school separately, in others he examines all the schools together to find out "the common characteristics of the adolescent culture." The Adolescent Society, Introduction ix.

This finding is in keeping with the general trend of the high school adolescent, noted by Coleman and Gordon to value personality, sports ability and participation in extra-curricular activities more highly than academic achievement.³ This general emphasis held true for men and women and for under and over achievers. Most important to the under achievers was prowess in sports and personality, by which was generally meant that the student was easy to get along with, and extraverted. The over achievers also felt that personality was an important asset for leading crowd status, but also stressed the outward symbols of wealth, such as having a car, dressing well, or having money, which were relatively less significant to the under achievers.

Coleman, commenting on the high school sub-culture, points out that:

The leading crowds of boys want more to be remembered as a star athlete, less as a brilliant student, than do the student bodies as a whole. Similarly, the leading crowds of girls were oriented away from thinking of themselves as a brilliant student, and were oriented toward, in some schools, the image of activities leader, and in others, the image of most popular.

This means that the social elites of these high schools are less willing to see themselves as engaging in intellectual activity and find the idea of being seen as 'intellectuals' more repugnant than do those who are outside the leading crowds.⁴

³J. S. Coleman found that in all the schools studied, the pupils valued other attributes, e.g. athletic ability and personality, more highly than good grades. The Adolescent Society, p. 68.

C. W. Gordon in his study of a suburban high school in a Midwestern community, found that boys conferred most prestige on the athlete. Girls acquired prestige through social participation, patterns of dress and service to the school. The Social System of the High School, p. 132.

⁴Coleman, op.cit., pp. 244-245.

The responses to a further question in the interviews would tend to substantiate this argument. All the respondents were asked if they thought they were part of the leading crowd at their old high school, and the results are given in the following table.

TABLE 10
LEADING CROWD STATUS OF THE RESPONDENTS
AT HIGH SCHOOL

	All students	UNDER ACHIEVERS			OVER ACHIEVERS		
		Total	Men	Women	Total	Men	Women
	#	#	#	#	#	#	#
Part of leading crowd at high school	28	19	11	8	9	7	2
Not in the leading crowd	16	5	5	-	11	6	5
Don't think there was a leading crowd	6	1	1	-	5	2	3
Number of students	50	25	17	8	25	15	10

In general, just over half of all the respondents felt that they had been part of the leading crowd, either because they had the pre-requisite qualities, or because they had been introduced by a friend. There was a significant difference ($p < .01$) however, between under achievers and over achievers in their participation in leading crowd activities; under achievers on the whole, feeling that they played quite a dominant role in the pupil sub-society. The

differentiation between the two groups was summed up by one over achieving student who, when asked what it took to be a member of the leading crowd replied:

You mean the leading crowd? The people who were sports-minded, very much so. And the very socially-minded--they fooled around a lot of the time. The bright ones wouldn't be in--they were the finks--and were looked down on. My friends thought there should be more emphasis on the academic and intellectual atmosphere rather than mob rule which is what it was.⁵

This differentiation between over and under achievers was most pronounced among the women; whereas all eight of the under achieving women said that they had been part of the leading crowd at high school, only two out of ten over achieving women admitted participating. This might be a further indication of the differentiation between the perception of the male and female role held in the society, the women having to make greater social sacrifices in order to achieve success in the more socially proscribed academic role.

Although the under and over achievers showed marked differences in their participation in, and attitudes toward, the leading crowd at high school, it would appear that there was little difference in the future orientation of leading crowd members and other pupils, both being predominantly geared to university or to some other form of higher education.

⁵Interview 116.

TABLE 11
POST HIGH SCHOOL ORIENTATION OF
THE LEADING CROWD

	All students #	UNDER ACHIEVERS			OVER ACHIEVERS		
		Total #	Men #	Women #	Total #	Men #	Women #
Went on to:							
University	39	22	14	8	17	11	6
Teachers' College	5	4	2	2	1	1	-
Nursing	8	4	1	3	4	2	2
Commercial course	1	-	-	-	1	-	1
R. O. T. P.	1	-	-	-	1	1	-
Office work	12	6	5	1	6	3	3
Got married	2	1	-	1	1	-	1
Still at school	13	7	6	1	6	3	3
Don't think there was a leading crowd	6	1	1	-	5	2	3
TOTAL	87	45	29	16	42	23	19
Number of students	50	25	17	8	25	15	10

NOTE: Some respondents gave more than one reply.

There were no significant differences between men and women, or under and over achievers in their responses to the question in the above table. This agrees with Coleman's finding that the elites in the high schools, although not valuing academic success as highly as the student body as a whole were as likely to have planned on college attendance.⁶ This is possibly a reflection of the general value which

⁶Coleman, op. cit. p. 114.

predominates in the middle class suburban school of the importance of further education, even if only to gain the qualifications necessary for a well-paying position in society enabling the holder to maintain or even surpass his family of orientation in social status.

A very similar picture of future plans was obtained when the students were asked what their two best friends from high school had done when they finished school.

TABLE 12

POST HIGH SCHOOL ORIENTATION OF RESPONDENTS'
TWO BEST FRIENDS AT HIGH SCHOOL

	All students	UNDER ACHIEVERS			OVER ACHIEVERS		
		Total	Men	Women	Total	Men	Women
Went on to:	#	#	#	#	#	#	#
University	63	32	22	10	31	20	11
Teachers' College	10	6	2	4	4	2	2
Army and Navy	4	2	2	-	2	-	2
Office work	15	8	6	2	7	4	3
Got married	1	-	-	-	1	-	1
Still at school	7	2	2	-	5	4	1
TOTAL	100	50	34	16	50	30	20
Number of students	50	25	17	8	25	15	10

Men and women and under and over achievers showed a marked similarity in response. It would seem from this that all the respondents had tended to associate with other students of similar orientation to themselves, who may have reinforced

them in their intentions to attend college. This might be of particular importance for the women who might not be open to the same pressures to attend college as the men.

Summary

Irrespective of the size of community of origin, and type of high school attended, the respondents were able to enumerate the qualities necessary for membership in the leading crowd in their old high school, and to say whether they had been a member. In common with the findings of researchers in the United States, the students tended to emphasize personality, sports ability, and wealth more than academic achievement.⁷ This reflected itself in the fact that a significantly higher proportion of under achievers considered that they had been part of the leading crowd; the serious academic orientation of the over achievers possibly alienating them from the dominant norms of the peer group. This was particularly noticeable for women where all the under achieving women felt that they had achieved status as members of the leading crowd, as compared to only two out of ten of the over achieving women.

In spite of the denigration of academic success among the members of the leading crowd, there was no difference in their orientation to college, the majority having gone on to university. This also supports Coleman's finding that in general the elite groups in the high schools study

⁷Coleman, The Adolescent Society, p. 158.
Gordon, The Social System of the High School, p. 132.

more often intended to go on to college than the student body as a whole, a factor which could not be accounted for solely on the grounds of their higher social status.

Both the leading crowd and the respondents' friends were reported as being predominantly oriented to university. As many of the students lived in the town and mentioned that their friends or associates from their old high school had also come to the same university, it is interesting to see the degree of contact they said they maintained with their crowd from high school. By maintaining their old friendships, the students might continue to use the high school clique as a reference group for determining their behaviour in their role as university student and carry over their attitudes to work and to social activities acquired at high school. The following section looks at the perpetuation of the high school sub-culture at university.

CHAPTER 5

CONTINUING CONTACT WITH THE HIGH SCHOOL PEER GROUP

The previous section commented on the differences among under and over achievers in the high school sub-culture, and it was noted that the under achievers were inclined to greater activity in the "leading crowd." With so many students coming on to university in or near their home town, there is the possibility that they will tend to maintain the old friendships and memberships in the various crowds, acting out the roles for which they have become known in high school. The first year of university instead of being a vital new experience, may become a perpetuation of high school in a different physical environment. This chapter comments on the extent of contact with the high school crowd by students from the home community, the amount of time devoted to the meetings during the week, and the most popular meeting places. It also discusses the amount of contact between the out-of-town residence students, and the commuting student body.

The respondents who had come from local schools were asked to assess the strength of the cohort that had come at the same time as them to Dorchester College.

TABLE 13

RESPONDENTS' ASSESSMENTS OF NUMBERS IN THEIR
HIGH SCHOOL CROWD WHO HAD COME TO DORCHESTER
COLLEGE AT THE SAME TIME AS THEY HAD

	All students #	UNDER ACHIEVERS			OVER ACHIEVERS		
		Total #	Men #	Women #	Total #	Men #	Women #
Less than ten	10	7	7	-	3	1	2
Ten to twenty	7	2	1	1	5	4	1
Twenty to thirty	6	3	1	2	3	1	2
Thirty to forty	4	1	-	1	3	2	1
Forty to fifty	2	2	2	-	-	-	-
Over fifty	4	2	2	-	2	1	1
Not applicable, i.e. student from out-of-town	17	8	4	4	9	6	3
Number of students	50	25	17	8	25	15	10

It should be mentioned that the interpretation of the term "high school crowd" tended to be somewhat ambiguous; those who considered themselves to be in the "high school crowd" counted the others in their circle who had come on to Dorchester College; those who were not, tended to quote the official statistics for their school's university entrance, and estimate how many of these had selected this particular college. As can be seen from the table the range was from under ten to over fifty, with the median somewhere around twenty to thirty.

With the student surrounded in many cases by a sizeable proportion of his old peer group, an attempt was

made to estimate the strength of high school ties, and the degree of identification with the high school group. The students were asked if they went around with any of the high school crowd at university.

TABLE 14
RESPONDENTS' MAINTENANCE OF CONTACT WITH
HIGH SCHOOL CROWD AT COLLEGE

	All students	UNDER ACHIEVERS			OVER ACHIEVERS		
		Total	Men	Women	Total	Men	Women
	#	#	#	#	#	#	#
No contact	7	4	4	-	3	2	1
Maintain contact with some	22	10	7	3	12	7	5
Maintain contact with most	3	2	1	1	1	-	1
Maintain contact with all of them	1	1	1	-	-	-	-
Not applicable, i.e. out-of-town students	17	8	4	4	9	6	3
Number of students	50	25	17	8	25	15	10

By far the great majority of students maintained contact with at least some of the high school crowd, even though they had entered separate faculties in the university. There were no significant differences between under and over achievers as regards maintaining contact with their old high school crowd.

The most frequently mentioned meeting places were the lectures or just generally round campus, one in three students said they met their fellow high school peers at lunch time or

after school in outside activities. Approximately one-third of the students spent less than five hours a week with their friends, the remaining two-thirds saw them more regularly. The women tended to get together more often than the men, particularly the under achieving women, all of whom spent at least five hours a week in the company of their friends. Under achieving men also tended to spend longer with their high school friends than the over achieving men.

In order to assess the relative strength of new friendships made at college, to old ones which the student had made in his high school days, he was asked whether most of his present friends were people he had known at school or people he had met around campus.

TABLE 15
RESPONDENTS' FRIENDS--FROM HIGH
SCHOOL OR UNIVERSITY?

	All students	UNDER ACHIEVERS			OVER ACHIEVERS		
		Total	Men	Women	Total	Men	Women
	#	#	#	#	#	#	#
Mainly from high school	15	7	5	2	8	4	4
About half and half	4	2	1	1	2	2	-
Mainly from college	13	8	7	1	5	3	2
No real friends	1	-	-	-	1	-	1
Not applicable, i.e. out-of-town students	17	8	4	4	9	6	3
Number of students	50	25	17	8	25	15	10

From this it can be seen that the students tended to split fairly evenly with about the same number claiming the

the majority of friends from high school as estimated that they had made more new friends at Dorchester College. There was a slight tendency for women to maintain their old high school friends more than the men, the majority of whom had re-oriented their friendship patterns since coming to college. This might also be due to the women's minority position, their wanting to maintain contact with old friends as they faced an unfamiliar college environment.

There was some recognition of the high school clique on campus mentioned by resident and out-of-town students. One woman student, living at home, who did not consider herself part of the crowd, said of them: "These kids just stick together, they've stuck together since public school. They always sit together--they're good friends among themselves."¹

Another student, resident in the town, said she only spent about half the time with her old friends as: "I'm against a high school crowd coming to Dorchester and remaining a crowd--that's horrible."² An out-of-town student commented that: "Other chaps from Toronto and vicinity have said there is a first year clique of home town students who have gone through high school together. I feel that this is true."³

The respondents were asked related questions about the degree of contact between in-town and out-of-town students when they were questioned on the degree of contact that existed between students living in residence on the campus

¹Interview 122. ²Interview 131. ³Interview 120.

and commuting students. Of the eight students in residence, half said they had a few friends outside, just under half said they had friends from both places and one admitted the people he knew outside were only acquaintances. Of the forty or so students living off campus, half had no friends in residence, about a quarter had a few and a quarter said about half and half.

Two things should be borne in mind; the students obviously had different definitions of the word friend; to some a friend was any person they had met and knew by sight, to others a friend was a rather special person in whom they could confide. The second point is that these were first year students and there was no indication of whether they would develop more relationships over the years with students "from the other place" or if the relationships they had formed would tend to continue without change.

For the majority of students the "friendship" was of a casual nature. Seeing people in lectures or acknowledging them in the halls, were mentioned by nearly all the students. Less frequently mentioned were planned activities they had undertaken jointly, such as meeting for lunch, or participating in sports and clubs. There were no significant differences between over and under achievers in their patterns of contact.

The amount of contact between the two groups of students was limited for the majority to less than five hours a week, only one in five of the students said that they spent more than five hours a week together.

Summary

In general, then, it can be said that once at university most of the home town students, whether under or over achievers, tend to maintain at least some of the old high school ties, but with varying degrees of intensity. For some the contact is casual, seeing each other at lectures or around campus, some make definite arrangements to meet for lunch, while others keep up extensive contact meeting outside at parties and social events as well as around college. It is this latter group particularly which is most likely to perpetuate the sub-culture of the high school at the university. This continuing contact with the high school crowd may reduce the degree of identification the student feels with the university as a place distinct from school, and may diminish the chances of his changing his work habits or the nature of his social activities.

As for contact between the residence students and the commuters, the general feeling was that there was little contact, and what there was tended to be restricted to the routinized formal organization of lecture, library, or commuting in the hallways. On average, they do not spend much time with each other. As one student in residence summed it up speaking of the commuting students: "We don't have much contact with them--they're always going off to catch a bus. We don't live with them, we don't eat with them, our only contact is through clubs, for those who join, and lectures."⁴

⁴Interview 119.

P A R T I I I

PRESENT ORIENTATION - ADAPTATION TO UNIVERSITY

PART III

PRESENT ORIENTATION--ADAPTATION TO UNIVERSITY

Introduction

Part II was concerned with the pre-university experiences of the freshman in the high school environment. Part III is concerned with the adaptation the high school pupil has to make to his new role at university. The following chapters cover the student's general perception of university, and his social and academic behaviour.

Chapter 6 looks at the ways in which students develop an image of the university, what they conceive to be its primary functions, and what they consider to be their main aims at college. The recent literature on the subject has suggested a certain seriousness among the student population, and awareness of the necessity of college education for a widening circle of occupations.¹ It was expected that this general trend would reflect itself in the attitudes of both under and over achievers.

Chapters 7 and 8 look in more detail at the ways in which students define their academic and social roles respectively, what they consider to be appropriate behaviour in each, and how they allocate their time to study and social activity.

¹B. R. Clark, Educating the Expert Society, Chapter 6.
D. C. Beardslee and D. D. O'Dowd, "Students and the Occupational World", The American College, Chapter 18.
T. Caplow, The Sociology of Work, pp. 215-220.

CHAPTER 6

THE STUDENTS' PERCEPTION OF THE UNIVERSITY

Social perception as Merton has pointed out is the product of a social framework.¹ The social framework that the students use in assessing the university depends on many factors--personal, social and socio-economic. This chapter is concerned with the responses of under and over achieving students to questions on their attitudes to university and their general satisfaction with Dorchester College.

The student's perception of the university is influenced by what he considers to be his main aims at college and what he hopes to get out of a university education. Burton Clark identifies four major campus sub-cultures on the basis of what the members consider to be their main aims at college.² The primary aim of those in the vocational sub-culture is training for the job, of the academic gaining a general education. The collegiate sub-culture sees the university primarily as a place to have fun, and the non-conformist as an environment in which the student can develop his ideas on life and discover his own individuality.

¹R. K. Merton, Social Theory and Social Structure (Glencoe: The Free Press, 1949), p. 101.

²B. Clark, Educating the Expert Society, pp.206-211.

The students at Dorchester were asked what they considered were their main aims at college, and the results are given in the following table.

TABLE 16
RESPONDENTS' MAIN AIMS AT COLLEGE
(by men and women and under and over achievers)

	All students	UNDER ACHIEVERS			OVER ACHIEVERS		
		Total	Men	Women	Total	Men	Women
	#	#	#	#	#	#	#
Academic	29	11	5	6	18	10	8
Vocational	21	14	12	2	7	5	2
Collegiate	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Non-conformist	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Number of students	50	25	17	8	25	15	10

All respondents considered their main aims at college to be either vocational or academic, none of them considering having fun or pursuing an identity to be of major importance to them.

