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UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA

GENDER AND LEISURE:
YOUTH PEER CULTURE IN A HINTERLAND COMMUNITY

BY

KIM SANGSTER 

A THESIS

SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES AND RESEARCH

IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE

OF MASTER OF ARTS

IN

RECREATION

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THE UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA

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The undersigned certify that they have read, and recommend to the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research for acceptance, a thesis entitled Gender And Leisure: Youth Peer Culture In A Hinterland Community submitted by Kim Sangster in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts.

David J. Whitson
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Margaret Haughey
Dr. M. Haughey

Date: April 17, 1990

For my sisters and brothers.

ABSTRACT

In the past decade, while there has been an increase in the attention devoted to youth culture, most studies have tended to focus on the experiences of young working-class males. There has been a comparative silence about the culture of teenage women--indeed by comparison, the exploration of the cultural world of young women has virtually just begun--and a lack of analysis which seeks to understand how they experience growing up into a society structured by gender as well as class. This study represents an attempt to contribute to the understanding of teenage females' experiences of youth culture.

The study may be classified as a critical ethnography because it was designed to allow young women an opportunity to speak for and of themselves. This ethnography explored the subculture of a specific group of teen friends, with interest and questions informed by feminist literatures on friendships and on hinterland communities, as well as leisure studies. Data collection techniques included participant observation, unstructured interviews (individual and group), and casual conversations.

Much of these young women's leisure was structured by relationships: with boyfriends, with female peers and with authority figures. They were either with these people, thinking and talking about them and wanting to be with them, or reacting against them (confronting or avoiding them). The importance of these relationships in constructing their

leisure and indeed their lives is underlined in several ways. What is also underlined is the importance of the literatures on friendship and youth culture in the understanding of young women's leisure.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The study of youth culture has typically focused on peer life and how peer relationships serve to initiate youth into a culture of anti-social attitudes and behaviours. These studies have generally been about urban, working-class male youths and it has only been in the past decade that issues facing teenage females have been examined (Brake, 1985; McRobbie, 1981). Apart from some very recent studies that examine issues central to young women's lives, most youth culture studies generally discuss young females in relation to young males. Thus, like their counterparts in adult culture, females are only peripherally acknowledged and represented. In particular, little is known about teenage females' concepts of femininity, sexual division, relationships and resistances (McRobbie, 1981). This study is intended to contribute to the understanding of females' roles in "youth culture", and of young females' own culture.

Specifically, the main question to be addressed is, what is youth culture for teenage females residing in a predominantly working-class hinterland community? During the course of this study, an attempt was made to make explicit, and share with others, what the girls may have known only tacitly and understood individually (Wolcott, 1985). The underlying task was to develop a theory of cultural experience

appropriate to these women's lives. In order to describe and interpret what youth culture means to these young females, an ethnographic research approach was taken. The ethnographic approach is appropriate in the study of female youth culture, because it encourages the subjects to articulate the lived experience of their daily lives.

The girls involved in this study share certain given societal positions. They are born of a specific gender (female) and into a certain class position (working-class). Moreover, these girls are born into a certain regional culture which itself exists in a dependent or derivative relationship with the dominant (urban) cultures of Canada and indeed North America (McCann, 1981; MacKenzie, 1987). Given the above mentioned set of constraints, it is possible to suggest that the girls live a certain set of future possibilities (cf. Willis, 1983; Gordon, 1984). This is not to imply that the girls do not have some control over their individual lives. It is assumed that these teenage women play an active role in producing certain images of themselves, and one of the purposes of this investigation was to explore how they construct these images. The kinds of ideas that the girls are able to produce, however, at once reflect and express their particular position in the social structure; it was my task to investigate this interaction.

Further, the role of youth culture in the production of the identities that female youth construct is considered.

Youth culture is a large complex of peer cultures, in and out of school, street life, and leisure. The main interests in this complex are music, clothing, food, conversation and sex; and it is critical both to the teens and to anyone dealing with them, that it is very largely outside adult control (Connell et al, 1983). However, by undertaking an ethnographic investigation of the life, world and lifestyles of these young women, an understanding is sought of what the girls see themselves to be doing. Having done this, findings are situated within a framework which views youth culture as a "site" of cultural production, as well as social reproduction and resistance (Willis, 1981). It also serves as a method of understanding the subordinations that are peculiar to teenage females in a hinterland community.

Relationships between the sexes are a focal point of this study. Such issues as the organisation of the girls' households and their positions within those households, the organisation of their individual relationships with boyfriends, peers and siblings are all related concerns. Further, young peoples' needs to be treated as adults, especially that they be recognised as sexual beings, is central both to peer life and to commercial youth culture. The manner in which these girls define themselves as sexual beings influences the relationships that they enter into, and their future possibilities. All of these concerns are

elements of gender relations: a system of social relations structured by gender (Connell et al, 1983).

The system of gender relations forms a main power structure in society. This is a system of male power and female subordination. Although elements of the 'normal' power relations between men and women may occasionally be reversed (e.g., the division of labour within a particular household), the domination of males and the subordination of females (young and old) persists as a general pattern (Connell, 1985). This system of gender relations, however, can change, because gender relations are socially constructed, not biologically predetermined. Moreover, gender relations, although complex, must also be examined in terms of their interactions with other patterns of social relations, the most important to this study being the social relations of class and region.

Although social structures are permeable, the structures of gender and class continue to be reproduced. Class identity, however, is not truly reproduced until it has been reworked and given personal meaning by the individual and by the peer group, as they experience it for themselves and 'claim' it as their own identity. This may also be true for gender identity. In this way, both class and gender identity may be viewed as being reproduced by what appears to be both personal and collective choice (Willis, 1977). In this study, the particular role of youth culture in the

reproduction of females' subordination is examined. Willis (1977) extensively documented the role of the peer culture of working class boys in Britain in the reproduction of a particular kind of masculinity. While Willis' study was gender specific, Henriksson (1983) has documented the importance of peer culture for both young males and young females. He has examined how the products provided by the commercial youth culture industry affect teenagers' "by way of the peer group" (p. 61). This takes on added importance when, as Connell (1983) comments, much "commercial youth culture is not only sexual...(but) is profoundly, visciously sexist" (p. 165). The sexist nature of youth culture is, for example, evident in the lyrics of much of the music favoured by teens, and in the expectations of young males and the 'norms' for male-female relationships.

It is nonetheless in peer group life that the girls try to construct an identity and a lifestyle for themselves. The lifestyle that the girls construct often expresses resistance to the structural constraints of family and school, and resistance to the futures that the girls see laid out for them. As young women wishing to claim their adult identity early, the girls' express resistance in manners which often appear to be self-defeating by outsider standards: e.g., through sexual activity, sometimes child bearing, and dropping out of school (Walker, 1986). Gender and class

identities are constructed as the girls make choices based on their socially structured experiences.

The accumulation and the results of choices made by the girls are keys to the formulation of their individual and collective identities. Although the teenagers at times were unable to articulate the choices that they have made, it is only through an examination of the girls' choices and the motives underlying those choices, that any kind of insight on the processes at work in the girls' lives can be gained. Only by moving back and forth between the concrete and the abstract can one understand young females in relation to their culture. They cannot be adequately understood, moreover, by following a single theory of social or cultural reproduction.

THESIS OUTLINE

The following chapter, Chapter II, contains a review of pertinent youth culture studies and a brief examination of theories and concepts related to the theme of cultural reproduction. This chapter is followed by a methodological review. Chapter III, Section I, contains an overview of the interpretive paradigm and situates ethnographic studies within the interpretive framework. Section II of this chapter contains a description of my fieldwork itself. This description is followed by a presentation of the data. Chapter IV is subdivided into three sections, each of

which describes the significance of a particular kind of relationship in these young women's lives. The main theme of Section I is about friendships with female peers. In Section II, Females Of The East End: Relationship To Male Peers, the discussion centres around the perceived and real power imbalances of heterosexual relationships. Finally, Section III, Females Of The East End: Relationship To Authority Figures, is about conflicts with adults and about the teens' underlying struggle for personal autonomy. All of these themes are developed further and related back to the literature in Chapter V, Reflections and Implications. Chapter V, Section I, functions to highlight the main points I have tried to make during the course of the study. Section II serves to tie the points of Section I back to the literature. Section III contains some of my personal feelings about the data. Brief concluding remarks are presented in Chapter VI.

CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

In order to review the literatures on themes pertinent to my own study, the discussion of 'culture' will be sectioned in a manner which will allow for an overview of different definitions of culture and an examination of youth subcultures (what they are and how they differ from parent cultures). Following this analysis is an examination of the concepts of hegemony and resistance. Both concepts are central to a discussion of culture because they allow for an understanding of how people mediate and respond to the connections between their own experiences and more general structures of domination in society. The review of literature becomes more specific as both common and comparative elements of youth culture are examined, drawing on studies from Britain, the United States, Australia, Sweden and Canada. This discussion is followed by an examination of influential ethnographies on youth which have informed the design of this study.

CULTURE

Culture may be considered as "a whole way of life" (Williams, 1965); this includes meanings, values and practices which construct social relations. This encompasses not only social relations in an interpersonal sense, but also

what young women in general can expect and want in their relationships with men, and what young women can expect in the area of employment. Williams' (1965) theory of culture is that of a radical interactionism: all practices interact with, and affect, one another (Hall, 1981). More precisely, this paradigm conceptualises culture as being "interwoven with all social practices...the activity through which men and women make history..." (Hall, 1981, p. 25). Culture is therefore both the meanings and the values which arise amongst distinctive social groups and classes, based upon given relationships and historical conditions, through which conditions of existence are responded to and 'handled'; and the practices through which 'understandings' are expressed and embodied (Hall, 1981).

Williams views culture as consisting of structurally patterned 'ways of living'. These are identifiable in everyday behaviour, in institutional forms, and in the typical 'cultural forms' of music, art, and literature. It is through these patterned ways of living that individuals make meaningful the circumstances in which they are placed, as women and men in particular positions in society and in history (cf. Hall, 1981; McGregor, 1983).

Specifically, three general categories may be depicted in Williams' definitions of culture: ideal, documentary and social. 'The ideal' definition of culture expresses values. Here, culture is viewed as "a state or process of human

perfection, in terms of certain absolute or universal values" (Williams, 1981, p. 43). In analysing culture from this perspective, one is in fact analysing "the best that has been thought and written in the world" (Williams, 1981, p. 43). To be 'cultured', then means to be familiar with this culture, to be part of it. Another definition, 'the documentary', expresses culture as "the body of intellectual and imaginative work, in which, in a detailed way human thought and experience are variously recorded" (Williams, 1981, p. 43). In analysing culture with a documentary emphasis, one is in fact critiquing artifacts (e.g., a musical genre, an art form, a game). Finally, one may analyse culture from 'the social perspective'. Here, culture is viewed as "a description of a particular way of life, which expresses certain meanings and values not only in art and learning but also in institutions and ordinary behaviour" (Williams, 1981, p. 43). From this perspective, cultural analysis entails the clarification of the meanings and the values implicit and explicit in a particular way of life.

It is particularly with this social definition of culture that this study is concerned. This definition allows for the analysis of elements in girls' ways of life (e.g., the characteristic styles which express working-class teenage girls' 'being-as-a-group') that 'the ideal' and 'the documentary' definitions of culture would not include as being cultural at all. The social definition of culture,

however, encourages the study of relationships between elements in everyday life; it insists, moreover, that such elements be seen as parts of a whole.