Men and women differed in what they considered to be their main goals at university; for many of the men university education was seen as providing a vocational training for their future career, for the majority of women education was being pursued more for education's sake. This fits in with the women's orientation to the future primarily in terms of marriage and home making rather than to a career. (For a further discussion on women's plans after university see Chapter 11.)

Although under and over achieving women showed no difference in their orientation to college there were significant differences between the under and over achieving men. For the former the university was seen primarily in vocational terms, for the over achievers the academic aspects assumed twice the importance of the vocational. This suggests that there is a tendency for the over achieving students to become more involved with the aspects of acquiring a broad general education at university rather than the narrower aims of obtaining a paper qualification for employment.

The students were also asked what they considered were the main aims of their friends. Four out of five students admitted that they were wholly or largely the same as their own. There was a slight tendency for the women and under achievers to share opinions which were wholly the same as their friends. This general pattern was repeated when the majority of respondents agreed that: "Generally speaking my friends tend to think the same as I do about things."³

As for the parents' views on the students' main aims at college, two out of three men felt that their parents were primarily interested in the vocational aspects of their university career. This was particularly true for the male under achiever. The majority of under and over achieving women on the other hand thought that their parents shared their views, and emphasized the academic aspects of college life.

³Question number 16 in the Questionnaire.

A further question which attempted to assess the students' reaction to college life asked them what aspects of Dorchester College they thought they would most likely remember in five years' time.

Most frequently suggested among the aspects of Dorchester they would most likely remember in five years' time was some facet of their academic life, the studying and the courses being mentioned by nearly half the students. Aspects to be remembered ranged from general impressions of a subject to "courses I particularly like" to "all the studying you have to do!!" Over half the under achievers thought they would remember the academic aspects of university life (often as unpleasant memories) as compared to one in three of the over achievers who mentioned some academic aspect. Of equal importance to the latter were the stimulating effects of the staff, mentioned by only two of the under achievers.

The students felt that they would also remember the friends they had made, mentioned by one in two of the women and one in eight of the men, and the social life, again predominantly more women stressed this aspect than the men. Relatively more important to the men were the liberal attitudes and the campus and its scenery, possibly a reflection of a sex difference with the women showing greater concern for people than for ideas and things.⁴

⁴R. F. Berdie and A. B. Hood found that there were significant differences at .05 level between male and female high school pupils who planned to go on to college concerning social differences, the girls responding more often in the direction of better social relations. Reported in "Personal Values and Attitudes as Determinants of Post High School Plans", Personnel and Guidance Journal, Vol.42, No.8 (April 1964), pp. 754-759.

One or two students mentioned the difficulties of adjustment in the first few weeks or in the first year. Two students mentioned the clubs and activities, only one mentioned the sports. With regard to the role of sport generally nine out of ten students disagreed that there was too much emphasis on sport on campus.

It would seem that in keeping with the trend away from the collegiate sub-culture to the academic and the vocational these students mention the "serious" aspects of university life more than the social, the latter being relegated to a secondary place.

A related question, although not projected into a hypothetical future asked the students how they would describe Dorchester if they had to do it in a couple of words. This produced similar results with the academic outweighing other descriptions. A significantly higher proportion ($p < .05$) of the over achievers mentioned academic work and the staff.

Apart from this the forward looking aspects of an expanding university received comment by one-quarter of the students, particularly among under achievers who were concerned that it was setting high standards of performance. A few mentioned the quality of "opening up the mind", the incidence of liberal attitudes, and even fewer (less than one in twelve) described it as a place for having fun and making new friends. Men and women tended to share a similarity of outlook except that the men more frequently suggested the liberal attitudes and were more impressed by the quality of the staff.

Although the quality of "opening up the mind" was only mentioned spontaneously by about one in seven students when describing Dorchester College, there was a general recognition "that one of the aims of university education is to make you question your own values", a view shared equally by men and women and under and over achievers, as can be seen from the following table.

TABLE 17

RESPONDENTS' RESPONSE TO THE STATEMENT: "ONE OF
THE AIMS OF A UNIVERSITY EDUCATION IS TO MAKE
YOU QUESTION YOUR OWN VALUES"
(by men and women and under and over achievers)

	All students #	UNDER ACHIEVERS			OVER ACHIEVERS		
		Total #	Men #	Women #	Total #	Men #	Women #
Agree	38	18	13	5	20	12	8
Disagree	11	6	4	2	5	3	2
Can't generalize	1	1	-	1	-	-	-
Number of students	50	25	17	8	25	15	10

Although it may be legitimately argued that such a response conveys very little information as to whether the respondents in fact had questioned or would question their own values, it may also indicate that university education is considered to have other ends beyond those of merely training for the job. An interesting comment on those that disagreed is that the Arts students tended to think that the person should be questioning their own values anyway, that it was a result rather than an aim of college, whereas

the Engineering students (four out of six disagreed) thought this was not true of their courses, and apparently they had experienced nothing in the university per se which had led them to question their own values.

The questioning of values and "opening up the mind" needs a congenial environment in which to take place. Sanford has suggested that continuing close contact with the home community during the university years:

May actually bar the student, throughout his college career from ever having the experience of standing in principled opposition to his parents.⁵

The place of residence of the students may also influence their overall image of the college, and may affect the nature of informal group relations. There were several questions in the interview which dealt with the student's place of residence during the term and his satisfaction with it, the hypothesis being that students who were satisfied with their present arrangements and who did not want to go away would be more likely to be found among the over achievers.

The respondents were asked a general question about the advisability of going away to college given the opportunity, including the financial opportunity.

⁵N. Sanford, "Developmental Status of the Freshman", The American College, p. 267.

TABLE 18

RESPONDENTS' RESPONSE TO THE STATEMENT: "GIVEN THE
OPPORTUNITY I THINK EVERYONE SHOULD GO TO
COLLEGE AWAY FROM HOME"

(by men and women and under and over achievers)

	All students #	UNDER ACHIEVERS			OVER ACHIEVERS		
		Total #	Men #	Women #	Total #	Men #	Women #
Agree	28	12	9	3	16	11	5
Disagree	18	12	8	4	6	3	3
Can't generalize	4	1	-	1	3	1	2
Number of students	50	25	17	8	25	15	10

Over two-thirds of the men were in agreement with college away from home in comparison to only half the women. There was a slight tendency for over achievers to favour university away from home although the differences were not large enough to be significant.

Although more than half of the respondents agreed that given the opportunity it was advisable to go to college away from home, less than two in five had submitted applications to any other universities, Queen's, Western and University of Toronto being the most frequently selected.

Twice as many men as women and twice as many under achievers compared to over achievers had submitted an application to another university. Similarly while half of the out-of-town students had made application to another university, only one in three of the local residents had applied anywhere else.

TABLE 19

APPLICATION TO, AND ACCEPTANCE AT OTHER
UNIVERSITIES BESIDES DORCHESTER
(by under and over achievers and home town)

	UNDER ACHIEVERS		OVER ACHIEVERS	
	Out-of-town-ers	In-town-ers	Out-of-town-ers	In-town-ers
	#	#	#	#
<u>Applied to other universities</u>	5	7	3	3
One other--accepted	1	5	-	1
--rejected	1	1	2	1
Two or more--				
accepted at all	2	-	1	-
accepted at some	-	1	-	1
Don't know (i.e. accepted Dorchester first)	1	-	-	-
<u>Did not apply at others</u>	3	10	6	13
Number of students	8	17	9	16

The main reasons that the home town students gave for attending Dorchester were the financial considerations mentioned by nearly all, followed by the home comforts. Some conceded that Dorchester was an up-and-coming university, a few mentioned that Dorchester had the reputation of being easy to get in, or that they had friends attending. Among the out-of-town-ers, those who mentioned ease of entry were slightly outnumbered by those who thought that Dorchester had high standards or who had been impressed by it as a university, some of them having made a visit while still at high school. Other reasons given were that it was away from home, or near to home.

All the respondents were asked if they would have liked to have gone to any other university, a question which elicited a positive response from almost three in five students, women, under achievers and local students being the most likely to say that they would like to have gone away. Caution is necessary in treating this as a measure of dissatisfaction as the question itself may induce a positive reply even among respondents who are not particularly dissatisfied with their present situation. However it does give some indication of the relative proportion within each group who say they would have liked to go to some other university.

Summary

All the respondents considered that their main aims at university were either academic or vocational. Under and over achieving women and over achieving men stressed the primacy of academic goals such as receiving a good education or learning to think, under achieving men stressed the importance of the more vocational goals, e.g. training for the job.

The respondents tended to feel that their friends shared the same aim as they did but that their parents were predominantly oriented to university in terms of its vocational training potential, stressing it as a prerequisite for earning large salaries and obtaining status in the community.

The respondents felt that some aspects of their academic life at college was the single most important thing that they would remember about Dorchester in five years' time. Second to this were the friends made, particularly important to the women and the new ideas presented which were of greater significance to the men. In a "quickie" description of Dorchester in a couple of words the academic side of things and the staff were more frequently mentioned than the more purely social aspects of university life.

Although almost three out of five students agreed that given the opportunity everyone should go to college away from home only a small proportion of local residents had applied to any other university, the main reason they gave for selecting Dorchester being financial, and to a lesser extent the advantages of home life. For the out-of-town student ease of entry headed the list of reasons followed by the fact that they thought Dorchester maintained high standards. This apparent paradox between the low entrance requirements and the high academic standards within the university was summed up by several students who described Dorchester as: "Easy to get in, hard to get out of."

A slightly higher proportion of women, local residents and under achievers agreed that they would like to have gone away to another university rather than come to Dorchester, but the numbers were not large enough to substantiate the hypothesis that over achievers were more satisfied in their choice of Dorchester College.

CHAPTER 7

THE ACADEMIC ROLE

In order to maintain his status as student, the individual is obliged to fulfil certain basic academic requirements. The emphasis the student places on the academic or studious aspects of his role will depend, to some extent, on the value which he places on academic success, which in turn influences and is influenced by his main aims at college, and his conception of the functions of a university discussed in the previous chapter. With only a limited number of hours per day, the student has to allocate his time, the way in which he does this being an indirect comment on the relative importance of the various activities to him.

The respondents were asked specifically about their study habits and how these compared with their high school routine. The value they placed on success was estimated indirectly by asking them, if they thought they would fail a year at college, and how much this would affect them if it were to happen. The chapter closes with a section on the interaction between students and staff and the attitudes of the former to faculty. It was thought that the men and the over achievers would have made a more positive identification with the academic role and would have organized their time such that academic work was allocated a high place.

As well as looking at men and women, and under and over achievers, this chapter compares the study habits of students who are regular and those who are irregular daters; those who have made an occupational choice, and those who are, as yet, uncommitted. It was felt that the students who had made some kind of decision on their occupational future would be more motivated to academic performance as they had a goal to strive for. Conversely, it was felt that students who were frequent daters might not allocate as high a place to the academic role, and would be less likely to achieve academic success.

At one stage in the interview, the respondents were asked to assess their present performance in the light of their behaviour at high school. They were asked if they worked harder in their first term at university than they did in their final year at high school.

TABLE 20

RESPONDENTS' ASSESSMENT OF HOW HARD THEY WORKED
AT UNIVERSITY COMPARED TO THEIR
FINAL YEAR AT HIGH SCHOOL
(by men and women and under and over achievers)

	All students	UNDER ACHIEVERS			OVER ACHIEVERS		
		Total	Men	Women	Total	Men	Women
	#	#	#	#	#	#	#
Worked harder at university	21	7	4	3	14	10	4
Worked harder at high school	21	13	8	5	8	4	4
About the same	8	5	5	-	3	1	2
Number of students	50	25	17	8	25	15	10

A slightly higher proportion of over achievers agreed that they had worked harder in their first university term than they had worked at high school. Among under achievers the main reason given for working harder was that the nature of work was different, they found they were left on their own more to do their own thinking. As one student said ruefully: "My mind is working harder than last year, but the results are not as encouraging."¹ Another student found: "The system is completely different, harder than Grade 13. Here you're on your own, and you don't know how much you're being pushed."² One female student who preferred college to high school contrasted the approach in the two: "At high school you're only reading the text book. Here you pick up things dropped in class."³

Among the over achievers, greater interest in the course was the main reason given for increased work at college. One student admitted that he could not stop taking books out of the library. Another found that there was: "A lot more reading, understanding and thinking"⁴ which he contrasted favourably with high school.

For those who said they were doing less work at university than at high school, the main reasons given by the under achievers were lack of external pressure from teachers or lack of interest. One student expressed the difference in supervision by saying: "I don't apply myself

¹Interview 120.

²Interview 122.

³Interview 114.

⁴Interview 110.

the same was as in high school. I knew if I hadn't done the work there I'd get pulled up in front of the class."⁵ Another remarked that: "In high school you had to do homework every day. At college you don't have to do it for tomorrow."⁶ There was a slight tendency for sexual differences, the men saying that they had not worked because they were not interested, the women saying they worked less because the authoritarian figure of the teacher was no longer there to pressure them. This lack of adaptation to a new system or expressed lack of interest in the subjects, may contribute to the poorer results of the under achiever. Or those who are failing may use lack of interest or external pressure as the explanation for their failure.

Among the over achievers the main reason for not working as hard was that there was in fact less work. This comment of the over achievers that there was less work at university assumes greater significance when it is realized that only 8 per cent of the over achievers took Senior Matriculation in two years, the majority completing it in one year, as compared to the significantly higher proportion of 40 per cent of the under achievers who took two years ($p < .05$).

The students who were working hard most of the term and who agreed that they were working harder than their last year in high school, gave more individual freedom and interest

⁵Interview 113.

⁶Interview 131.

as the main reasons for their greater effort. Those who were not doing much work, and who felt that they had worked harder in high school said this was mainly due to less work, or lack of interest in the university work.

It is interesting that only two people mentioned personality problems at college as a reason for their working less hard than they had in their final year at high school. Conversely, two spoke of conflict between the academic and the social roles during their final high school year as reasons for working harder at college.

One of the difficulties in taking Senior Matriculation results as a yardstick for measuring future achievement is that persons may not have worked hard at Senior Matriculation; in view of this, it is interesting that only two men and one woman among the over achievers admit that they did not work hard in their final year at high school.

With the students dividing fairly evenly between those who felt that they had worked harder at Senior Matriculation and those who felt that they were putting in more time and energy at university, they were asked how hard, in fact, they worked at university.

TABLE 21

RESPONDENTS' ASSESSMENT OF HOW HARD THEY HAD
WORKED THE PREVIOUS TERM AT UNIVERSITY
(by men and women and under and over achievers)

	All students	UNDER ACHIEVERS			OVER ACHIEVERS		
		Total	Men	Women	Total	Men	Women
	#	#	#	#	#	#	#
I worked hard most of the term	21	5	5	-	16	10	6
I worked quite hard, but mainly around exam time	13	9	4	5	4	4	-
I worked fairly hard on occasion but not very much of the time	9	6	4	2	3	1	2
I didn't do very much work	7	5	4	1	2	-	2
Number of students	50	25	17	8	25	15	10

Although women generally said that they worked less hard than the men, there were differences in emphasis between over achieving and under achieving women; whereas the over achievers showed a greater tendency to work consistently hard throughout the term, the under achievers tended to concentrate their efforts round examination time.

A significantly higher proportion ($p < .01$) of all over achievers felt that they had worked consistently all the term, some making the point very emphatically. This result tended to lend support to the hypothesis that academic achievement at university is associated with hard work.

Further information in support of this is given in the following two tables which give the responses of students on the basis of their Senior Matriculation and of their university examination results. These two tables are important as they effectively demonstrate that high marks at Senior Matriculation do not differentiate between students in their academic role behaviour at university, whereas there is a significant difference between under and over achievers. This would tend to refute the objection that the under and over achievers differ in their responses mainly because the over achievers contain a greater proportion of students with high grades at Senior Matriculation.

TABLE 22

COMPARISON BETWEEN THE TOP AND BOTTOM FIFTY
PER CENT AT SENIOR MATRICULATION IN
THEIR WORK HABITS AT UNIVERSITY

	SENIOR MATRICULATION RESULTS	
	Bottom 50%	Top 50%
	#	#
I worked hard most of the term	10	11
I worked quite hard, but mainly around exam time	7	6
I worked fairly hard on occasion, but not very much of the time	4	5
I didn't do very much work	4	3
Number of students	25	25

In the above table the students are dichotomized on the basis of their Senior Matriculation results. As the

figures indicate there is no significant difference between the two groups on their reported study habits. However, if one compares the students on the basis of their Christmas examination results, significant differences at the .01 level emerge as can be seen in the following table.