CULTURAL REPRODUCTION

'Structure of feeling' is a phrase used by Williams (1981) to express the thoughts and feelings of a generation. The structure of feeling in any community is not possessed in the same way by all individuals in the community, nor is it learned. For instance, one generation may raise a new generation in a general context of beliefs and aspirations, as well as more specific communal norms and values, but the new generation will usually develop its own structure of feeling. Although the new generation will in many ways continue the general structure of feeling of the previous generation and will reproduce many elements of their parents' culture, the new generation will <u>feel</u> its life differently in certain ways, and will therefore shape its creative responses into a new structure of feeling (Williams, 1981). Just as a young generation of American blacks responded differently than had their parents to the racist structures of American society, so today, arguably, young women in Canada experience a different structure of feeling than did their predecessors of twenty-five, or even ten years ago.

These above mentioned examples illustrate the dual processes of reproduction and transformation. Cultural

reproduction is about a relation of practice between the structure of today and the structure of yesterday, "the way one was produced out of the other" (Connell, 1983, p. 149). It involves the reworking or the living out of the cultural traditions and knowledge of one's community, in the context of changing social conditions, and of the resulting new structure of feeling. Continuity is present in the (sometimes limited) ways of thinking and feeling that a generation absorbs from its parents. Change, however, is also present in the way the new generation experiences and applies these ways of thinking and feeling in what are usually somewhat different circumstances. This sense of continuity has the ontological structure of an 'intelligible succession': "Each day does not come out of the same mould, it comes out of the day before" (Connell, 1983, p. 149).

Culture is thus reproduced and transformed as groups take up existing cultural patterns, and transform and develop them in their own ways (Willis, 1977; Williams, 1981). This practice of cultural transformation, however, only takes place within a given field of possibilities and constraints. For example, the girls involved in this study share certain societal positions. They are working-class females residing in a hinterland community. These young women play active roles in producing certain images of themselves, yet, they are bound by the economic and social constraints that all

working-class women in these towns experience. As Willis (1983) explains:

> To be born within a certain gender, a certain class, a certain region, [is] to be formed, developed and become a social subject within a certain cultural/ ideological web and language community, to 'inhabit' a set of future possibilities (p. 112).

The study of culture, therefore, encompasses both the effects of structural relations, and the manner in which those relations are experienced, understood and interpreted and put into practice. Moreover,

> groups which exist within the same society and share some of the same material and social conditions understand and share some of each others' 'culture' (Clarke et al, 1981, p. 53).

DOMINANT AND SUBORDINATE CULTURES

Different cultures, however, exist and interact in relations of domination and subordination to one another. The culture holding the majority of 'cultural power' tries to represent itself as <u>the culture</u>. This is what an earlier generation of qualitative sociologists called the capacity to "define the situation", and to establish these definitions as official, or as "common sense" (cf. Bruyn, 1966; Garfinkel, 1967). In capitalist societies, meanings which reflect the interests of the dominant culture are actively promoted in and through key social institutions (e.g., the family, the school system, the media).

> . . .the capacity to create meanings [is not] equally distributed. In a society of structured inequality, different kinds of meanings cannot compete in equal terms. Some interests have the ability to make their definitions and meanings prevail over others. They possess cultural power (Clarke & Critcher, 1985, p. 227).

Gramsci used the term 'hegemony' to help us understand the role of ideas in sustaining different forms of domination. Hegemony is achieved by ensuring that subordinate groups are surrounded by cultural institutions (e.g., the school system) that legitimise dominant group meanings and values. The dominant class in society is generally small in size and in order for this class to maintain its dominant position, it must establish its own ideas as the norms and standards which others are measured against. According to Gramsci, dominant ideology

> 'organises' human masses, and 'creates the terrain'; ...it has an 'internal' psychological dimension and ... it is the way in which consciousness itself is structured" (1981, p. 209).

Nonetheless, dominant ideas of society do not exist in isolation. Subordinate groups and classes both realise and express their subordinate positions and experiences, and sometimes these expressions represent their opposition to the dominant culture (cf. Williams, 1977; Willis, 1977; Clarke & Critcher, 1985).

SUBCULTURES

The cultural and ideological relations between dominant and subordinate groups in society consist of the struggle for leadership; "for moral, cultural, intellectual and, thereby, political leadership over the whole of society" (Bennett, 1981 p. xiv). Gramsci argues that the middle-class in a capitalist society can only become a hegemonic, leading class if middle-class ideology is able to accommodate some aspects of working-class culture and values (e.g., around gender or ethnicity). Because it must accommodate elements of working-class culture in order to ensure the maintenance of its leadership, the dominant culture becomes:

> a mobile combination of cultural and ideological elements derived from different class locations which are, but only provisionally and for the duration of a specific historical conjuncture, affiliated to bourgeois values, interests and objectives (Bennett, 1981, p. xv).

Youth subcultures are subsets of their parent culture. They are more localised, smaller in size and differentiated in structure, but they should be examined in relation to their parent cultures because they share similar circumstances. Further, because membership of a subculture cannot protect youth from the conditions which shape the life of their class as a whole, it is useful to analyse subcultures in relation to the dominant culture. Working- class youth subcultures derive from the working-class parent culture, thus, they are all subordinate subcultures in relation to the dominant

middle-class culture, and they express resistance to the norms and values of the dominant culture in a variety of ways.

RESISTANCE

Three basic assumptions are included in the concept of resistance. First, the concept of resistance takes into account human agency, and portrays domination as something actively contested. Individuals are not viewed as simply passive in the face of domination, but rather as people who either identify with and seek to participate in the dominant culture, or resist it in ways that are sometimes symbolic and sometimes more direct. Secondly, the concept of resistance encompasses the idea that power is exercised on and by people within different contexts. Power is not seen simply as top-down, but rather as exercised both as a mode of domination and as an act of resistance; one is, for example, demonstrating some power in one's life by refusing to "go along". Resistance is important in this context because it highlights individuals' "ability as human agents to make meaning and to act in social situations as well as to be acted upon" (Weiler, 1988, p, 48). Transformation as an expressed hope is the third assumption included in the concept of resistance. Emancipation is the guiding interest:

> The concept of resistance must have a revealing function that contains a critique of domination and provides theoretical opportunities for self-

> reflection and struggle in the interest of both social and self-emancipation (Aronowitz & Giroux, 1985, p.105).

Resistance has traditionally been used to describe public counter-school or antisocial actions, and has generally been documented as a male phenomenon (e.g., Willis' Lads). Some feminist theorists (cf. Connell, 1982; Davies, 1983; Kessler et al, 1985), however, have pointed out that young women can resist domination and oppression as well as young men. Further, they are as capable as young men in negotiating "social forces and possibilities in an attempt to meet their own needs" (Weiler, 1988, p. 40). Young women's resistance, however, must be understood and in fact can only be understood in relation to both their class and gender position. For instance, McRobbie found that:

> One way in which the girls combat the class-based and oppressive features of the school is to assert their "femaleness", to introduce into the classroom their physical maturity in such a way as to force the teachers to take notice. A class instinct then finds expression at the level of jettisoning the official ideology for girls in the school (neatness, diligence, compliance, femininity, passivity etc.) and replacing it with a more feminine, even sexual one (1978, p. 104).

Thomas (1980) found that girls in opposition to school authority were either 'aggressively defiant' or like McRobbie's girls, asserted their sexuality. By using sexuality as an act of resistance to accepted forms of female behaviour, the girls "take what society tells them is their

most significant characteristic and exaggerate it as an assertion of their own individuality" (Weiler, 1988, p. 43). In this way, their use of sexuality becomes a form of power. The aggressive use of sexuality in the context of resistance, however, has generally only been used by working-class girls (as opposed to middle-class girls) against situations defined by the school or state authorities. Although these young women tend to assert their 'femaleness' in sites such as the school, it must be noted that this does not mean that they are 'loose' sexually. Both McRobbie and Thomas have pointed out that working-class girls in their studies were cautious about entering into sexual relationships because they were aware of "the dangers of becoming labeled 'loose' in the context of their own working-class culture" (Weiler, 1988, p. 43).

McRobbie and Thomas have demonstrated through their studies of working-class girls that these girls face a double sense of oppression (gender and class). Fuller, in her 1980 study, Black Girls In A London Comprehensive, demonstrates a third type of oppression--that of race. Amos & Palmer (1981) have coined the phrase "triple oppression" to represent the oppressions of race, class and gender. Fuller, however, only deals with the dual oppressions of gender and race in her study (cf. Hebdige, 1979, who connects race and class). Fuller found that black British girls created a complex of responses in the negotiation of their oppression and that

this complex of responses was not necessarily tied to overt counter-school groups. Weiler (1988) summarises Fuller's findings:

> . . . while the black girls were conscious of the racism and sexism they faced, they did not express that criticism as opposition to the school and the system of certification that the school represented. Instead, they overtly conformed to school mores...and more specifically saw the school as the means to resist the sexism of black British culture and the racism of white British culture (p. 46).

Fuller argues that it is in fact the two forms of oppression combined (gender and race) that gives these girls the anger and the power to resist dominant definitions of themselves and to assert control over their own futures.

Three themes with respect to resistance tend to recur throughout feminist writings. First, "all people have the capacity to make meaning of their lives and to resist oppression" (Weiler, 1988, p. 51). Giroux (1983) notes that hope is inherent to this concept of resistance. Secondly, "the capacity to resist and to understand is limited and influenced by class, race and gender position" (Weiler, 1988, p. 51; cf. Fuller, 1980; Gaskell, 1985; Kessler et al, 1985; Connell et al, 1982). This second theme suggests that people will use whatever power that they can to meet their needs and to "assert their humanity". What is pertinent here is that men who experience one form of oppression (working-class men, black men, native men) have

often asserted what they experience as the only power they have (their physical power as males) to oppress the women in their lives. The final theme then suggests that the solutions "sought by people embedded in sexist, racist, and classist society can lead in fact to deeper forms of domination and the oppression of others" (Weiler, 1988, p. 51; cf. Willis, 1977; McRobbie, 1978; Thomas, 1980).

COMMON ELEMENTS OF YOUTH CULTURE

Brake (1985) argues that the growth of youth culture paralleled the rise of mass secondary schooling. Today, youth culture remains evident within the high school setting as youth are generally required to attend high school until they are sixteen years of age. This compulsory education provides the environment for youths to meet and to interact on a daily basis throughout the school year. Although the institution provides the environment for youth interaction, youth culture is often viewed as an oppositional culture to the formal culture of the school setting (cf. Willis, 1977; Robbins & Cohen, 1978; Corrigan, 1979; Connell et al, 1982; McLaren, 1986). It is viewed in such a manner because youth culture develops outside of the control of adults (Connell et al, 1982)-- in this instance outside of the control of teachers-- and because social life and leisure activities tend to be more important or at least more interesting to youth than education (Brake, 1985).

Besides resisting the formal culture of the school, youth subcultures also resist other institutions representing adult control. According to Bibby & Posterski (1985), youth resist adult control because they view adult control as responsible for their subordination or suppression. When youth resist the forces of adult controlled institutions (school, family, even youth centres), conflict often results. The matter underlying the conflict is directly related to teenagers' desire to be treated as adults, and adults refusal to do so. Institutions which are preoccupied with controlling teenagers, therefore, are commonly viewed by teenagers with antagonism.

Commercial youth culture, however, acknowledges and profits from young peoples' demands to be treated as adults. As defined by Connell et al (1982), commercial youth culture is:

> A complex of institutions and informal networks that is able to do...things for teenagers, which offers freedom, pleasure and responsibility, is capable of providing very significant support for the struggle almost all of them wage, at some level or other, with the institutions that fundamentally define them as children--the family and the school (p. 164).