TABLE 23
COMPARISON BETWEEN TOP AND BOTTOM FIFTY PER CENT
IN CHRISTMAS EXAMINATIONS IN THEIR
WORK HABITS AT UNIVERSITY

	CHRISTMAS EXAMINATION RESULTS	
	Bottom 50%	Top 50%
	#	#
I worked hard most of the term	6	15
I worked quite hard but mainly around exam time	8	5
I worked fairly hard on occasion but not very much of the time	6	3
I didn't do very much work	5	2
Number of students	25	25

Writing on the importance of occupational choice, Erikson suggests that: "In general, it is the inability to settle on an occupational identity which disturbs young people."⁷ Beardslee and O'Dowd similarly suggest that: "Until

⁷E. H. Erikson, "The Growth and Crises of the Healthy Personality," Personality in Nature, Society and Culture, eds. C. Cluckhohn, H. A. Murray, and D. M. Schneider (New York: Knopf, 1956), p. 218.

he finds the place where fits in the world of work, the young person often has not discovered the kind of person he is."⁸ This being the case, one would expect that the student who has made an occupational choice would be more motivated to devote his energies to work than the student who is undecided. The following table gives the results for those who have a clear idea of what they want to do after university compared to those who are, as yet, undecided. The results are broken down further into over and under achievers.

TABLE 24

COMPARISON BETWEEN THOSE WITH AND WITHOUT CLEAR
IDEAS OF THEIR FUTURE AFTER UNIVERSITY IN
WORK HABITS AT UNIVERSITY
(by under and over achievers)

	CLEAR IDEA AFTER UNIVERSITY					
	All students		Under achievers		Over achievers	
	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
	#	#	#	#	#	#
I worked hard most of the term	17	4	4	1	13	3
I worked quite hard but mainly around exam time	5	8	4	5	1	3
I worked fairly hard on occasion but not very much of the time	7	2	5	1	2	1
I didn't do very much work	4	3	4	1	-	2
Number of students	33	17	17	8	16	9

⁸D. C. Beardslee and D. D. O'Dowd, "Students and the Occupational World", The American College, p. 602.

From the over-all figures it can be seen that the mode for all students who have made an occupational choice is hard work throughout the term; for those who have not decided the mode is for a concentrated effort round examination time. The proportion of students, particularly among the over achievers, who reported working consistently hard and who had made a career choice lends support to the hypothesis of academic effort being associated with certainty of future occupational selection.

Another social variable which might affect the amount of time spent studying is the frequency of dating among the students. The following table suggests that there are differences between frequent daters and the rest of the students.

TABLE 25

COMPARISON BETWEEN REGULAR AND IRREGULAR DATERS
IN THEIR WORK HABITS AT UNIVERSITY
(by men and women and under and over achievers)

	UNDER ACHIEVERS				OVER ACHIEVERS			
	Regular daters		Irregular daters		Regular daters		Irregular daters	
	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women
I worked hard most of the term	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	#
	1	-	4	-	1	3	9	3
I worked quite hard but mainly round exam time	-	2	4	3	1	-	3	-
I worked fairly hard on occasion but not very much of the time	3	2	1	-	1	1	-	1
I didn't do very much work	3	1	1	-	-	1	-	1
Number of students	7	5	10	3	3	5	12	5

NOTE: Regular daters are those who date at least once a week; irregular daters are those dating less than once a week.

There was a significant difference ($p < .01$) between the regular daters and the others in their work habits, the former being more inclined to work only occasionally or very little of the time. There were also differences among under and over achievers, while only one student out of the twelve under achieving regular daters said he worked hard most of the term, five out of eight of the over achieving daters said this was true for them. It may be that the over achievers have adapted to the university more quickly and have been able to cope with this particular form of role conflict.

The results given so far have depended on the student's estimation of his study habits; the question needs to be asked as to how the students arrive at their assessment. The respondents were asked to estimate how much time they spent studying outside lecture hours and laboratory periods.⁹ Information on their previous day's work and whether this was about their average was also obtained to provide at least a partial antidote to over-reporting. Using all the information on the student, an assessment was made of his weekly studying.

⁹F. G. Brown and T. E. Dubois, commenting on the efficacy of this method of gaining information, conclude that: "Particularly effective were such simple items as asking the student how many hours he studied and what grades he expected to receive. These items were definitely more successful than the more subtle personality scales." Reported in the article "Correlates of Academic Success for High Ability Freshman Men", Personnel and Guidance Journal, Vol. 42, No. 6 (February, 1964), pp. 603-607.

TABLE 26

RESPONDENTS' ASSESSMENT OF THE AMOUNT OF TIME
THEY SPENT STUDYING
(by men and women and under and over achievers)

	All students	UNDER ACHIEVERS			OVER ACHIEVERS		
		Total	Men	Women	Total	Men	Women
Hours per week:	#	#	#	#	#	#	#
Less than ten	7	4	3	1	3	-	3
Ten to twenty	9	5	5	-	4	1	3
Twenty to thirty	20	12	6	6	8	7	1
Thirty to forty	12	4	3	1	8	5	3
Forty to fifty	2	-	-	-	2	2	-
Number of students	50	25	17	8	25	15	10

It can be seen from this that the studying habits varied, ranging from the admission of several students of "virtually none" to the estimation of a couple of students who said that they worked at least forty or fifty hours, typified by the student who reckoned that his working day began at 7:30 a.m. and ended somewhere about 9:00 p.m. This pattern of study was maintained with some modifications at week-ends.

All the students were asked about studying at week-ends in order to get a complete picture of their weekly schedule. Some students admitted that they did not work on week-ends reserving it more for dating and general social activity; this was particularly true for under achievers. Among certain of the students who were not involved in much socializing, the week-end was not set off in any special way

from the rest of the week as far as studying was concerned. This was particularly true for over achievers who admitted that they dated infrequently if at all.

More of the over achieving students reported working longer hours, this was not due to a lighter course load as there were no differences between under and over achievers in this respect. In the majority of cases it sprang from an emphasis on their academic, rather than their social, role at university. One over achieving male student when asked to describe Dorchester in a few words, said: "Work. That's all we do around here, day and night."¹⁰ Further questioning revealed however that he would not want it any other way; from other parts of the interview it could be seen that his social life was virtually non-existent. It is difficult to know whether these students had voluntarily decided to become serious students emphasizing the academic side of their university career above all else, and consequently alienating themselves from many of their peer group, or whether they had sought in study a substitute for the social contacts they had not enjoyed.¹¹

¹⁰Interview 133.

¹¹J. S. Coleman, commenting on the attitude to academic success in the high school, says: "It was quite clear in discussions with adolescents that they sharply differentiated the student whose good grades were a result of high intelligence plus average effort, and the 'grind' whose good grades were a result of average intelligence plus high effort. The latter student was looked down on in all the schools." The Adolescent Society, p. 309.

Other students who tended to have a serious orientation to the university were those who had a clear idea of their course of action after university, five out of seven working more than thirty hours had made some decision on their occupational career.

Similarly, frequency of dating practices and number of hours spent studying tended to vary inversely. The general tendency for the irregular daters to work harder was true for both under and over achievers. There was a significant difference at the .05 level between under achievers who worked less than twenty hours and their dating practices. Similarly, while one in three of the irregular daters among the under achievers gave thirty hours a week or more to study, none of the regular daters reported working more than thirty hours. The pattern was similar among over achievers, although there was a greater tendency for study among both groups.

As far as taking part in extra-curricular activities was concerned, there was a slightly higher tendency for those who were working thirty hours a week or more to agree with the statement that: "I would like to take part in more activities, but I just don't have the time."

Attitudes to Failure at University

The interviews were conducted in the Spring term after the students had received the results of their first term's examinations which had given them some idea of their academic potential, and had given some of them the shock of failure or near failure after a generally successful high school career.

There was a significant difference at the .01 level between under and over achievers in their confidence of passing all years, twenty-three of the over achievers thought they would graduate without having to repeat a year as compared to only seven under achievers. The greater proportion of students with high grades at Senior Matriculation among the over achievers is not sufficient of itself to explain the difference between the two groups as can be seen from the following table.

TABLE 27

RESPONDENTS' CONFIDENCE OF GETTING THROUGH
UNIVERSITY WITHOUT FAILING A YEAR
(by under and over achievers and
by Senior Matriculation results)

	ACHIEVERS		SENIOR MATRICULATION	
	Under	Over	Bottom 50%	Top 50%
	#	#	#	#
Did not think would have to repeat a year	7	23	11	19
Probably have to repeat a year	6	1	4	3
Probably have to repeat one or two courses	4	-	2	2
Thought would fail a year	6	-	5	1
Didn't know	2	1	3	-
Number of students	25	25	25	25

Of the nine over achieving students who fell in the bottom fifty per cent at Senior Matriculation, eight thought they would not have to repeat a year, and one said he hoped not. In other words these students were conforming to the

over achieving pattern of having confidence in their ability to pass all years. Conversely, of the nine under achieving students who fell in the top 50 per cent at Senior Matriculation, one thought he would fail outright, two thought they probably would fail, two thought that they would have to repeat some courses, the remaining four being confident in their ability.

The respondents were asked if they thought that failing a year at college would bother them a great deal; four-fifths of the over achievers thought that failing a year at college would bother them a great deal while only two-fifths of the under achievers felt this way. There was a significantly higher proportion ($p < .01$) resigned to failure among the under achievers who saw it as a more imminent possibility than the generally confident over achiever. However, looking at the students who have already failed all their subjects in the Christmas examinations, there is a division between those who were bothered a great deal and those who, for one reason or another, were not particularly worried.

Reasons students gave for being bothered were personal, e.g. a blow to their pride, or a need to question motives and social, being unable to reach the social heights and the financial success thought to be obtainable with a degree.

Reasons students gave for not being bothered a great deal by failure were largely personal, e.g. it would create a challenge to come back, or give the student a chance to grow up.

The students were asked how they thought their parents would react if they were to fail a year at university.

TABLE 28

PARENTAL REACTION TO RESPONDENTS FAILING
A YEAR AT COLLEGE
(by men and women and under and over achievers)

	All students	UNDER ACHIEVERS			OVER ACHIEVERS		
		Total	Men	Women	Total	Men	Women
	#	#	#	#	#	#	#
Very disappointed or angry	20	11	7	4	9	7	2
Quite disappointed	21	13	10	3	8	4	4
Unconcerned-- neutral	3	-	-	-	3	2	1
Sympathetic, encourage to try again	17	8	5	3	9	3	6
TOTAL	61	32	22	10	29	16	13
Number of students	50	25	17	8	25	15	10

NOTE: Some students gave more than one reply.

Four out of five students felt that the reaction would be one of disappointment, the parents being divided between strong disappointment and a somewhat milder emotion. Only six students mentioned that their parents would be angry, but one-third felt that their parents would be sympathetic and encourage them to try again. The over achieving women in particular felt that they would receive understanding and encouragement to go on. There was a general tendency among the over achievers to feel that their parents would be either sympathetic or neutral.

As for the effects of failure in later life, three-fifths of the respondents felt that failure had a significant effect on a person's chances for success later on in life. However, most students qualified this by specifying the area in which they felt the person would be affected whether personal, social or economic. The majority felt that the effects would be harmful to the student but some respondents felt that it might be beneficial giving the student a therapeutic shock.

Significantly fewer ($p < .01$) of the over achievers were willing to concede that failing a year at college made no difference, possibly having greater confidence that they would not fail, they did not need the rationalizations that the under achievers required.

Interaction between Students and Staff

It has been suggested, particularly in regard to the American higher educational system, that as the size of the institutions increase, and as the students come to regard higher education as a consumer good, the nature of staff-student relationships undergoes a change, for although:

The faculty member usually relates to more students in the classroom than ever before, he interacts less with the individual student outside the classroom.¹²

Several questions in the interviews were designed to gain information with respect to the student's attitude towards and his behaviour with the members of staff, how he

¹²B. Clark, Educating the Expert Society, p. 241.

conceived of the role of staff, and of his role in relation to them; how far he thought the staff were conforming to their role expectations as he defined them; how much he was interacting with members of staff.

There are certain difficulties in obtaining accurate information from students with respect to staff. The interviews were conducted in a semi-formal structured situation by a graduate student who was submitting the findings in a thesis. There is, therefore, the possibility of "prestige" type answers on the part of the students who might not feel able to "let themselves go" as to what they really thought, or who, from their first year vantage point, might have identified the interviewer more with staff than with students and be afraid that she would either be offended at criticism or would pass on their comments to members of staff, although they had been assured of anonymity and confidentiality. However, the atmosphere of the interviews seemed to be sufficiently free for the students to express their opinions in this as in other fields. There were no refusals to be interviewed, and the students were very cooperative, summed up by one female respondent who left with the comment: "I hope that's been helpful, I tried to be truthful."

In general it can be said that the respondents held a favourable attitude toward staff, as can be seen from the following table.

TABLE 29

RESPONDENTS' ASSESSMENT ON THE HELPFULNESS OF STAFF
(by men and women and under and over achievers)

	All students	UNDER ACHIEVERS			OVER ACHIEVERS		
		Total	Men	Women	Total	Men	Women
	#	#	#	#	#	#	#
They are all unhelpful, none of them are really interested in you	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Some of them will help you if you make an effort to see them	12	4	4	-	8	3	5
All of them seem helpful to me, and would be willing to see you	35	20	13	7	15	10	5
I don't know them well enough to say	3	1	-	1	2	2	-
Number of students	50	25	17	8	25	15	10

NOTE: Respondents were asked to select one of the above statements which came closest to their own views.

In general, there was a readiness to agree that all the staff were helpful, particularly among the under achievers, where one might have expected some latent aggression manifesting itself. Apparently the under achievers are not using the staff as scapegoats for their own failure.

Both under and over achievers appeared to base their judgment on the same criteria, the majority had formed their opinions from actually talking to the staff, mentioned by almost half the students. Many of the students thought that the staff were helpful as they had issued a general invitation

in the lectures for students to come to them with their problems. However, there was a recognition that the initiative must come from the student, summed up by one respondent, who commented that: "Once you get to see them they're very glad to help you, but they don't beg you to come and see them; they've work to do as well."¹³ The interests of the staff were seen to range from "wanting the kids to pass" to answering "trivial questions" to taking a general interest "in what you're going to do." For the minority of students who voiced criticism, their objections were mainly lack of time, lack of interest, or lack of sympathy for the students. As one student expressed it: "Some seem more aware, more compassionate. Others tell you to get your nose to the grindstone as there are no problems that work can't solve."¹⁴

Some students, outlining first the "ideal type" of staff member deduced that all staff must be helpful as: "I cannot see anybody teaching in a university who does not want to help."¹⁵ This same student went on to analyze the development in staff-student relationships over time. "In first year, you can't push yourself on staff, this changes over time, in fact it's changed so far this year." He himself had seen several members of staff, but only since his second term. Another Arts student, whose father had been to college, contrasted his expectations of the role of staff with what he had actually found by saying; "I would have expected the professors to be very busy, very much

¹³Interview 124. ¹⁴Interview 145. ¹⁵Interview 110.

interested in their work and so on, but they seem interested in students individually as people, as fellow students in a way."¹⁶

How far did the students see the staff as being interested in them as people as the above student had found?

TABLE 30

RESPONSE TO THE STATEMENT: THE STAFF ARE ONLY
INTERESTED IN YOUR GRADES, AND DON'T CARE
ABOUT YOU AS A PERSON

(by men and women and under and over achievers)

	All students	UNDER ACHIEVERS			OVER ACHIEVERS		
		Total	Men	Women	Total	Men	Women
	#	#	#	#	#	#	#
Agree	7	5	4	1	2	1	1
Disagree	36	17	12	5	19	13	6
Unable to generalize	7	3	1	2	4	1	3
Number of students	50	25	17	8	25	15	10

Again there was a generally favourable response with seven out of ten disagreeing that the staff were only interested in their academic performance, the rest being divided between agreement and being unable to generalize. Those who agreed with the statement generally attributed it to the large size of classes, and to their first year status.

Men and women had a similar viewpoint with regard to the staff's attitudes as did under and over achievers.

As well as gaining information on the students' attitudes to staff, the interviews also sought some information

¹⁶Interview 144.

on the students' actual behaviour vis-à-vis the staff.
 Given that the majority of students accepted that the staff were helpful and approachable, how much contact actually was there?

TABLE 31

RESPONDENTS' ASSESSMENT ON THE NUMBER OF TIMES THEY
 HAD COME INTO CONTACT WITH THE STAFF OUTSIDE
 LECTURE HOURS OR LABORATORY PERIODS*

	All students	UNDER ACHIEVERS			OVER ACHIEVERS		
		Total	Men	Women	Total	Men	Women
	#	#	#	#	#	#	#
Never	10	8	7	1	2	1	1
Once or twice	17	7	3	4	10	6	4
Three to five times	13	4	2	2	9	5	4
Five to ten times	7	4	3	1	3	2	1
More than ten times	3	2	2	-	1	1	-
Number of students	50	25	17	8	25	15	10

*At time of interviewing in March, 1964.