Commercial youth culture meets youths' needs to be acknowledged as adults in two main ways: recognising youth both as consumers and as sexual beings. The marketing of products that, in general, only teens would purchase is

evidence of commercial youth culture extending adult status to teenagers. It recognises that young people form distinctive preferences and exercise those preferences by spending money. Commercial youth culture is also appealing to youth because it legitimises their sexuality. Sex and eroticism are, according to Henriksson (1983), the most common reoccurring themes of commercial youth culture products. By recognising young men and women both as consumers and as sexual beings, commercial youth culture legitimates youths' claims to adult status, and makes itself a part of youths' struggle against many adult controlled institutions.

Commercial youth culture plays an important political role in that it tends to divide young people, and to prevent them from making lasting relationships. First, commercial youth culture is partly responsible for pushing teens away from their parents. Commercial youth culture openly supports and legitimises youth sexuality, while within the family, the teenager is supposed to remain more or less sexless (Connell et al, 1982). Further, commercial youth culture is sexist. It is sexist not only because it separates the boys from the girls, but because it also staunchly reinforces patriarchal norms. Commercial youth culture of the 1980s continues to construct female identity and happiness through finding a male (cf. Rich, 1980 & Raymond, 1986, compulsory heterosexuality and the issue of heteroreality).

To recapitulate, the common elements of youth cultures include the growth of youth culture through mass secondary schooling, youths' resistance to adult control, and the importance of commercial youth culture to youths' lives.

COMPARATIVE YOUTH CULTURES

Youth culture studies which have been undertaken in Britain, Australia, Sweden and the United States are quite extensive, especially when compared to the limited amount of research which has been undertaken in Canada. For this reason, information gathered from the results of youth culture studies in the aforementioned four countries will be examined.

In the United States and Britain, youth culture is socially visible and often dramatic. In these countries, style is a primary characteristic of youth culture and is reflected in youths' dress, music and manner of speaking (Marsland, 1982). Style may be defined as a mode of public self-presentation often signifying a refusal of the dominant culture (Hebdige, 1979). The styles that youth cultures adopt are often perceived as threats to adult culture (Cohen, 1972). For instance, in Britain, subgroups of youth culture can be identified such as mods, rockers and punks which through symbolic dress act to threaten adult culture. In the United States, gangs --primarily of ethnic origin-- threaten the adult and white Anglo culture in their overt rejection of

its laws and their refusal to participate within the formal education system. Youth in Britain and in the United States tend to view their fate as a collective fate, in the lack of opportunity (e.g., employment) extended to them (as working-class youths, as blacks, as Chicanos). This sense of collective fate as a generation is crucial to the idea of a youth culture that transcends individual tastes and aspirations, and may even transcend collective identities forged around class, race and ethnicity.

In Australia and Sweden, however, youth culture is a highly individualised culture. Individualism as a cultural phenomenon suggests that people are no longer viewed according to their social roles, but are perceived as individuals above and beyond all social roles (Henriksson, 1983). In both countries, style is important to individualism. In Sweden, for example, the three most important considerations in the purchase of an article are the price, the appearance, and the knowledge that others will approve of the purchase. The goal is to be unique in the way one dresses:

> I would never dream of wearing the same trousers, same boots and the same jacket as millions of other people. I'd feel quite devastated. As if I didn't exist. I'd only be a copy of someone else.
> Pia, age 14 (Henriksson, 1983, p.52).

Because individuality plays a central role in young peoples' lives, they do not often collectively rebel or reject adult cultural values. When they do resist adult

domination, they tend to do so through borrowed elements of foreign youth culture such as punk rock. Commercial youth culture, however, is quick to diffuse any threat that this adoption might represent by converting youth protest into fashion (Henriksson, 1983). Youth culture, thus, is often viewed as non-threatening by adult culture because protests are muted or disarmed in their developing phases.

Canadian youth culture reflects similar themes. For instance, youth culture styles are often based on 'borrowed tradition'. It is not uncommon for Canadian teenagers to adopt styles from Britain or the United States; thus, Canadian youth culture, like the youth cultures of Australia and Sweden tends to be at a surface level. It lacks the ethnic and/or class origins of the adopted culture (Brake, 1985).

Because Canadian youth do not experience a collective sense of fate, Canadian youth culture may be said to be highly individualised. Young Canadians' individualised understanding of the world likely stems from their belief in individual success or failure. This belief is well established in Canada and has been passed from generation to generation (Marchak, 1988). For example, when people first immigrated to Canada, they believed that they could transcend structural barriers (e.g., language, ethnicity et cetera) through hard work. In a sense, this view was accurate in that immigrants typically did achieve a moderate rise in both

income and lifestyle. Because Canadian youth now have more than their parents did, they may tend to adopt a similar outlook.

Canada's close proximity to the United States often results in American youth culture overshadowing Canadian youth culture. Young Canadians, for instance, often are more aware of what is happening in American youth culture than they are about what is happening to fellow Canadian teenagers. Yet this knowledge remains partial; the refusals of Chicano or black youth are reduced to their stylistic elements (e.g., fashion and music). In Canada, we get what can be commercialised and generalised, while the origins of the specific refusals and sense of collective anger are obscured. Because of this, the mainstream Canadian adult culture is able to more easily assimilate or control Canadian youth culture. One method in which adult culture maintains control is through the media.

> Because Canada is so vast, primary information in Canada about other Canadians is through the imagery of the mass media; so that media stereotyping is often accepted as genuine information about the world in general and Canada in particular (Brake, 1985, p. 160).

Any opposition among Canadian youth tends, moreover, to be smothered by the physical dispersion of small towns and rural communities. For instance, even though a deeper sense of oppression and opposition may exist among Native and French youth, opposition generally is isolated. For Natives

living on reservations, for example, opposition is often ignored or directed inward due to the sheer remoteness of typical reservation locations. Youth in Toronto know little of the struggles of youth in Montreal, Vancouver, or Halifax. Thus, Canadian youth culture tends to be a phenomenon of the cities and Canadian youth culture lacks a sense of national identity.

ETHNOGRAPHY IN THE STUDY OF YOUTH CULTURE

Many excellent ethnographic studies of youth culture have been undertaken in the past decade. Although most of these studies have tended to centre aroundyoung males' experience, young women's experiences are beginning to become a focus of research (cf. Griffin, 1986; Kostash, 1987). The methodologies of several studies which have influenced the design of this study will be examined in this section. The examination will include an Australian, three British and two Canadian studies.

Connell et al (1982) undertook a study of teenagers, in hope of understanding the effects of schooling in class relations and gender relations in Australia. Several interviewers utilised highly flexible interviewing techniques based on a definite set of issues. The areas that the interviews covered ranged from the young peoples' experience of school, of each other, and of the adults in their lives (e.g., their parents and teachers) to parents' experience of

their own and their children's schooling, and their subsequent working lives and the social relations of that work. The sample (one hundred) attempted to locate people in specific situations. Initially the criteria for family interviews included the following: consideration of the father's job, Australian born parents, nuclear family (intact), no parents older than forty-five, and mothers as housewives. Some of these criteria were changed as the study evolved (e.g., mothers of most teenagers work).

Connell et al's field procedures relied heavily on the co-operation of principals. The researchers approached the schools that were composed of the populations (e.g., working-class and middle-class students) that they hoped to study. Upon gaining the principal's permission, the interviewers proceeded to contact students and parents by sending a letter home with students accompanied by a covering letter from the principal explaining the project and asking for co-operation. Next, students completed a questionnaire during class time. Once parents had agreed to participate in the study, they were contacted once again by letter or phone, and a member of the research team then went to visit them in their home in order to explain the project in more detail. If, after this meeting, parents were willing to participate, the interviewer then left a questionnaire and asked for permission to interview their son or daughter at school. Finally, once

agreement to participate in the study was given, arrangements were made to interview the parents again in their home.

> By the time we taped an interview with a parent, he or she would normally have seen two or three of our pieces of paper, and we would have visited the house two or three times (p. 214).

Two points may be made from this extract: one positive and one negative. The positive element is that the importance of personal contact is highlighted. The negative aspect, as cited by Connell et al, is that the researchers spent more time interviewing parents than they spent familiarising themselves with and interviewing the teenagers; thus, interviews with the teenagers being studied tended to be less rich. Nonetheless, excellent data concerning the effects of youth culture and the young peoples' participation in it emerged from these parents and teachers' discussions of their efforts to maintain young peoples' interest in schooling, and of struggles surrounding dating behaviour and the young peoples' 'claim to adult sexuality'.

Issues of gender relations are paramount in Making The Difference. Connell et al found that male power and female subordination persists as an overall pattern in the families in their study, even where there were factors which might have been influences for change. For instance, there were families in the study where the main economic providers and decision makers have been working mothers. Young women in these same families, however, continue to learn conventional

definitions of femininity. Nevertheless, a potential force for change may be established in these households, as a tension develops between the young women's "local reality and the larger structure" (p. 72). This tension may set the stage for change: changing ideas about young women's future employment and young women's position in society. The main point made by Connell et al is:

> In thinking about gender relations, then, we must be alert to tensions and contradictions within them as clues to what is presently changing or is likely to. We must also be alert to the ways they interact with other patterns of social relations--most notably class (p. 73).

Counter-school young men, close to the school leaving age (15 years) were the focus of Corrigan's study (1979), Schooling The Smash Street Kids. Corrigan utilised the qualitative methods of participant observation and interviews. In an attempt to gain an understanding of how the structures worked, he spent a great deal of time in the school environment. This time spent in the school provided Corrigan with insights that helped to direct his interviewing in specific directions and helped with his interpretation of other data. He also spent time talking with the boys informally. Like Connell et al, Corrigan realised the importance of personal contact with the individuals under study.

Corrigan's style of writing was most enjoyable. He presented his biases first and then proceed to explain the

faults of his preconceived ideas. His study, however, is typical in its emphasis on working-class male youths. Corrigan follows the male-dominated sociological line of inquiry, researching only male adolescent activity, male delinquency, and male experience of school.

Perhaps the best known youth culture study to date is Paul Willis' Learning To Labour. Like Corrigan, Willis also studied youth at the school leaving age. Willis studied a group of twelve non-academic working-class 'lads'. His group, known as the Hammertown Boys, were selected on the bases of friendship links and that the boys were members of some kind of oppositional culture to the working-class school. The boys were (as far as possible) in the same school year, were friends, and were selected for their likelihood of leaving school at the statutory minimum age of sixteen (Willis, 1977). The methods consisted of participant observation (in the classroom, around the school and during leisure activities), unstructured interviews (regularly recorded group discussions), informal interviews and diaries.

> These techniques are suited to record this level [the cultural] and have a sensitivity to meanings and values as well as an ability to represent and interpret symbolic articulations, practices and forms of cultural production (Willis, 1977, p. 3).

When the Hammertown Boys left school, Willis followed them to their place of work. While observing the boys at work, Willis often worked alongside the boys for short periods of

time. These work periods were concluded with taped interviews.

Willis' Learning To Labour is a very influential study in terms of its general insights, even though it is based upon a small group of boys. When undertaking an ethnographic investigation, however, it is desirable to keep the number of subjects studied manageable as it is necessary to establish personal relationships with the individuals in the study if they are to talk frankly and freely. Learning To Labour is an example of a classic critical ethnography in its use of participant observation and interview data to help subjects articulate their understanding of the social context of their lives. Yet it is also classic in its focus on males, in its representation of male youth culture as youth culture, and in its silence on gender relations as a structure of oppression.