Fewer of the over achievers and the women reported having no contact with the staff. Some of the students saw this as the source of their difficulties: "That teaches me a lesson, it's probably my problem."¹⁷ Another student summed it up by saying: "I never do go to professors much, that's me. It really dates back to high school when I thought they were impervious. I think differently now, but it carries over and I've learned to look in books myself. I feel I've accomplished more."¹⁸

¹⁷Interview 137.

¹⁸Interview 109.

Some of the students who had little contact with the faculty spoke of some of their fellow students who made a point of seeing staff as "keeners" or "pseudo-intellectuals" who hung around the staff waiting for "goodies."

The most frequently named meeting place between students and staff was in the latter's office, mentioned by almost one in two students. Second to this was contact after the lectures; under achieving students in particular tending to restrict their contact to end of lecture conversations in which their identity was probably not made known.

It is interesting that only three students mentioned any form of contact outside the formal organization, a fact which tends to bear out Professor Clark's comment that:

The training of students as experts requires little attention to their life outside classroom and laboratory, and the specialist type of faculty man cares less about student life and its influence on character than the older faculty type, who was, or thought he was, a cultivated man."¹⁹

The physical, architectural set-up of the buildings tends to reinforce this attitude by lack of provision of places of common meeting on an informal level; a university designed for men on the move. Martin Trow commenting on the architecture of the modern campus suggests that as well as examples of good architecture:

There are other cases however, where they (the architects) are more concerned with the visual impact of their designs; the sociologist would say that their significant reference groups are made up of other architects rather than the academic

¹⁹B. Clark, "Educating the Expert Society", p. 227.

community and the results, however striking or handsome, may leave much to be desired as housing for an intellectual community.²⁰

While there are obvious reported differences between students in their contact with the staff, how did the students perceive these differences? The majority of students, irrespective of the level of their contact, felt that they had about as much contact with the staff as the other students. There were no significant differences between under and over achievers, the majority of both groups perceiving themselves as conforming to the norm, with roughly one in ten thinking they had greater contact and slightly less feeling that they were below average in this respect.

It is interesting to note the frame of reference the students used to assess their behaviour; the majority referred to friends or to members of their group. A few students identified with the student body as a whole, as for example, the student whose initial reaction was that he had less contact with staff but who changed this to "about as much contact" when he compared himself with other first year students.

A further question which bore indirectly on the staff-student relationship asked the students what they would most likely do if they were having difficulty with an assignment.

²⁰M. Trow in The Study of Campus Cultures, pp. 106-107.

TABLE 32

RESPONDENTS' COURSE OF ACTION IF THEY WERE HAVING
TROUBLE WITH AN ASSIGNMENT
(by men and women and under and over achievers)

	All students	UNDER ACHIEVERS			OVER ACHIEVERS		
		Total	Men	Women	Total	Men	Women
	#	#	#	#	#	#	#
Settle matter on own	23	9	6	3	14	8	6
Speak to friend, someone in course	22	14	11	3	8	5	3
Go and see member of staff	18	9	5	4	9	5	4
Speak to relative or adult friend	3	1	-	1	2	1	1
TOTAL	66	33	22	11	33	19	14
Number of students	50	25	17	8	25	15	10

NOTE: Some students gave more than one reply.

The students were also asked if they had taken this course of action when they had experienced a difficulty. Several of them admitted that they had been to a member of staff with a difficulty, and found it generally helpful. There was little difference between over and under achievers in this respect, either in the frequency with which they mentioned that they would go to see a member of staff with a difficulty, or in the number of times that they had in fact been.

As noted earlier, women showed greater propensity for coming into contact with the staff (one in two women suggested this as a solution as compared to one in three men;

the latter preferring to speak to someone in the same course when they were experiencing a difficulty).

A further point of interest is that one in five students thought that some, generally favourable, aspect about the staff would be one of the things they would most likely remember in five years' time. The aspects of the staff they thought they would remember included their personality and humour or, for a few of the students, their different viewpoints and philosophies, and their willingness to listen to the student's viewpoint.

Summary

The students who most frequently reported that they worked hard, and who did in fact put in the longest hours tended to come mainly from over achievers, from students who were fairly confident of their academic performance, from those with a clear idea of what they wanted to do after university and from students who dated less frequently than once a week. Whether academic achievement at the expense of social activity is a good thing is another question. One second year student I spoke to obviously did not think this was advisable; he and his friends ranged anywhere from a C to a D in their marks and anything above that was regarded derogatively as "getting keen." His comment to the "Honours Boys" who always stuck together in the library was: "You may be getting A's academically, but you're getting F's socially."

However, for the successful students at least it would appear that academic achievement was related to hard work often at the cost of social restraint.

In general, the over achievers demonstrated a confidence in their ability to get through university without failing, an attitude which could not be wholly explained by the greater number of students with high Senior Matriculation results.

Both under and over achievers shared generally favourable attitudes to the staff. Under and over achievers had about equal contact with the staff but over achievers were more likely to see the staff in their offices, under achievers in the anonymity of after lecture conversations.

CHAPTER 8

THE SOCIAL ROLE

The student, by virtue of the fact of being a student, is involved in social inter-action with administration, faculty and other students within the context of the formal organization. In addition to this, as a member of the informal organization, he is expected to maintain a certain degree of contact with the group of which he is a member, the norms being defined by the group and by the individual. This chapter is concerned with the students' social activities at college in the informal setting; his participation in clubs and organizations, his leisure time interests, and his patterns of dating. This enables a comparison between the student's reported activities at high school covered in Chapter 4, and it complements the previous section which concentrated on the academic aspects of his role.

It was felt that the over achiever would tend to concentrate more on the serious aspects of his role, which would reflect itself in his attitudes to both his academic and his social roles.

The High School and the University

The process of adjustment from high school to university takes place on many levels; the student on entering university is required to make a definite choice of major a choice partially dictated or influenced by his future occupational orientation, he has to come to terms with the different way of presenting material and learning, he has to adjust his social life in line with his perceived aims at university, and he has to accept a novitiate status after being a senior.

With reference to the student's adjustment on the latter two points, those of his social life and his acceptance of his first year status, some information was obtained when the students were asked if they thought they were part of the leading crowd at university. The overwhelming majority (94 per cent) felt that they were not, one of the most frequently given reasons being that they were only in their first year. Others, possibly some of them rationalizing said they were not in because they did not want to be in, various reasons being given such as:

I'm not much of a joiner. If I'm going to be in a crowd I'd rather be there when it's starting, rather than join later and go along with their ideas, ¹

or a feeling that it would inhibit their study, as one respondent said:

¹Interview 112.

Me? One of the in's? No. I think I'd flunk.
I'm a guy who has to spend a lot of time with
the books.²

It can be seen that for one reason or another there was an unwillingness for the overwhelming majority of students to identify themselves with a leading crowd at college although approximately three out of five, particularly under achievers felt that they had enjoyed this status at high school.

Approximately three out of ten respondents felt that the university was too large to have a leading crowd, and thought in effect there were several crowds. Some of these were specifically identified by the students when they were asked what they thought it took to be in the leading crowd at Dorchester. The intellectuals, the beatniks and the sports crowds were mentioned with about equal frequency, personality and active participation in extra-curricular activities were also thought of as good assets for leading crowd status.

Speaking mainly of the athletic group, one respondent said:

If you're good in sport around here, you're set up a little bit; if you're mediocre and good to get along with, you're accepted.³

"The good athletes tend to stick together"⁴ as another student put it.

As for the socially prescribed personal qualities, one student felt that "students judge him (another student) on his humanness--his popularity, patience and practicality. They look for a fellow to go along with the crowd."⁵ Having

²Interview 107.

³Interview 105.

⁴Interview 104.

⁵Interview 127.

money, owning a car and being a sharp dresser, thought to be fairly important at the high school level, are relegated to a minor position. This could be due either to a change in the students' values or to a greater homogeneity in social background such that cars and money are no longer necessary to distinguish a middle class elite.

Of the students who felt that there was a distinguishable leading crowd, two out of three felt that some of their friends at least were members, the main reasons being that they knew seniors who were active in the leading crowd, that they were part of a faculty group, e.g. engineers, that they were academic or thinking people, or that they were known on student affairs on campus.

It would seem that both the under and over achieving respondents had made a re-orientation to their new social role as freshmen, in contrast to their elite role of senior at high school.

Participation in Student Activities

The general tendency, noted in Chapter 6, was for the students to identify with the seriously oriented academic and vocational sub-cultures rather than the fun-loving collegiate. With this general orientation, one might ask how much time the students felt they had to engage in other aspects of college life, how much time they spent on their leisure time and extra-curricular activities, and what kinds of activities they participated in. It was hypothesized that though the time devoted

to clubs, organizations and leisure time pursuits might be similar for under and over achievers the nature of the activities would be different, over achievers concentrating on the more serious aspects, and the under achievers participating in the lighter and more social events. The results will be discussed under the three headings of clubs and organizations, leisure time activities and dating practices.

a) Clubs and Organizations

It is generally accepted by students at high school and at college that participation in extra-curricular activities is one way of gaining leading crowd status. All respondents were asked if they belonged to any clubs or organizations on campus and the results are given in the following table.

TABLE 33

NUMBER OF CLUBS JOINED AT UNIVERSITY
(by men and women and under and over achievers)

	All students #	UNDER ACHIEVERS			OVER ACHIEVERS		
		Total #	Men #	Women #	Total #	Men #	Women #
Joined club(s)	37	19	14	5	18	12	6
Joined one	20	12	11	1	8	5	3
Joined two	8	2	1	1	6	5	1
Joined three	6	3	2	1	3	2	1
Joined four	3	2	-	2	1	-	1
Did not join a club	13	6	3	3	7	3	4
Number of students	50	25	17	8	25	15	10

Two-thirds of the students had joined at least one club on campus, the majority restricted themselves to a single club but almost one in five were in three or more clubs, proportionately more women being "heavy" joiners than the men. This is a further comment on a trend already noted at the high school level for the women to engage in more social activities.⁶ The most frequently mentioned clubs were faculty, religious and booster clubs.

There was no appreciable difference between under and over achievers in the proportion who had joined clubs but there did tend to be differences in the types of clubs joined. Under achievers most frequently mentioned athletics booster clubs and faculty societies as claiming their time and energies, with musical and political activities being least frequently mentioned. Over achievers were most active in political, religious and music clubs and organizations of a current events nature (one-third mentioning that they had been active in this type of club at high school in contrast to the under achievers who had showed little interest). They were least active in sporting events. This lends some support to the hypothesis that under and over achievers will be active in different types of organizations, the over achievers being more attracted to the serious type club.

The main reason that men and women and under and over achievers gave for joining was interest in the activities of the club. Second to this was an admission that they had been

⁶See Chapter 4 on the High School Sub-Culture.

pressured or that they thought benefits would accrue, these two reasons being most applicable to the faculty organizations where half of those who joined said they were inactive in club activities. An active member was defined as one who had been to at least two meetings, a more rigorous definition would have excluded most of the respondents.

The majority of students who were only in one club spent less than an hour a week in its activities, this held for over and under achievers. Of those who were in two or more clubs only one in ten spent less than two hours a week in its activities, the majority spent somewhere between two and five hours, the rest being split between one group that was involved for five to ten hours, and the enthusiasts all under achievers who spent between fifteen and twenty hours a week engaged in club activities.

Sociological theory suggests the importance of the groups in which the individual is a member in helping to formulate his ideas and regulate the norms of his behaviour.⁷ How far were the students associating with other club members outside club hours and how much did persons of similar interests go around together? The hypothesis had been put forward that not only would under and over achievers engage in different types of activity, but that their peer groups would also be different in composition and outlook. Under and over achievers were sub-divided by the number of clubs they

⁷G. C. Homans, The Human Group (New York: Harcourt, Brace, 1950), p. 129.

were in as it was expected that the person who was in only one club would spend less time with the members outside the club than the student who had joined several clubs, and had a wider choice of associates. Comparing under and over achievers who had restricted their membership to one club, a general difference emerges with under achievers spending more time with members outside the club. Whereas two-thirds of the over achievers report spending less than an hour a week with fellow members, over half the under achievers spend five hours or more with club associates per week. Of the students who were in two or more clubs proportionately more of the over achievers spent less than an hour a week with members outside the club than the under achievers.

The students who had not joined in any extra-curricular activities did so mainly because they wanted to find their feet and have more time for studying. This was particularly true for the over achievers six out of seven of whom gave this as their reason. As one student put it:

I didn't join mainly because I haven't had time. In the first month or so I found it hard adjusting to university life--I got into the habit of working and got interested. Next year I'll probably play sports, I missed it this year. Maybe next year I'll be able to work it in. I wanted to find out how hard it was first.⁸

Another respondent who had not joined in any formal activity also felt that it was a question of adjustment, of maintaining a balance between the academic and the social:

⁸Interview 148.

I've not joined anything this year, I was sort of wondering how well I'd do. I thought it was more important to get a good grounding this year--find out how well I can do if I spend my time at it. I find I can get just as much done if I join an activity, I just get down and work harder.⁹

This respondent was not the only one to mention the difficulties of adjusting to new social and academic roles simultaneously. When I spoke with a group in residence at the beginning of the study they told me that I should meet the "good" students, i.e. those who could combine participation in extra-curricular activities with effective academic performance. They recognized that the "good" students made an efficient use of their time, but admitted that this was a technique that they themselves had not mastered. They did not give me the names of any of these "good" students and it may be that they only existed as figments of the folklore. This overall pattern of academic or social activity, rather than both, is borne out by the over achievers who worked harder, spent less time in clubs or with members outside club hours, dated less, and were more inclined to feel that they did not have time for all the activities that they would like to take part in.

College life although basically different from that of high school does share certain similarities, e.g. the majority of high schools have extra-curricular activities of some sort. The student's behaviour at university could be conditioned by his earlier behaviour at high school such that

⁹Interview 138.

students who had taken an active part in the pupil sub-society would continue to be active members or "the joiners" among the university group. It is somewhat difficult to compare participation in the high school and at university as pupil activity at the high school level is greater than that reported to date at university, only one in ten admitted that they had not joined anything at high school compared to one in three at university. As most of the students mentioned participation in three or more clubs at high school with no differences between over and under achievers it followed that most of the joiners at university had come from active high school pupils, but also that two-thirds of the non-joiners had also come from this group. However, the highest proportion of joiners came from the active high school group, i.e. over eight out of ten students who were in two or more clubs at university were the "joiners" at high school as compared to less than five out of ten of those who had only joined one university organization. It is possible that the habit of joining is started in high school and may continue even after university.

The activities most frequently reported at high school by the men and women and by under and over achievers were athletics, students' council, and music and dramatic clubs. Under achievers were least active in the current events type activities and "subject" clubs, e.g. biology. Over achievers were least active in what the pupils thought of as the prestige clubs, e.g. Hi-Y and Key Clubs being more inclined to the current

events and subject clubs. It could be said that there was a slight overall orientation to the "serious" clubs among the over achievers even at the high school level.

b) Leisure Time Activities

In order to find out how the respondents spent their leisure time and what activities they valued, they were all asked what they liked to do most in their spare time; it was felt that the over achievers would prefer to engage in the more serious pursuits and the under achievers in activities of a lighter more social nature. It is recognized that this question may have no more validity than the one asking about hobbies and interests in an application for employment.

TABLE 34

RESPONDENTS' PREFERENCES IN LEISURE TIME ACTIVITIES
(by men and women and under and over achievers)

	All students	UNDER ACHIEVERS			OVER ACHIEVERS		
		Total	Men	Women	Total	Men	Women
	#	#	#	#	#	#	#
Athletics	16	8	6	2	8	5	3
Solitary activities, e.g. hobbies	45	20	13	7	25	13	12
Social activities, e.g. dating, going out with friends	26	15	6	9	11	8	3
Cultural activities, e.g. visiting art galleries, listen- ing to music	12	4	2	2	8	4	4
TOTAL	99	47	27	20	52	30	22
Number of students	50	25	17	8	25	15	10

NOTE: Some students mentioned more than one type of activity,

Both under and over achievers mentioned solitary activities, e.g. reading, photography, or working on the car most frequently. Among the social activities, several students mentioned talking with friends and going out on dates, only two spontaneously mentioned formal student activities such as clubs.

Male under achievers and over achievers tended to follow a similar pattern in their leisure time activity, both groups giving precedence to solitary pursuits. The women differed, over achieving women tending to stress the solitary aspects in common with the men, whereas all the under achieving women mentioned the social aspects, relegating solitary activities to second place. This finding ties in with a further piece of information in Chapter 4, that under achieving women all were active socially in the leading crowd at high school in contrast to the over achieving women. It may be that the women who want to get ahead at college are more prepared to conform to the dominant norm which emphasizes the vocational and the academic aspects of university life whereas the female student who either has the inability or the lack of motivation to conform is more inclined to emphasize the lighter side associated with the collegiate sub-culture.

c) Dating Practices

As dating plays an important role in the lives of the majority of the freshmen, and as it may have an effect on students' behaviour in other areas, e.g. academically, the students were asked specifically on their present dating

habits which included questions on the regularity of their dating, whether they were going steady and how their behaviour compared with that of their friends.

Under and over achievers differed somewhat in their patterns of dating behaviour, almost half the under achievers were regular daters (i.e. dated once a week or more) while approximately two-thirds of the over achievers dated less than once a week.

TABLE 35

RESPONDENTS' DATING HABITS
(by men and women and under and over achievers)

	All students #	UNDER ACHIEVERS			OVER ACHIEVERS		
		Total #	Men #	Women #	Total #	Men #	Women #
Never	5	-	-	-	5	4	1
Once or twice in past six months	7	4	3	1	3	2	1
Once a month	10	4	3	1	6	5	1
Once every two - three weeks	8	5	4	1	3	1	2
Once a week	8	3	2	1	5	1	4
Twice a week	6	5	1	4	1	1	-
More than twice a week	6	4	4	-	2	1	1
Number of students	50	25	17	8	25	15	10

A greater proportion of the over achievers were very infrequent daters, i.e. once or twice in the past six months or less; five students, all over achievers reported that they never dated. Conversely a higher proportion of under achievers

were weekly daters, nine out of twenty-five reporting that they dated twice a week or more.

Generally when the respondents compared their dating habits with those of their friends a significantly greater proportion ($p < .01$) of over achieving students felt that they dated less than their friends.

As for going steady, three out of ten students said that they were going steady now, and a further one in ten admitted that they had been going steady in the past but were not now. The students tended to make a distinction between going steadily, which involved going out with the same date several times, and going steady, which was a more serious procedure generally accompanied by the exchange of pins, rings, etc.

There was little difference between over and under achievers in the numbers who said they were going steady, but four out of six of the over achievers said that their steady boy or girl friend was out of town, and therefore they met less frequently, this compared with two out of nine of the under achievers. Three students, all males and all under achievers, mentioned that their steadies were working. The rest had friends at university, four out of nine under achievers having steady boy or girl friends at Dorchester.

The parental reaction to students going steady was felt to be either approving or non-committal, only one student felt that the parents disapproved. Men and women and under and over achievers differed little on this. A somewhat

similar reaction was experienced from friends, most of whom were thought to be neutral, not persuading one way or the other. As one student said: "They do it too. I don't think they're against it." Another student felt that the others were envious of the relationship, and one summed up the reaction by saying: "They just laugh."

As for marriage plans, the majority of students thought that they would be married within three years of graduating. (A more detailed discussion of the students' attitudes towards and expectations of marriage is contained in Chapter 11 in Part IV on Future Orientation.)

This chapter so far has been concerned with the student's social behaviour and his participation in organizations and activities on and off campus. A short closing section examines the student's attitudes to the relative advantages or disadvantages, socially and otherwise, of actually living on campus.

Both residence and non-residence students felt that the students who lived on campus had a more active social life mainly because they had the opportunity to get to know more people and get together more easily, and because there was always something going on, an idea which a number of off-campus dwellers firmly held.

TABLE 36

RESPONDENTS' VIEWS ON THE ADVANTAGES AND
DISADVANTAGES OF RESIDENCE LIFE

	Those in residence	Those out of residence
<u>Advantages</u>	#	#
Social	8	7
No commuting	3	2
Part of university life	3	4
Greater freedom	-	10
	14	23
<u>Disadvantages</u>		
Lack of privacy	5	18
a) unable to work	3	9
b) regulations on personal life	1	4
c) too many others around	1	5
Cliquey	1	-
Don't like the kind of life	-	4
Satisfied with present set up	-	3
TOTAL	6	25
Number of students	8	42

NOTE: Some students mentioned more than one advantage or disadvantage.

Although the advantages of an active social life were mentioned by on and off campus students, the latter group thought that the greater freedom that the residence students enjoyed was their greatest single advantage. Interestingly enough none of the residence students who had already attained some measure of freedom from their families mentioned this as an advantage. In fact, among the disadvantages they mentioned

most frequently was the lack of privacy, the inability to work, and the restrictions on personal life. This aspect is also prominent among the listed disadvantages of residence among non-residence students, one in four citing inability to work, and a further one in four disliking the regulations on personal life or the fact of having so many others around. A few students admitted that they did not like the residence way of life, and three suggested that they were satisfied with their present set up.

Summary

This chapter has been concerned with some of the responses of under and over achieving first year students to the demands of their social role. In general it can be said that over achievers tended to participate less than under achievers in social activities, they spent less time involved in clubs and organizations, they dated less than their friends and they more frequently agreed that they did not have the time to take part in all the activities they would like to. It would seem then taking into account the findings of the previous chapter on the students' academic role that the majority of over achievers devoted less time to social activity because they spent more time engaged in academic work.

Over achieving women showed greater similarities to the men as far as participating in social activities, and did not spend as much time in the clubs and organizations

or with members outside as the under achieving women. This latter group in particular appeared to take a more active part in the social life of the university.

As far as the physical environment was concerned the majority of all students felt that those living in residence had a more active social life as they had the opportunity to get to know more people and there was always something going on. It may be that the off-campus students feel somewhat "deprived" as far as opportunity for social activity on campus is concerned, which may in turn encourage the continuation of the high school clique's existence at university as a counter-measure to the residence group.

P A R T I V

FUTURE PROSPECTS - PLANS AFTER GRADUATION

PART IV

FUTURE PROSPECTS - PLANS AFTER GRADUATION

Introduction

The preceding chapters have been concerned with the students' role in and perception of the high school and college sub-cultures; Part IV looks at their orientation to their future occupation, and the reactions of the parents to their decision or lack of decision. It was thought that students who had given some serious thought to their choice of major and subsequent selection of occupation would be more motivated to do well academically than students who were unsure, or who had not taken the trouble to find out about the future occupational possibilities. It was also felt that positive support and encouragement from the parents would act as a stimulus to the student.

The section closes with a brief examination of the students' attitudes toward and their future marriage plans. This was of interest particularly with respect to the women, some of whom might be considering college as a stop-gap between high school and marriage, and consequently might not be motivated to academic performance but might rather concentrate on the social aspects of college life.

CHAPTER 9
VOCATIONAL ORIENTATION

The Choice of Major and the Commitment
to a Future Occupation

Speaking on the subject of choosing a major,
Sanford says:

For the student, choosing a major is usually a highly significant experience. Often it is the first time that he consciously commits himself to long-range goals after giving due consideration to reasonable alternatives. The choice usually has implications respecting his future vocation, and thus he approaches perhaps for the first time, a socially defined identity that has an aspect of being irreversible. The choice of major is frequently expressive of deep-lying forces in the student's personality, but, on the other hand, it is sometimes derived from highly superficial considerations. In either case it may be regretted later.¹

In this quotation several points are made which should be borne in mind in the subsequent discussion, viz, that the choice of a major is closely linked with occupational choice and may commit the student to a particular type of occupational role; and that the reasons for the choice may range from a very serious considered opinion to a less well-thought out "decision."

¹N. Sanford, "Student Performance in Relation to Educational Objectives", The American College, p. 66.

On the first point, the choice of a major and the commitment to an occupational selection there has been considerable discussion as to the actual mechanisms of choice. Ginzberg suggests that the child goes through several phases from a fantasy period in early childhood to a clarification of his occupational goals in early adulthood.² Case develops the hypothesis outlined by Ginzberg, suggesting that it is not sufficient to accept ostensibly direct and overt indications by a respondent that an occupation has been decided on, as there may be subsequently frequent shifts in choice which indicate that it was a "pseudo" rather than a "true" decision.³ In his study of Washington State College undergraduates Case used three main criteria to differentiate between those who had made a "true" and those who had made a "pseudo" choice - certainty of college major, the true having made a positive choice; satisfaction with the present major, the true being very satisfied; and the amount of information obtained on the occupational field of interest, the true having gathered a lot of information.

These classifications were held in mind, while looking at the respondents' replies to the choice of major, and the certainty of occupational choice. It had been hypothesized

²E. Ginzberg, S. W. Ginsburg, S. Axelrod and T. L. Herma, Occupational Choice; An Approach to a General Theory (New York: Columbia University Press, 1951).

³H. M. Case, "Two Kinds of Crystallized Occupational Choice", American Sociological Review, Vol. 19, No. 1 (1954), pp. 85-87.

that those who had made a true or realistic occupational choice would be more highly motivated to achievement than those who had not made any occupational decision. The following table suggests that there is a marked difference between under and over achievers in their commitment to an occupation.

TABLE 37
COMMITMENT TO OCCUPATIONAL CHOICE
(by men and women and under and over achievers)

	UNDER ACHIEVERS		OVER ACHIEVERS	
	Men	Women	Men	Women
	#	#	#	#
<u>Not decided on occupation</u>	5	3	4	5
Decided on major*	1	-	4	5
Not decided on major*	4	3	-	-
<u>Decided on occupation</u>	12	5	11	5
Tentative or unrealistic decision	5	1	-	-
Pseudo	5	2	5	1
Realistic	2	2	6	4
Number of students	17	8	15	10

*At time of interviewing - March 1964.

Before commenting on the data, some clarification of the terms is required. A realistic choice was considered to be one where the respondent had made a definite commitment to a major, obtained information on his career choice, and had selected an occupation which was not apparently beyond his

capabilities. A pseudo choice was one in which the respondent had either come to his decision without much information, or who was in the process of changing his mind, having come to college with a clear idea. Examples of this are the student who came to college with the idea of teaching because of "lack of knowledge of any other fields"⁴ and was torn between this and going into a seminary. Or the student who came up with the definite idea of going on into medicine and is now unsure whether to go on in this line as he has been "mulling over in my mind whether to be an English teacher."⁵ The respondent reports having made a choice, but further discussion reveals that he is unsure about it.

The unrealistic decision is rather different from the pseudo as the individual may say he is very sure of his major and his orientation, and he may have acquired information on the occupation of his choice. However, the decision appears unrealistic in view of the respondent's present academic performance, e.g. the student who is planning on going on to medical school after he has finished at Dorchester, but who only obtained a D- grade point average on the Christmas examinations and who is only anticipating a D in the Spring examinations.⁶ Or the student who anticipates entering Law school, but only achieved a D average at Christmas and who anticipated C-'s and D-'s in the Spring examinations.⁷ This is not to say that the individual may not ultimately realize

⁴Interview 116.

⁵Interview 148.

⁶Interview 137.

⁷Interview 121.

his ambition, but it is suggesting that his aspirations in terms of his present academic achievement may be too high for a successful outcome.

It can be seen from the previous table that there was a significant difference between under and over achievers for those who had made a choice and for those who were undecided. Over achievers, in both categories, were more decisive than under achievers, e.g. although slightly more over achievers have not yet decided on their occupational choice they all reported having made a choice of major when interviewed in March, in contrast to the under achievers only one of whom had decided on his major. Of the seven under achievers who had not decided on their major, two thought they would not be returning the following year, two thought they would decide after final examinations when they saw their results and three were not sure when they would decide. As one of them put it:

When I came in last fall, I had to put something down. I didn't really know what a major constituted. Now, I'm in the process of change, finding more interesting things. I'm not enjoying Economics as much as I thought I would. I'm thinking more on the Arts line, having done the Arts line this year.⁸

Of those who had decided on an occupation more of the over achievers had made a realistic choice (ten out of twenty-five over achievers as compared to four out of twenty-five under achievers). The fact that the respondents had made a choice and were fairly confident themselves that

⁸Interview 121.

they would not change their minds at all during college does not necessarily mean that they would not change their ideas, but that they perceived themselves as working towards some defined occupational goal.

There was no significant difference between under achievers and over achievers in those who had made a pseudo choice, i.e. although they reported having made a decision, they were not sure that they would not change their minds during college, and, in fact, presented with new stimuli and the possibility of new openings, they were wavering about the advisability of their decisions.

The unrealistic decisions were confined to the under achievers, and were made by almost one in four.

As Sanford has suggested, the choice of a major confronts the student with the need to take some account of his career choice.⁹ The respondents were asked when they thought was a good time to decide on their major or the course in which they planned to get their degree and how long ago they had made their decision. The results are given for men and women and under and over achievers. A further table gives results for the various types of occupational choice.

⁹Sanford, op. cit., p. 66.

TABLE 38

HOW LONG AGO THE STUDENT MADE A DECISION ON HIS MAJOR
(by men and women and under and over achievers)

	All students	UNDER ACHIEVERS			OVER ACHIEVERS		
		Total	Men	Women	Total	Men	Women
	#	#	#	#	#	#	#
This year	10	3	2	1	7	3	4
Late high school	13	7	4	3	6	4	2
Mid high school	14	6	4	2	8	5	3
Earlier	3	2	2	-	1	1	-
Not decided	10	7	5	2	3	2	1
Number of students	50	25	17	8	25	15	10

NOTE: Late high school = Ontario Grades 12 and 13.
Mid high school = Ontario Grades 10 and 11.

TABLE 39

OCCUPATIONAL CHOICE BROKEN DOWN BY TIME STUDENTS
DECIDED ON MAJOR

	OCCUPATIONAL CHOICE			
	Realistic	Pseudo	Unrealistic	Undecided
	#	#	#	#
This year	5	1	-	4
Late high school	2	5	2	4
Mid high school	6	4	2	2
Earlier	1	-	2	-
Undecided	-	3	-	7
Number of students	14	13	6	17

Men and women showed no significant differences for the age at which they had made their choice of major. Three

out of five students knew their orientation before they left high school, many of them having decided in their mid high school years. Under and over achievers showed a basic overall similarity, although over achievers who had not decided on their major when they came to university were more likely to have made a decision when they were interviewed in March than under achievers. Several students who advocated postponing a decision until the student was in college presented a similar argument to the female respondent who said on the subject of choosing a major:

I don't think you should make up your mind too definitely. You might come here and find something else you're interested in. You should have some idea--but be prepared to change; things like psychology and sociology that you've never had at high school--you couldn't decide on them before.¹⁰

Those who had made a "realistic" occupational choice were divided between those who had made a choice of their major for several years, and those who decided during the present academic year. Those who had made a "pseudo" choice had largely decided on their major before leaving high school, three of them were now reconsidering their choice completely. Those who had made an unrealistic choice had come to university with their minds made up, four out of the six had decided by at least their mid high school years. Almost half of those who were unsure of their occupational choice were also unsure of their major, of the rest slightly more had decided by the time they left high school than had decided at university.

¹⁰Interview 138.

As well as being asked on their own behaviour, the students were also asked in general when they thought was a good time to decide.

TABLE 40

RESPONDENTS' OPINIONS ON A GOOD TIME TO
DECIDE ON MAJOR
(by men and women and under and over achievers)

	All students	UNDER ACHIEVERS			OVER ACHIEVERS		
		Total	Men	Women	Total	Men	Women
	#	#	#	#	#	#	#
This year	22	9	7	2	13	8	5
Late high school	25	13	8	5	12	7	5
Mid high school	3	3	2	1	-	-	-
Number of students	50	25	17	8	25	15	10

Twice as many respondents thought that the choice should be delayed till at least the first year at university as had actually delayed their choice. Only three people (all of them having made a pseudo or tentative occupational choice) thought that the decision should be made by mid high school although seventeen students reported having made a decision at least by their mid high school years.

Those who had made a "realistic" occupational choice were slightly in favour of a high school decision rather than one at university (eight compared to six), as were the "pseudo" group (eight compared to five).

Those who had made an unrealistic choice tended to recommend a decision by the mid high school years but those who were undecided on their occupational choice were twice as

likely to advocate choosing the major after the student started at university as they were while the student was still attending high school.

The respondents suggested that they wanted to balance the security of occupational choice with the information they needed in order to make the choice. Some students felt that until they came into actual contact with courses and curricula at the university level, they could not make up their minds.

As one of the roles of guidance in the high schools is:

To make the students conversant with the expanding educational and occupational opportunities in their own and other communities and to assist students with various capabilities to select courses of study within their intellectual range which will lead to future occupational opportunities;¹¹

it is interesting to see how students perceive the role of guidance, and how far they see it as being helpful to them in their selection of a career. The overall impression of men and women, under and over achievers, those who had made an occupational decision and those who had not was that guidance was of no use to them in helping them make up their minds. The main criticism seemed to be that they were called in for a general chat once a year, and were not given detailed information on a specific course they should take. It may be that the high school pupil and the Guidance Officer perceive the latter's role very differently, the

¹¹"Transition from School to Work", Department of Labour Report No. 10 (December 1962), p. 67.

pupil requiring an authoritarian figure who tells him what to do, takes the burden of decision from him, and becomes the scapegoat if the plans do not work out. The Guidance Officer, on the other hand, may perceive his role as one of helping the pupil come to his own decisions.