Like Willis, Griffin (1986), used qualitative techniques to develop an ethnographic account of young peoples' lives which was based on a form of cultural analysis. Her study, Young Women From School To The Job Market, was developed as a female equivalent to Willis' Learning To Labour. In her study, Griffin attempted to apply Willis' analysis of young, white working-class males to young, white working-class females. She encountered several problems, however, in attempting to analyse young women's lives with concepts and theoretical frameworks which had been designed to explain male experiences.

The first of these problems was that conformity and deviance in school are defined quite differently for females than they are for males. For instance, deviancy is generally defined according to young females' sexuality, whereas deviancy among young males tends to centre around verbal or physical aggression (Millman, 1975). Secondly, males and females tend to structure their friendship groups differently. Where young men tend to spend much of their time in 'gangs of lads', young women usually have a best friend or a small group of close friends--generally not more than three or four girlfriends. Finally, where Willis had argued that the counter-school culture of his 'lads' prepared them for the manual labour of the job market, Griffin found that she was unable to make a connection between young women's status in school and their upcoming position in the labour market. Griffin has, therefore, found that young women's experiences cannot be judged against those of young men, and that different analytical constructs need to be developed. This exemplifies the ethnographer's concern with grounded theory: that explanations emerge from the data and that one does not search for data to 'fit' the theory.

Most of the interviews that Griffin carried out were taped and supplemented with fieldnotes. Where taping the interview was impossible (e.g., in the factory), Griffin recorded the interviews in fieldnote form. Although some quantitative analysis was carried out on the interview

material from the initial interviews at the school, most of the data analysis was qualitative. Griffin chose qualitative methods because she found them to be highly flexible; she was able to pursue topics that had not been preselected. For instance, she eventually changed her research design in the second stage of the project so that she was able to give more attention to young women's leisure. Finally, Griffin's study involved the investigation of a case involving a relatively small number of core subjects. As with most ethnographic youth culture studies, this is necessary for the effective establishment of rapport with the individuals in the study.

Like Griffin, Kostash (1987) acknowledged that most research focusing on adolescents is male oriented. Kostash wanted to know what teen culture was like from young women's points of view. She began her research in Edmonton, 'snowball style': among her friends, she put the word out that she wanted to meet teenage females. Once she met a girl, the girl would often introduce Kostash to one of her friends and so on. In a sense, therefore, Kostash's method was similar to Willis' development of his sample of 'lads' through friendship links. Kostash, however, would sometimes look for girls on her own, for instance, when she wanted to meet non-white girls, girls with a specific music preference, or girls interested in computers. Eventually, Kostash expanded her search from Edmonton to Vancouver and Toronto. It was in Vancouver that she made a point of meeting young

women who had dropped out of school and in Toronto that she targeted young women that she could not readily meet in Edmonton (e.g., teenagers from private schools, or from alternative schools).

The core of Kostash's research in No Kidding was taped interviews. Interviews were held either at Kostash's house, or more often, in the girl's bedroom. Supplementary data stemmed from Kostash's personal journal of impressions and reports, and her fieldnotes of unrecorded conversations. She also collected pertinent newspaper clippings and undertook field studies (e.g., attended girls' volleyball games and parties). In all, Kostash interviewed approximately fifty young women. In her book, No Kidding, each of the profile chapters represent single individuals. Unlike Connell et al, there are no composite portraits.

Another Canadian youth culture study was undertaken by McLaren in 1986. McLaren's Schooling As A Ritual Performance is based on extensive participant observations in a Catholic school in Toronto. The emphasis of this study was on exploring the influence of Catholic schooling on youth. McLaren's emphasis on the school environment and his silences regarding his methodological procedures make it difficult to incorporate his study into this study of young females in youth culture. Further, McLaren's concern for religion and specifically with the texture of religion in a Portuguese community is a different concern than mine. In addition, his

concern with young males and relative ignoring of young females is an example of what I want to avoid. Overall, McLaren's study is interesting as a study in ethnicity and resistance, and as a good ethnography. However it is also a good example of the typical urban and male emphases of most youth culture studies.

JUSTIFICATION FOR STUDY

The work of theorists who have addressed the issue of working-class girls' subcultures has stemmed from the feminist critique of investigations of male youth subcultures. While these male oriented studies have been useful, feminist researchers have come to criticise them in several areas. Specifically, the exclusive focus on young men and the "subsequent definition of male counterculture as working-class culture" (Weiler, 1988, p. 41) has been rejected by feminist researchers. Feminist critiques seem to centre around two main points, the first of which questions the reliability of male sociologists' descriptions of working-class cultures. For instance, "...does Willis, in common with other male sociologists, "see" male activities and spheres as significant, but remain "blind" to the significance of female spheres?" (Weiler, 1988, p. 41). The second point of dispute lies in Willis' neglect to mention

the sexist oppression underlying male, working-class culture. In the words of McRobbie,

> Shopfloor culture may have developed a toughness and resilience to deal with the brutality of capitalist productive relations, but these same "values" can be used internally...They can also be used, and often are, against women and girls in the form of both wife and girlfriend battering. A fully sexed notion of working class culture would have to consider such features more centrally (1981, p. 41).

Both the acceptance of the absence of girls in working-class youth subcultures, and the failure to recognise the sexism of male subcultures are interrelated. Weiler (1988) summarises the situation:

> . . . the moral failure to condemn or even to see the sexism of male subcultures leads in turn to a failure to understand the full dynamics of working-class culture and life (p. 42).