As well as being asked specifically on their contact with Guidance in the schools, the students were also asked if they had discussed the choice of major and their occupational orientation with anybody else. Almost half the students spontaneously reported that they had discussed, or in many cases, informed their parents of their choice or their lack of decision. In this there was no difference between under and over achievers. Respondents were twice as likely to have talked it over with their parents as they were with their friends, only one in four mentioning that they had discussed it with their friends. This probably lends support to the comment by Ginzberg that:

It is worth noting that the subject of occupational choice is seldom discussed even among close friends, and almost never in a group.¹²

However, in reply to another question asking them of their present behaviour a slightly higher proportion ($p < .05$) of over achievers said they discussed "what they were going to do after they finished college" which in the context of the previous questions meant occupationally quite a bit with their friends. It may be that with the greater confidence

¹²Ginzberg, op cit., p. 103.

the over achievers displayed about their future ability they did not feel the anxiety which Ginzberg suggests is one reason for avoidance of the subject.

As well as mentioning parents and friends as persons with whom they had talked about their future occupational choice, the respondents also named people already engaged in the occupation and staff at school. Whereas under achievers were slightly more likely to go to somebody already in the profession, over achievers were more likely to go to a member of staff specializing in the subject they were interested in.

Thirteen students, divided fairly evenly between over and under achievers reported having made up their minds on their own without discussion with others. One female student who wanted to take psychology as a major when she was in high school had found there were very few people with whom she felt she could discuss her choice:

I had read books on interesting aspects of psychology--abnormal psychology really intrigued me. Nobody seemed to know much about it--the conception of psychology is different even with adults. They think of psychiatrists and the couch.¹³

This student was one of several mentioning disenchantment when actually confronted with the courses at university. She commented, "I've a little bit of disillusionment with psychology--it's not a subject for a girl--you need a Ph.D. to get anywhere in Ontario, and I don't plan to go that far." She had switched to English for her major--"I get more

¹³Interview 108.

enjoyment out of English--it's less scientific. Psychology is quite interesting but you are dealing with small, little things--like rats!"

The Occupation Selected by Students

In choosing a particular occupation the student is generally committing himself to long-range goals as in an age of specialization it is difficult to transfer from one profession or type of occupation to another without repeating the process of lengthy training. He is also determining his future life style and social status.

Several studies have noted that occupational preferences among high school pupils and college students show an unrealistically large selection of professional careers, particularly those conveying high status.¹⁴ The students at Dorchester College were no exception to this general trend. Of the thirty-three students who had made some kind of occupational choice, all had selected occupations in Classes I and II of the Blishen scale.¹⁵ Almost all the students had chosen well known and well established occupations like law, medicine, the ministry, government service, and teaching.

¹⁴Beardslee and O'Dowd found that approximately two-thirds of the students in three different types of college were aiming for professional occupations, generally of high status. The American College, p. 609

Trow found that this held for both probable and possible occupations selected by high school students. "Phantasy and Vocational Choice", Occupations (1941), pp.89-93.

¹⁵B. Blishen, "The Construction and Use of an Occupational Scale, Canadian Society, p. 477-485.

Only one or two students had chosen unusual or less well known occupations like the student who was developing an interest in oceanography.

Under and over achievers showed little difference in the types of occupational commitment that they had made, although the over achievers, particularly in Arts, had made a wider selection of occupations than the under achievers. Seven out of the ten women who had made some vocational commitment had decided on teaching, the other three anticipated careers in law, mental health, and veterinary practice.

Only two students had selected occupations in the business world; it may be that students are deterred from selecting careers in business because of their less idealistic and less attractive stereotype.¹⁶ On the other hand, many of the occupations selected by the students, e.g. medicine, teaching and the ministry were of a "service" type, although only one student mentioned usefulness to the community as a reason for his choice. The more general reason was interest, which might, of course, encompass the idealistic aspects of service.

Only one student said "further degree" for his occupational commitment thus far; but one in five had chosen careers for which extensive further training would be required (split about evenly between over and under achievers). An additional eight students who had selected teaching would probably be expected to take at least a summer course before being accepted in their profession.

¹⁶D. C. Beardslee and D. D. O'Dowd suggest that the stereotype of the business executive among college students is not as favourable as that for other professions such as doctor, scientist or engineer. The American College, pp. 616-617.

Summary

Men and women and under and over achieving students showed no significant differences as regards the time they had decided on their choice of major, three out of five respondents having decided before they came to college. The main reasons given for an early decision were to orient the students at high school, and make sure they took the right courses in their Senior Matriculation year. Many of them actually said that they thought it was good to have a goal to work towards. Those who had delayed their decision thought it was a good idea to wait until they had had experience of the courses; some, particularly the under achievers, wanted to delay until they saw their final results and found out which subjects they had done best in.

As for the choice of occupation, there did tend to be a more realistic assessment by the over achievers, almost half having already decided in the light of their present knowledge and ability. One in four of the over achievers were in the process of changing their minds about their future occupation; the rest had not made any decision on occupation, but were sure of their choice of major. Among the under achievers there was more uncertainty with a tendency for unrealistic decisions judged on their present academic record, and indecision as regards their choice of major among those who had made no occupational commitment. While it is realized that the choice the students make in their first year is not necessarily binding, they themselves recognized that it does at least orient their thinking and may influence their academic performance.

CHAPTER 10

PARENTAL REACTIONS TO STUDENTS' CHOICE OF OCCUPATION

The choice of occupation by the student is of potential significance to the parents for a variety of reasons. As the choice he makes will determine how he spends a great deal of his time the parents may want to know that he is suited or happy in the occupation of his selection. And closely related to this the occupation will to some extent influence the life style of the holder and the parents may have an image of certain occupations as conveying status or high monetary reward or both.

From the students' point of view the parents' ideas and suggestions may be important in organizing their view of the world of work and consciously or unconsciously influencing the direction of choice. Where the parent has expressed an opinion on the occupation he considers desirable, there are several possible courses of action open to the student. He may select the same occupation as his parents either out of a willingness to conform or because he himself also considers the occupation to be desirable. He may reject the suggestion and substitute an occupation of his own choice, or he may delay making a decision under the cross-pressuring of his own and his parents' divergent wishes.

It was hypothesized that there would be a greater degree of compatibility between the views of the over achiever and his parents on his occupational future than those of the under achiever and his parents.

The respondents were asked specifically if their parents had ever made any suggestions on occupations to them; the answer to this question formed the main basis for assessing whether or not the parents had made any suggestion, but other comments that the student made à propos of his parents and his vocational future were also taken into account. Several students, for example, felt that their parents had never specifically suggested anything and yet, at the same time, they had absorbed the atmosphere of the home which in itself led them in certain directions. Two or three students for example, coming from homes of strong religious conviction had oriented their thoughts towards the ministry. Another female student, whose parents were both graduates in the physical sciences "naturally" gravitated to scientific research. This "climate of opinion" in the home could be, for some students, an important factor in directing their thinking in a certain way, and conversely restricting their thinking along other channels. As Caplow suggests, this second factor may be important in that "The inheritance of occupational level is most appropriately considered in terms of the various mechanisms which operate to restrict the range of occupational choice."¹

¹T. Caplow, The Sociology of Work, p. 216.

The following table gives the type of occupational choice the student had made when the parents were reported as having made a suggestion and when they were not recorded as having made a suggestion. Where parents had influenced their children by being in a certain profession but had also made a suggestion to them as to their occupational future, they have been included with the parents who made a suggestion. Where the parents had strongly influenced the respondents but at the same time had not made any concrete suggestions, they were included with the group of parents who made no suggestion.

TABLE 41

THE TYPES OF OCCUPATIONAL CHOICE MADE BY RESPONDENTS
BY EXPRESSED PARENTAL SUGGESTION

Occupational choice	UNDER ACHIEVERS			OVER ACHIEVERS		
	Total	Parents made suggestions	Parents made no suggestion	Total	Parents made suggestions	Parents made no suggestion
Realistic	4	2	2	10	3	7
Pseudo	7	1	6	6	1	5
Unrealistic	6	3	3	-	-	-
Not decided	8	5	3	9	3	6
Number of students	25	11	14	25	7	18

There was a slight tendency for the over achievers to report that their parents had not made any suggestions as to their occupational future, but had left the choice up to them, they were therefore not subject to a conflict of interests between their own choice and that of their parents which some students experienced.

Where the parents had made some suggestion on the students' future occupation there tended to be an even split between those who had made a decision on their future occupation and those who were delaying their decision. This held true for both men and women and under and over achievers. Examples of the former are the under achieving female respondent who had decided to become a teacher partly due to the influence of her mother who had wanted to go away to teachers' college but had been denied the opportunity. Another over achieving male student had listened to the suggestion that he go in for law and had rejected in favour of journalism.

There were several examples of delayed decision where the individual was cross pressured by his parents' wishes and his own often hazy ideas of his future career. One student for example had a father who up to two years previously had entertained the idea of his son being a Civil Engineer like himself. As a result of his disinclination for this field he had taken vocational guidance and had decided to go in for the Arts side, although he had not decided at the time of the interview what major to take, or what occupation to follow.

One or two students resented the insistency of their parents on their occupational future. One under achieving male respondent when asked if his parents had ever suggested what they would like to see him do replied:

Teaching, I get it every week. It has good pay and benefits, why don't you be a teacher? I guess I'm not cut out for it.²

²Interview 130.

Instead he had decided on a career in law, but was barely passing his examinations.

There was a tendency on the other hand, as can be seen in the table for there to be greater flexibility in occupational choice among those whose parents had not made a decision. Several men and women and under and over achievers whose parents had not influenced them had made a pseudo choice, which in many cases, meant very often that they had entered university with some fairly fixed views regarding occupation, and during the process of the year had changed them. If the early selection and clinging to an occupation is "certainly undesirable at the college level where many young men and women are being prepared for generalized roles requiring a maximum of self-confidence, flexibility and originality,"³ then parental pressure in some cases may be considered undesirable.

In view of the suggestion that parents project their ambitions into the careers of their children, it is interesting to look at the incidence of suggestion to non-suggestion among the various socio-economic groups.⁴

In the top two classes respondents were more likely to feel that the parents had never made any direct suggestions particularly true for the over achievers, although several of the students showed in the course of the interview that their parents had had an effect on their thinking.

³D. C. Beardslee and D. D. O'Dowd, "Students and the Occupational World," The American College, p. 607.

⁴T. Caplow, The Sociology of Work, p. 215.

TABLE 42

PARENTAL SUGGESTION ON OCCUPATIONAL CHOICE BY
SOCIAL CLASS OF PARENTS USING BLISHEN SCALE

Blishen Scale	UNDER ACHIEVERS			OVER ACHIEVERS		
	Total	Parents made suggestions	Parents made no suggestion	Total	Parents made suggestions	Parents made no suggestion
	#	#	#	#	#	#
Class I	3	1	2	3	-	3
Class II	10	5	5	13	4	9
Class III	4	3	1	3	2	1
Class IV	3	1	2	2	-	2
Class V	4	1	3	1	-	1
Class VI	1	-	1	2	1	1
Class VII	-	-	-	1	-	1
Number of students	25	11	14	25	7	18

Class III, possibly the most consciously socially mobile class had the highest incidence of suggestion to non-suggestion true for both men and women and under and over achievers.

The majority of male and female respondents in the bottom four classes felt that their parents had not made any definite decisions concerning their occupational choice.

It could be argued that parents who had attended college would be more likely to make suggestions to their children as to their occupational future as they would have a more realistic knowledge of the opening for the college graduate. Alternatively it could be argued that parents who have not attended college might be more likely to suggest occupations

to their children as they see the opportunities for mobility. The following table compares college-educated and non-college educated parents for the degree to which they made suggestions. A third category of influence is included; this is where the parents have not made any specific decisions, and yet by their occupation or their values have influenced the student in his thinking.

TABLE 43
AMOUNT OF PARENTAL SUGGESTION OR INFLUENCE BY
UNIVERSITY AND NON-UNIVERSITY
EDUCATED PARENTS

	UNDER ACHIEVERS		OVER ACHIEVERS	
	Non-college parents	College parents	Non-college parents	College parents
	#	#	#	#
Parents made suggestion	7	4	4	3
Parents influenced respondent	1	1	1	3
No suggestion	6	6	10	4
Number of students	14	11	15	10

First generation under achievers were evenly divided, half having parents making suggestions, half being left to their own decision; first generation over achievers more frequently reported freedom of choice.

Among the second generation college students there was a slightly greater tendency for parents to influence choice without actually suggesting a specific occupation.

The parents who had made some suggestion always selected one of the professions; engineering, the army and the Civil Service being selected for the men; teaching most frequently for the women. It is possible that the parents felt that teaching was a good occupation for their daughters as it was possible for them to return to it after several years of marriage if they ever needed or wanted to. Parents were twice as likely to suggest an occupation other than their own for the students to follow.

Summary

The impression that the majority of students conveyed was one of freedom of choice in their occupation. It is possible of course that the students were not consciously aware of any particular occupation being selected although the subject might frequently have been discussed at home and the parents by their behaviour might have outlined what they considered to be socially prescribed or proscribed occupations.

The students' reaction to parental decision tended either towards agreement in conformity with the parents' wishes or to lack of any definite decision, possibly evidence of cross-pressuring between the student's wishes and those of his parents.

In view of the fact that parents tend to project their ambitions into the careers of their children, it was interesting

to see that among the under achievers there was little difference among the parents of each social class as to those who made suggestions, and those who refrained. Among the over achievers there was a tendency for the students to feel that their parents had not expressed any decision on their choice of occupation, particularly among the upper two classes.

CHAPTER 11

ATTITUDE TOWARDS AND FUTURE MARRIAGE PLANS

Studies which have looked at the marriage plans and attitudes to marriage on the part of college students have found that the majority of college women, like others outside university, attach primary importance to their role as wife and mother, and regard their occupational role as secondary, in most cases a temporary measure until marriage or the birth of the children.¹

The respondents, both men and women, were asked what age they thought they would be when they got married and their attitudes to students' marriage and women working. It was expected that there would be differences in attitude between men and women, and possibly between under and over achieving women, the latter being less inclined to consider

¹Alice Leopold found that the largest group of women graduates in national samples in 1955, 1956 and 1957 expected to leave the labour market on marriage or when family responsibilities required. Reported in "Today's Women College Graduates", Personnel and Guidance Journal, Vol. 37, No. 4 (December 1959), pp. 280-284.

Goldsen found that almost all of the women in the college sample would like to marry between the ages of twenty and twenty-five. Only 6 per cent of the women expected that their most important satisfaction in life would come from their professional activities. R. K. Goldsen et alia, What College Students Think, pp. 48 and 84.

themselves "career women" and more oriented to the social activities at college.

As far as marriage was concerned, the majority of students thought that for various reasons they would get married between one and three years after graduation. One female student who thought she would get married about twenty-four or twenty-five said:

I don't want to get married till I've finished university, I don't want to be too young but I don't want to be too old as you get set in your ways and you can't adjust as a younger person can.²

A male student wanted "two years' leeway"³ while a female student thought that by twenty-five she would have done the things she wanted to do "like graduating, and spending a year in Europe."⁴

Seven students split fairly evenly between under and over achievers felt that they would get married before or immediately on graduation, the rest thinking it would be sometime in the future except for two students, both over achievers, who felt that they would not get married at all.

Proportionately more of the male students felt that it would be longer than three years after graduation before they settled down as compared to the women, the majority of whom felt that they would be married within three years of graduation.⁵

²Interview 113. ³Interview 143. ⁴Interview 114.

⁵This trend to later marriage on the part of the males is similar to that reported by R. K. Goldsen that two-thirds of the women wanted to be married by the time they were twenty-three, this being true for less than one-third of the men. R. K. Goldsen, What College Students Think, p. 85.

There was little difference between under and over achievers in their marriage intentions, both groups projecting it into a future at least three years away. Whether their intentions would remain the same during their senior year is of course another question. It would appear that most students, at this early stage anyway, felt that they needed to finish their education and have some time to themselves before getting married.

A further question asked the respondents how they felt about a student getting married while still at college. Three out of five students approved, the majority giving some kind of qualified approval such as:

If they have the money or can manage to support themselves, fine. I'm very much against it if they have to rely heavily on their parents--I'm against burdening marriage with a financial burden.⁶

While many of the students mentioned the financial problems, some gave qualified approval for other reasons, e.g.

If they get married and drop out, I think they should have waited till the man at least graduated. If they can stay in, then it's pretty good.⁷

Others thought it was all right provided:

They can make the adjustment to marriage or if the individuals were suited. In some cases, it's probably good--probably be able to concentrate more. In other cases, it's foolish.⁸

Although three out of five of both under and over achievers approved, there was a slight tendency for the over achievers to add a proviso. The men split two to one in

⁶Interview 102. ⁷Interview 144. ⁸Interview 131.

favour of student marriage, the women divided evenly, half of them saying they disapproved or felt sorry for the student who got married while at college. This held true for both under and over achieving women.

As might be expected the students who anticipated getting married while at college or immediately on graduation were more inclined to give approval to student marriage, a finding which was true for both under and over achievers.

Anticipated parental reaction to the respondents' marriage while still a student was predominantly one of disapproval, mentioned by three out of five students. Under and over achievers and men and women anticipated a similar response. Some of their comments are given below:

They'd shoot me! They wouldn't like it at all. If a fellow is planning for a career it's an impossible situation--you have split interests, and this defeats the purpose of marriage.⁹

I guess they'd be shocked first of all. Secondly, they wouldn't approve.¹⁰

And as one female student expressed it:

They'd be afraid I'd drop out, and get pregnant. The financial situation would be difficult as I'm putting myself through.¹¹

Only two students thought that their parents would approve if they got married while still at college, the remainder feeling that the reaction would be neutral or one of surprise.

The students anticipated that their friends would respond to this hypothetical situation either with surprise

⁹Interview 109. ¹⁰Interview 107. ¹¹Interview 119.

disapproval or just neutrally. There was little difference between under and over achievers in the expected response from friends. Women were more likely to think in positive emotional terms of either approval or disapproval, whereas the majority of the men felt that there would be a non-committal or neutral response from friends.

The women were asked if they intended to go on working after they were married. Two felt that they would not work at all, as one of them expressed it:

I wouldn't like to work after I was married.
I think it's too difficult to hold down a
job and a home too.¹²

Of the rest, half thought they would work for two or three years or until the children came along. The remaining seven students (three under achievers and four over achievers) felt that they would work longer.

All respondents were asked a general question on their ideas about women working, being presented with the list of five statements on the following table and asked to select the one which came closest to their own views.

As can be seen the majority of students felt that a career and motherhood were incompatible, almost half the respondents feeling that a married woman should only have a career provided she had no children.

¹²Interview 135.

TABLE 44

RESPONDENTS' ATTITUDES TO WOMEN WORKING
(by men and women and under and over achievers)

	All students	UNDER ACHIEVERS			OVER ACHIEVERS		
		Total	Men	Women	Total	Men	Women
	#	#	#	#	#	#	#
In general I don't approve of women having careers	1	1	1	-	-	-	-
I approve of a woman having a career if she wants one provided she isn't married	4	1	1	-	3	3	-
I approve of a married woman having a career if she wants one, provided she has no children	24	14	7	7	10	6	4
I approve of a married woman having a career if she wants one, provided her children are in school	12	6	5	1	6	2	4
I approve of a married woman having a career if she wants one, regardless of the age of her children	9	3	3	-	6	4	2
Number of students	50	25	17	8	25	15	10

Many of the students emphasized the importance of the mother-child relationship in the early years, and gave this as the main reason for thinking that a woman should not continue her career when she had children. A few qualified

this by saying that they felt that it was all right for her to return to work once the children were past school age. Proportionately more women and under achievers agreed that the woman should only work provided she had no children, men and over achievers being slightly more ready to concede that she could have a job regardless of the age of her children. As only two out of the eighteen women agreed that it was all right regardless of the age of the children and as most of the women thought they would be married within three years of graduation it is unlikely that they would regard university as providing the training ground for a life-time's career in the same way that the men would. There was some difference between the under and over achieving women however, in that seven out of eight under achievers felt that a woman should have a career only if she had no children or if they were past school age, whereas six out of the ten over achieving women felt that it was all right provided the children were in school or regardless of the age of the children. It may well be that the over achieving women are more oriented to, and contemplate an earlier return to work after marriage than the under achievers who are more prepared to make a career out of home making.

There was a slight tendency for students whose mothers worked to agree that a woman could combine a career and motherhood either regardless of the age of her children, or provided they were in school. Among the under achievers, the only woman who agreed with mothers working provided the

children were in school was herself the daughter of a working mother. She said: "That's what my mother did. I don't think it's a bad idea."¹³ Over achievers tended to have more "liberal" views regardless of whether their mother worked or not.

Summary

It can be said that the respondents, particularly the women anticipated marriage within a few years of leaving college. For most of the women this means withdrawal from the occupational world when the children are born, while they are young, and possibly for an indefinite period. It does not necessarily follow that the "ideal type" marriage planned by these respondents will actualize but it is important in that this is how they see their future life primarily in terms of marriage rather than occupation. These findings tend to follow the general pattern noted in college studies for women to give primary emphasis to the choice of a husband during the early twenties, and to be concerned less with their occupational future. There were no differences between the women under and over achievers in the age at which they thought they would marry, but there was a slight tendency for the over achieving women to agree with a woman returning to her career provided her children were in school or regardless of their age if alternative care could be arranged.

¹³Interview 112.

The majority of students approved of persons getting married while they were still students although many, particularly the over achievers, only gave qualified approval. The main deterrents were seen to be financial difficulties and personality problems.

The majority of respondents anticipated disapproval from their parents if they were to get married while still students mainly because of the fear that they would drop out before completing their education. They anticipated surprise or a non-committal response from their friends more frequently than disapproval.

PART V

CONCLUSIONS

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This study took as a dependent variable changes in academic performance between the last measure while at high school (Senior Matriculation) and the first measure taken at university (Christmas examinations) of first year university students. The effect of variations in standards for Senior Matriculation was minimized by excluding from consideration in the research design those first year students who were not attending high school in Ontario or Quebec during the previous academic year.

The independent variables considered were:

- a) those defined in terms of an individual student: how he defined his role at university; his adaptation to a less authoritarian atmospheres; and his conception of the aims of a university education;
- b) those defined in terms of the social environment acting on the student: the influence of the university sub-culture; consequences occurring when some of the high school sub-culture enter the local university and transfer the sub-culture with them; the mechanisms of social control exercised by the students' parents.

Though the above factors may be presumed to operate on the whole of the first year student body, it was their significance in modifying academic performance which was of interest. Two groups of first year students were selected for purposes of comparison. One group, the over achievers, were doing well academically at university compared to their Senior Matriculation results, the other group, the under achievers, were doing poorly in terms of their performance at Senior Matriculation.

Recent studies in the informal organization of the high school and the university suggest that student sub-cultures as reflected in student values and attitudes play an important role in defining the situation at the high school and university for the members of the various sub-cultures. Coleman, for example, after studying the high schools in and around Chicago concludes:

Adolescents are not looking to the adult community for their social rewards, but to each other. . . . It is their peers whose approval admiration and respect they attempt to win.¹

He found that the social norms of the student sub-cultures, contrary to those of the staff, emphasized social and athletic prowess rather than academic ability.

These findings, which have been borne out in other studies of the social system of the high school were also found

¹J. S. Coleman, Social Climates in High Schools, Washington, U. S. Department of Health, Education and Welfare, 1961, p. 9.

to hold true for a group of under and over achieving students in attendance at university. Twice as many students mentioned personality or sports ability as a means of acquiring leading crowd status in their old high school as mentioned academic activity. There was basic agreement between under and over achievers and men and women as to what constituted qualifications for entry into the leading crowd at their high school but there was a significant difference at the .01 level between under and over achievers in their actual participation in leading crowd activities. Three-quarters of the under achievers agreed that they were members of the leading crowd as compared to only one in three of the under achievers. It would appear that even at the high school level under and over achievers had defined their relationship to the high school sub-culture rather differently. As Coleman suggests, the leading crowds had tended to encourage academic mediocrity and denigrate academic success. In view of the fact that the respondents' leading crowd at high school had in many cases come to university at the same time, it is to be expected that some of these values would be transported with them to university.

The low social value placed on academic prowess may be of some importance to the high school pupil or university student who has ability and who also wishes to be accepted by his peer group, as it may create a conflict of interests. It is not known, for example, whether the student who is doing well academically is using this as a substitute for the social success which he is denied, or if he places little value on

acquiring leading crowd status. The general impression that the over achievers conveyed, which might have included some rationalization, was that they were not members of the leading crowd out of choice, because they did not share and did not wish to share the attitudes of those who were "in". As far as their status at university was concerned, the majority of respondents felt that the university was too large to have only one leading crowd and also that in their status as freshmen they were too insignificant to be considered a part of any leading social activity.

While there were distinct differences in the way the under and over achieving students related themselves to the pupil sub-culture at high school, it was also the aim of the survey to see how these groups had re-oriented themselves to the student sub-culture in the university. This new environment required the students' adaptation on many fronts, academically, intellectually and socially, an adaptation which some students appeared to cope with more adequately than others.

One of the means of adaptation available to the local student was to maintain contact with members of the high school group who had come to college at the same time, and who could give each other mutual support in their unfamiliar surroundings. The majority of home town students when they were interviewed in March said that they had maintained contact with the high school group, two-thirds of them saying they saw members of the high school crowd for more than five hours a week. To some this contact was of a fleeting nature when they met by chance around campus, to others, particularly under achievers, it was

a perpetuation of the high school sub-culture with "the crowd" meeting for lunch and taking part in outside activities together. Several students from in town and out of town noticed and commented on the high school cliques on campus. It is this latter group who are most likely to transfer the values of the high school student sub-culture to university and who by restricting their contact with other groups and other ideas circulated on campus convey the stereotype of the "street car" college.

The out of town students frequently did not have access to the mutual support of the former members of their old high school group, but it appeared that they had oriented their friendships towards other students of similar interests to themselves. There appeared to be little contact between out of town students living in residence, and local students, interaction being confined for the most part, to attending the same lectures or seminars or seeing each other casually in the halls. Only a few local and residence students who shared a common interest, eg. playing on the same football team, or attending the same church, maintained contact with each other. It will be interesting to see how the relationship changes as the proportion of out of town students increases.

The achievement of any new status requires a period of re-socialization. When the high school pupil suddenly achieves the status of university student it is not unusual that the role and role expectations are only vaguely known to him. Some students may be more familiar with the role requirements through their contact with relatives and friends who are attending or

through the high school authorities, others may have a more glamourized conception of the university derived from the media of mass communication. Whatever his perception of the university may be, the high school pupil having submitted his application to a university and been accepted needs to decide what he considers to be his major aims at college and what aspects of his role as student he wishes to emphasize. This in turn will affect how he allocates his time, and the value he places on certain activities. The decision may not be a conscious one, it may be influenced to a large extent by the groups of which the individual is a member and the type of behaviour which is socially rewarded.

The findings suggest that the under and over achieving students defined the situation in different ways and perceived the university differently, hence had varied emphases on the requirements of their role as students. The majority of under achieving students considered their main aims at college to be vocational, obtaining training or qualification for the occupational world, an aim which has been associated primarily with the commuter college.² Over achievers, on the other hand, were oriented to the university chiefly in academic terms, their main aim being to get as broad an education as possible, and to be challenged by new ideas, an aim which identifies more closely with the norm of the serious faculty member.

There was also a difference in the manner in which the two sexes perceived the new situation at university. The

²B. Clark, Educating the Expert Society, pp. 206-211.

majority of women agreed that their main aims were academic as did the over achieving men; it was the under achieving men in particular who emphasized the vocational aspects of a college education. The women's attitude of education for its own sake rather than as a prerequisite for a particular career fits in with the women's orientation to the future primarily in terms of marriage and home making rather than of a vocation.

The tendency noted above for the over achievers to identify more with the serious aims of the faculty was brought out in the response to several other questions. When asked to describe Dorchester College in a couple of words a significantly higher proportion of over achievers mentioned the staff or some other aspect of academic life. Of equal importance to the under achievers was the fact that Dorchester had the forward looking aspects of an expanding university, which disturbed some of them who were concerned that it was setting high standards of performance. A higher proportion of the over achieving students also thought that they would remember some favourable aspects about the staff in five years' time.

The contention that the under and over achievers defined their roles as students differently is further supported by their study habits. A significantly higher proportion of over achievers felt that they had worked consistently hard all term, a belief that was substantiated by the fact that they tended to spend longer in studying outside the lecture hours and laboratory periods than the under achievers. This was not due to over achievers taking less courses as there were no

significant differences in their course loads. (It is interesting to note that the majority of over achievers felt that their academic performance was better than that of their friends whereas all but two of the under achievers felt that they had about the same or a worse academic record than their friends.)

A further differentiation between the under and over achievers was in their attitudes toward their future at university. Over 90 per cent of the over achievers were confident of getting through college without repeating a year as compared to less than 40 per cent of the under achievers. The greater proportion of students with high grades at Senior Matriculation is not sufficient to explain the differences between the two groups. This, and other examples which are quoted more fully in the section on Methodology, suggest that performance at Senior Matriculation per se cannot account for the differences in attitude between under and over achievers but that some other influence is operative. In the course of this report this has been associated with under and over achievement.

That the student role played by the over achievers is more in keeping with the generalized aims of the university is supported by the differential responses of the two groups to the question of failure while at university. When asked if failing a year would bother them a great deal, four-fifths of the over achievers felt that this would be the case as compared to only two-fifths of the under achievers. In other words, there was a significantly higher proportion resigned to failure among the under achievers who saw it as a more imminent

possibility than the generally confident over achiever. Similarly, a significantly smaller proportion of over achievers were willing to concede that failure at university had no significant effects on a person's chances for success later on in life, possibly with their greater confidence that they would not fail, they did not need the rationalizations that the under achiever required. It would seem that the under achiever was more likely to have prepared himself in some way for the event of failure. Further research might discover the coping mechanisms of the student who fails, the "reasons" he gives for his failure, and the type of help or encouragement he seeks.

The change in status from pupil to student is also accompanied by a change in the complementary status of teacher to that of professor. The student is required to re-define his role in relation to staff, and be cognizant of the new expectations of staff in regard to him in his role as student. Several respondents had not made a successful adaptation to this new relationship, and were still using the high school teacher as a model, even referring to members of the university staff as "teachers". A number of respondents, particularly under achievers, admitted that they were not working as hard at university as they lacked an authoritarian figure at the back of them allocating work to be handed in for the next day. Several of the over achievers on the other hand, who had a more successful identification with the faculty, found it a challenge to think for themselves and have a greater freedom rather than just absorbing the contents of a text book.³

³Several students commented on the Senior Matriculation year as one of memorization of facts from the text book for regurgitation at the examination.

Although there were differences between respondents in the way in which they defined the role of staff, both under and over achievers expressed similar favourable attitudes toward faculty members. Both maintained about the same degree of contact with staff, although the majority (eight out of ten) of those who had never seen a faculty member outside of regular lecture hours and laboratory periods were under achievers. Those who did come into contact with the staff ranged from the single meeting to frequent interaction. The main place of meeting was in the office of the staff member, however, there was a greater tendency for under achievers to limit their contact to end of lecture discussions in which their identity was probably not made known. Only three students mentioned any degree of contact outside the formal organization, and the students at this stage of their career did not seem to expect or want inter-action between themselves and the staff at an informal level.

The way in which the student allocates his time at college is an indirect comment on the activities which he values, and the way in which he is orienting himself to his role as student. Complementing the differences already noted between the under and over achieving students to the academic components of their student role were the differences in attitude and behaviour toward their social role, some of the over achievers engaging in a type of social non-conformism.

As far as dating, for example, the over achievers tended to date less than the under achievers, a significantly higher proportion admitting that they went out much less than

their friends. One in five of the over achievers never dated at all, whereas all of the under achievers reported dating, for half of them this was at least once a week. It is hard to say whether the students who are failing socially turn to work as a substitute for successful social activity, or whether because they value academic success they find they do not have enough time for extra-curricular social activity. Whatever the reason may be, the over achieving students did tend to allocate priority to their work role, and put the social role in secondary position.

Similarly, although over achievers had joined as many clubs on campus as the under achievers they tended to spend less time involved in club activities or with members outside the clubs. The nature of the activities also tended to be somewhat different with under achievers participating more in sports, over achievers in discussion type activities.

As noted earlier the women in the sample whether under or over achievers viewed the aims of the university with remarkable similarity. While this is true, there was a basic differentiation in their participation rates in social activities, and in the nature of these activities. It has already been pointed out that there was a tendency for the under achieving female university student to have been more socially active at high school than her over achieving fellow student. At college the majority of under achieving women who had joined organizations had tended to join two or more whereas half the over achieving women joiners had limited themselves to one club. (This fitted in with a general tendency for the under achieving women to

adopt a less serious attitude to their role at university, none of them felt that they had worked consistently hard in the previous term as compared to six out of ten women over achievers who felt that they had.)

In addition to the purely academic function of providing a "liberal education" for certain members of the society, the university also has a vocational function to train young people for positions in the occupational world. Hence, as well as adjusting to the routine aspects of college life and defining his prescribed and proscribed academic and social behaviour the entering freshman has to think of his future vocational orientation for as Sanford says, speaking on the student's choice of a major: "Often it is the first time that he consciously commits himself to long-range goals."⁴ At the time of interviewing in March 1964, all the over achieving students had decided on their major and a sizeable proportion (sixteen out of twenty-five) had made some decision on their occupational future, although some were in the process of revising their ideas in the light of further knowledge at university. The majority of under achievers (fourteen out of twenty-five) had either made some unrealistic choice of occupation in terms of their present academic capabilities or had not made any decision at all on their major. It would seem generally speaking that the over achievers had a more realistic and more decisive orientation to their major, and to their future occupation.

⁴N. Sanford, The American College, p. 66.

Many of the respondents had set occupational goals before coming to university but as far as the age at which the students had made their choice of major there was no significant difference between men and women or under and over achievers. Three out of five knew their orientation before they left high school, many of them having decided in their mid high school years. Those who had made a "realistic" occupational choice were divided between those who had made a choice of major for several years and those who had decided during the present academic year. Those who had made a "pseudo" choice had largely decided on their major before leaving high school, a few were now reconsidering their choice completely. Those who had made an unrealistic choice had come with their minds made up, most of them (four out of six) having decided by at least their mid high school years.

When students were questioned as to when was a good time to decide on the choice of major twice as many respondents thought that the choice should be delayed till the first year at university as had actually delayed their choice. While many of the students felt that having made a decision on the major gave a goal to work towards, several felt that the decision could only be made on the basis of knowledge which the students acquired during their first year. For most of the respondents the Guidance Services provided at high school were not considered to have been helpful and for many the university had become a place for gaining and exchanging information about the occupational world, particularly to the over achieving students who discussed their future career more often with their friends.

The students who had made an occupational choice largely confined their selection to the old professions and teaching. In some cases the choice had been restricted by the knowledge of what was available and, as noted above, the students were beginning to realize that there were many occupations which they could enter of which they were unaware in their high school days.

The definition of the feminine role in our society and the range of occupations which are considered appropriate for a woman determined the way in which the female respondents in the sample oriented themselves toward their future role expectations.⁵ Half the women had delayed making a decision of any kind on their occupational future, of those who had decided teaching was the most frequently selected vocation. The majority of women however expected to be married within three years of graduation, most of them expecting to withdraw from the occupational world on the birth of their children. The under achieving women generally felt that a married woman should work only if she had no children whereas the over achieving women had a wider variety of response; only a few of them felt that a woman should only work provided she had no children. It may be argued that faced with the situation the respondents might behave differently but it does give some indication as to how they are orienting their thoughts to the future and consequently determining in part their present definition of university life.

⁵G. T. Parsons, "Age and Sex in Social Structure of United States", Essays in Sociological Theory (Glencoe: The Free Press, 1954), pp. 95-99.

While in attendance at university the student is influenced by institutions other than the college. Since many of the students were living at home and others were in week-end commuting distance, the social control of the family was still exercising some effect on the student in his adjustment to college life.

The initial impression was one of general understanding between parents and students with a sizeable proportion (over three in five respondents) disagreeing that "on the whole parents tend to control their children's lives too much." As far as discussing their major and future occupation, the parents were the single most frequently mentioned persons that the respondent had talked to. Half the students had discussed it with their parents while only one in four had discussed it with their friends.

There were differences in attitude, however, between the parents' views on the functions of a university and those of the students. The parents saw the university primarily as an institution providing vocational training, much more so than the students themselves some of whom pointed out the conflict between their own views of obtaining a broad general education and their parents' views of getting a degree to get a well-paying position.

While three out of five students felt that their parents had not made any definite suggestion on their future occupational choice it was clear in the interviews that some of the students had been greatly influenced by the home environment toward certain types of occupation. (It is interesting that almost

half the men whose friends had made an occupational choice gave parental influence as one of the main reasons for their choice.)

Where the parents had indicated an occupational preference some of the students were experiencing a conflict between their own inclinations and those of their parents; in some cases the student faced with this situation had delayed making any decision. Generally speaking the over achievers felt that they enjoyed greater freedom in this respect than the under achievers. (This fits in with a pattern of greater independence on the part of the over achievers, e.g. proportionately more of the over achievers felt that if they were having difficulty with an assignment they would settle the matter on their own than the under achievers who generally sought the support of someone else. Proportionately less of the over achievers felt that on the whole their opinions tended to be the same as those of their friends.)

The university for many students is viewed in terms of its permissiveness and to some extent its social, if not physical distance from their parents. Some of the students particularly the under achievers experienced difficulty in reconciling the freedom they enjoyed in one environment with the more stringent norms of the parental household. One in four of all the students living off campus thought that the greater freedom was the single most important benefit of residence life; the residence students, on the other hand, who had achieved a greater measure of independence, did not see freedom as one of the advantages of residence, in fact they were more aware of the disadvantages of lack of privacy.

Summary and Suggestions for Research

The study took two selected groups of first year students, the under and over achievers, chosen on the basis of a comparison of their performance at Senior Matriculation and their performance on the first term's university examinations and looked for associations between changes in academic performance and the way students related to a changed social and academic environment.

Significant differences were found between these under and over achieving groups in the following fields: role definition at university, cognition of the main aims of a college education, and orientation to the future.

A difference in the relative importance allocated to academic and social pursuits was seen between the two groups. Those in the over achieving group considered academic work the more important and were thus not in conflict with, rather, they were encouraged by, the aims of the formal organization of the university while the group whose academic performance deteriorated as measured after one term at university was biased toward social activities (including sports). At high school, participation in social and sports activities was synonymous with being in the leading crowd, but such a synonymous relation does not exist at university and may be the "high school leading crowd students" found difficulty in assimilating the more academic atmosphere at university in their junior position within the hierarchy of the student body.

Academic performance has been used in this thesis as a measure of successful adaptation to the university. Further

research might investigate what various students consider to be the main components of success at university. These might be compared with the attitudes of the staff to determine any discrepancies between the faculty and the students.

A challenge to the intellect and the provision of a broad liberal education were seen to be the main purposes of a university education by the majority of the over achieving group whereas the majority of the under achieving group stressed the vocational aims of training for the job. It may be that the two groups are looking to different sources for their social rewards and have identified with the aims of university as expressed by these sources. Further research might spell out more clearly the reference groups used by the student when considering his main aims at university.

As regards their occupational future, members of the two groups reported having made a choice with about equal frequency. However, some of the under achievers, none of the over achievers, made a decision considered unrealistic in terms of their academic performance. Of those who had not decided on their future occupation, all of the over achievers had made some decision on their major, whereas the majority (seven out of eight) in the under achieving group were still undecided. Some attempt was made to assess factors affecting occupational choice to see if these differed for under and over achieving students. No significant differences were found between the two groups. A more detailed study might examine the mechanisms of occupational choice and could include some consideration of the student's own intellectual and

social dispositions, the amount of knowledge acquired on the various occupations and its sources and other persons in the students' background possibly affecting his choice. This might include an examination of the students' socio-economic background and its possible effect on his occupational selection. (It was found in the study that the students who had made an "unrealistic" choice came from lower socio-economic groups than the majority of students.)

An overall difference which emerged showed that over achievers in their general orientation to college and to their future expressed a greater decisiveness and independence of outlook than the under achievers. In their responses the over achieving group also conveyed an impression of greater intellectual sophistication, than under achieving students. Further research might show whether these were expressions of personality differences between under and over achieving students.

The definitions of under and over achievers in this study were based on two measures (Senior Matriculation results and university examinations) both of which were known to the student. It is not known whether the values and attitudes expressed by the students were a consequence of or an effect on their present academic performance. Similar research might be conducted where the measure of achievement was not made known to the students, e.g. results of an aptitude test administered on entry.

When the factor of sex was considered, the differences between under and over achievers remained except in certain

broad areas in which under and over achieving women tended to share a similarity of outlook. The majority of women expected to be married within three years of graduation and regarded their future primarily in terms of marriage and the family rather than in terms of an occupation. Consequently they all tended to stress the value of education for it's own sake at university rather than for vocational preparation. Further research might demonstrate the differences between men and women in other attitudes and areas of behaviour and whether this conservatism of the women evidenced in their emphasis of women's traditional role, is brought out in other areas in which their personal involvement is less.

A P P E N D I X

Q U E S T I O N N A I R E

Q U E S T I O N N A I R E

1964

- 1) How long have you been at Dorchester?
- 2) i. Have you decided yet what subject you want to major in or the course in which you plan to get your degree?
 - a) Degree: B.A., B.Sc., B.Eng., B.Comm., B.J.
Subject:
 - b) How long have you felt like this?
 - c) What made you decide on that?
 - d) Did you ever talk it over with anybody? Who? Why?
 - e) Did you ever talk it over with your Guidance Teacher at school? Did you find this helpful?
 - f) How definite would you say your decision is?

Very definite
Fairly definite
Not very definite
Not definite at all
 - g) Do you think it is important to make up your mind early?
- ii. IF NOT DECIDED YET
 - a) Do you know when you will likely decide? (End of first year, beginning of second year, next May after results?)
 - b) Why at that time do you think?
 - c) Have you any ideas now?
 - d) Why do you think you're having difficulty making a decision?
 - e) Do you think it is important to make up your mind early?

- 3) ALL: Do you have a fairly clear idea of what you want to do after you finish university?

Yes

No

i. IF YES:

- a) What is it?
- b) About how long would you say that you had decided on this?
- c) What made you decide on this?
- d) Do you think you will change your mind at all during college? Why?
- e) How do your parents feel about you wanting to be a _____?
- f) Why do you think they feel this way?
- g) Do you think you could train for this job without coming to college?

Yes

Probably

No

- h) Why did you choose to come to college then?

ii. IF NO:

- a) When do you think you will probably decide?
- b) Do you have any ideas now? What?
- c) How do your parents feel about your lack of decision?

4) ALL:

- i. Have your parents ever suggested what they would like to see you do?
- ii. How do you think they would feel if you decided to be:
 - a door-to-door salesman (boys)
 - a hostess in a night club (girls)
 Why do you say that? (How do you know?)

- 5) a) Do you ever talk about what you are going to do when you have finished with -
- (girls) your close friends at Dorchester?
 - (boys) the guys you hang around with most?

- b) Have any of them decided what they are going to do yet?

i. IF YES:

- a) What kind of jobs are they going in for?
- b) Why do you think _____ was able to decide so early?

ii. IF NO:

- a) When do you think _____ will decide?
- b) Why do you think he is having a difficult time deciding?

- 6) Which of the following statements comes closest to describing how hard you worked at your studies on average last term?

I worked hard most of the term.
 I worked quite hard but mainly around exam time.
 I worked fairly hard on occasion but not very much of the time.
 I didn't do very much work.

- 7) Did you work harder last term than you did in your final year at high school? Why or Why not?

- 8) i. About how much time would you say you spend studying outside the lectures?

ii. Take yesterday for example; how much time did you spend studying yesterday?

iii. Is that more, less, or about the same as _____, and _____?

If more, why? If less, why?

- 9) i. How would you say your academic standing compared with your two best friends?

Better
 About average
 Not as good as friends

ii. What would you say was about average? Why?

- 10) i. What kind of a grade do you think you will get in the spring exams? Why?
- ii. Do you think your marks will all be about the same or do you think they will vary quite a bit? Which do you think you will do best in? And worst in?
- 11) How about your friends - what kind of a grade do you think they will get? Why?
- 12) i. If you were having difficulty with an assignment what would you most likely do?
- ii. Have you ever done this in the past? What were the results?
- 13) About how often would you say you had seen a member of staff outside lecture hours or lab. periods? When was this? Where did you meet? Why?
- 14) Do you think you come into contact with the staff about as much as other students? Why? Do you ever talk about this to other students?
- 15) Which of these statements would you say came closest to your own ideas about the staff?
- They are all unhelpful, none of them is really interested in you.
- Some of them will help you if you make an effort to see them.
- All of them seem helpful to me, and would be willing to see you.
- I don't know them well enough to say.
- Why did you choose that answer?
- 16) Would you agree or disagree with the following statements:
- Agree Disagree
- a) There is too much emphasis on sport around here.
- b) Given the opportunity, I think everyone should go to college away from home.
- c) The atmosphere at Dorchester is far too serious.

Agree Disagree

- d) One of the aims of a university education is to make you question your own values.
 - e) People around here don't generally work hard enough.
 - f) On the whole, parents tend to control their children's lives too much.
 - g) The staff are only interested in your grades, and don't care about you as a person.
 - h) I would like to take part in more activities, but I just don't have the time.
 - i) It's better to go to college, have a good time and fail than not to go at all.
 - j) Generally speaking, my friends tend to think the same as I do about things.
- 17) If you had to describe Dorchester in a couple of words, how would you describe it? Why?
- 18) Did you apply to any other universities? Which?
- 19) How many of these accepted you? Which?
- 20) Why did you choose Dorchester?
- 21) Would you have liked to have gone to any other college? Which one? Why? Why didn't you?
- 22) What did your two best friends from high school do when they finished school?
- 23) About how many of your high school crowd came to Dorchester at the same time as you did?
- 24) Do you go around with any of them now? How many? Who? What kinds of things do you do with them mainly?

- 25) About how much time would you say you spent with them?
- 26) Would you say that most of your friends were people you had known at school or people you had met around here?
- 27) What do you think it took to be part of the leading crowd at your old high school?
- 28) Would you say you were part of the leading crowd? Why? Why not?
- 29) What happened to those that were part of the leading crowd when they left high school?
- 30) What do you think it takes to be part of the leading crowd around here?
- 31) Would you say you were part of the leading crowd here?
 - i. IF YES: Why do you say that? How did you get in?
 - ii. IF NO: Why do you say that? What do you need to get in?
- 32) Are any of your friends in the leading crowd? Who? Why?
- 33) What aspects of Dorchester do you think you will most likely remember in five years' time? Why?
- 34) What do you see as your main aims at college? Why?
- 35) What do you think are your friends' main aims at college?
- 36) What do your parents think your main aims should be?
- 37) Do you think you will have to repeat a year sometime before you graduate?

Yes
Probably
No

- 38) If you were to fail a year at college do you think it would bother you a great deal? Why?
- 39) How would your parents feel about it do you think?
- 40) Do you think failure at the university has a significant effect on a person's chances for success later on in life? Why? Why not?
- 41) Did you ever fail a year at high school?
- 42) Did you write your Senior Matriculation all in one year or did you spread it over two years? Why?
- 43) Do you belong to any clubs or organizations on campus? .
- i. IF YES:
- a) Which ones are they?
 - b) How long have you been a member?
 - c) Briefly, what were your reasons for joining?
 - d) Do you have any special responsibilities; if so, what?
 - e) About how much time do you give to it during the week?
 - f) How much time would you say you spent with the members outside the club?
 - g) Did you belong to any clubs at high school? Which were they? Did you have any special responsibility?
- ii. IF NEVER BELONGED TO A UNIVERSITY CLUB:
- a) Why would you say that you haven't joined anything?
 - b) Are any of your friends members of a club on campus? Which?
 - c) Did you belong to any clubs at high school? Which? Did you have any special responsibilities?

44) ALL:

Do you belong to any organizations off campus? Which?
How long have you been a member?

45) What do you like to do most in your spare time?

46) Some people find that they don't have time to take part in all the activities that they would like to. Do you ever find that this happens to you? For any particular activities? Which?

47) If you had an assignment, say an essay had to be in the following day and you hadn't done it, and your friend had made a blind date for you for that evening and was relying on you to make up a foursome, what do you think you would probably do?

Go with friends, and hand in the essay late;
stay and work on the essay and not go out.

48) About how often would you say you dated during the past six months?

49) How many times last week? Is this more or less than usual for you? Why?

50) How about your friends - about how often do they date?

51) Have you ever gone steady?

52) a) Are you going steady with one person now? About how long have you been going steady?

b) How do your parents feel about it?

c) How does the gang feel about you going steady?

53) Is the person you go with at Dorchester?

Yes

No

54) What age do you think you will be when you get married?

- 55) What do you feel about people getting married while they are still students?
- 56) If you got married while you were still at college how do you think your parents would react? Why?
- 57) How about your friends? What be their reaction do you think? Why?
- 58) TO WOMEN:
- a) Do you think you will go on working when you are married? Why? Why not?
 - b) Do you ever talk about this with the other girls?
 - c) What are their opinions?
- 59) ALL:
- Which of the following statements comes closest to your own views?
- In general, I don't approve of women having careers.
 - I approve of a woman having a career if she wants one, provided she isn't married.
 - I approve of a married woman having a career if she wants one, providing she has no children.
 - I approve of a married woman having a career if she wants one, provided her children are in school.
 - I approve of a married woman having a career if she wants one regardless of the age of her children.
- Why did you choose that one?
- 60) How do your friends think about it - do you ever discuss it with them?
- 61) Do you live in residence?
- i. IF YES:
- a) Do you think it is an advantage to be living in residence? Why?
 - b) Do you think you have a more active social life in residence?

- c) Do you think it is easier to work in residence?
- d) Do any of your friends live off campus?

ii. IF NO:

- a) Are you living at home?
- b) Would you like to live in residence? Why? Why not?
- c) Do any of your friends live in residence?
- d) How often do you meet them? Where?
- e) Do you think they have a more active social life in residence? Why?
- f) Do you think it would be easier to work in residence? Why?

JUST A FEW MORE QUESTIONS

- 62) How old are you?
- 63) What does your father do for a living? (Specific: If retired, his occupation on retirement.)
- 64) What was your father's last grade in school?
- 65) Does your mother work? IF YES: What kind of work?
Part-time or full-time?
- 66) What was her last grade in school?
- 67) Do your parents give you any financial help while you are at college?
- 68) What is your home address?

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