In addition, a definition which excludes the domestic world of sexuality, childcare and unpaid labour found in the private sphere of the family, in favour or the public sphere of paid labour, street corners and pubs, can only be half a definition of working-class culture and life:

> To ignore the cultural world of women is to distort any understanding of the totality of working-class culture... studies are needed which will address definitions of work that include both paid and unpaid work, approach both public and private sites and an analysis of deep human needs as they are mediated in all aspects of class culture, for both men and women (Weiler, 1988, p. 45).

All of these issues are recognisable in even a preliminary exploration of the culture of young working-class women in northwestern, Ontario. Youth culture there, in its public forms was very much expressive of the resistance of young men and women alike, of the institutions of adult control: schools, parents, the law, and youth centres. It was in their leisure, and when they were with their peers, that these young people could express themselves; and this is why the study of youth culture and the theorisation of youth culture is important in understanding the leisure activities or 'lifestyles' of young people in this kind of social position. It is about resistance, and the claims to adult status. Yet this particular youth subculture was also visibly sexist in the ways described above. Not only did young men assume the right to dominate in mixed groups, but relationships among the women themselves were very much structured by relationships (and the pursuit of relationships with males). Young women's resistance, and their claim to adult status, was tied to sexuality in ways that demonstrably created problems for them, and not only by creating barriers between themselves and their parents. These issues will be further explored following the presentation of the data.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

This chapter is divided into two subsections. The first section includes a discussion of ethnographies and ethnographic methods. It begins with a general discussion of the positivistic and interpretive paradigms and their applicability to social scientific inquiry. Following this is a brief discussion of critical theory and critical ethnography. The section concludes with a discussion of ethnographic methods (interviews, participant observation and supplementary data). Section II provides a description of my own fieldwork (setting and access), and data analysis techniques.

SECTION I

THE INTERPRETIVE PARADIGM

Two main paradigms dominate the social sciences: positive and interpretive. Both paradigms hold different sets of assumptions as to the central principles and procedures of social scientific inquiry. Positivists believe that the aims, concepts and methods of the natural sciences are applicable to social scientific inquiry. They maintain that causal explanations are possible in the explanation of social phenomena, and that individual will, for example, what

people think they want to do and are doing, makes little difference. It is not, therefore, important to investigate the actors' point of view. Understanding individual actions, or more precisely, "understanding human behaviour from the actor's own frame of reference" (Bogdan & Taylor, 1975, p.2), is, however, central to those working within the interpretive paradigm. We use the interpretive paradigm in the belief that actors' viewpoints do matter, and therefore that methods capable of eliciting them are important and necessary. In my study where cultural questions are explored, including the making of culture, cultural change, and the lived experience of cultural domination, the interpretive paradigm is appropriate.

One of the clearest representations of the interpretive standpoint is expressed in Max Weber's definition of sociology (Carr & Kemmis, 1986):

> Sociology...is a science which attempts the interpretive understanding of social action... In 'action' is included all human behaviour when and in so far as the acting individual attaches a subjective meaning to it. Action in this sense may either be overt or purely inward or subjective; it may consist of positive intervention in a situation, or of deliberately refraining from such intervention in a situation or passively acquiescing in the situation. Action is social in so far as, by virtue of the subjective meaning attached to it by the acting individual (or individuals), it takes account of the behaviours of others and is thereby oriented in its course (Weber, 1964, p. 88).

Actions are meaningful to the individual(s) performing them; they become intelligible to others only by reference to the meaning that the individual(s) attaches to them. When observing an individual's actions, an interpretation by the observer of the meaning which the individual assigns to his/her behaviour is essential (Carr & Kemmis, 1986). A.J. Ayer (1964) illustrates this point by describing how the raising of a glass of wine could be interpreted as:

> . . . an act of self-indulgence, an expression of politeness, a manifestation of loyalty, a gesture of despair, an attempt at suicide, a religious communication...(p. 88).

Clearly, in order to grasp the subjective meaning underlying a particular behaviour, actions must be interpreted by direct reference to the individual's motives in performing a particular action.

Often, however, individuals may not be able to articulate their motives, at least in terms intelligible to the outsider. In this instance, interpretation is useful in helping to make explicit what is perhaps only known tacitly and only understood individually (Wolcott, 1985). This has tremendous importance for understanding subcultures. Thus, interpretation makes actions and life strategies intelligible that might otherwise seem bizarre.

> The claim that actions are meaningful involves more than a reference to the conscious intentions of individuals. It also involves understanding the social context within which such intentions make sense (Carr & Kemmis, 1986, p. 89).

In trying to understand the effects of context, moreover, interpretive sociology seeks to open up the possibility of thinking critically about that context, and its effects on our thinking and aspirations. Foucault (1970) has suggested that we are typically only able to think thoughts that the thought structures of our era have made it possible for us to think about; and this will be explored with reference to the ideas and aspirations that a group of teenaged women in northern Ontario are able to construct, including ideas about gender relations. It is through interpretation that an understanding of this interaction between the individual and the social structure may be effectively pursued. Through an examination of individual choices and more specifically, the socially structured experiences which are the background to those choices, insight as to the processes at work in the individual's life may be better understood. The socially constructed character of commonly shared experiences suggests, therefore, that the meanings which are assigned to actions are influenced both by the past and present social order. Actions must, therefore, be examined in the interpretive paradigm; otherwise, actions will be "denuded of [their] meaning" and "placed in a calculus of movements which have meaning only illicitly" (Carr & Kemmis, 1986, p. 89).

These young women's behaviour may be viewed as a product of how people interpret their world. To grasp this

process of interpretation, one must view their behaviour from their point of view. Max Weber has coined this process verstehen (Bogdan & Taylor, 1975). Verstehen explanations endeavour to explain human actions by clarifying the thinking by which actions are undertaken and setting this thinking in the context of the social rules and forms of life within which they occur. In this way, verstehen explanations increase knowledge as to why social life is experienced in the way that it is (Carr & Kemmis, 1986).

The epistemological approach of critical theory represents a particular development of the qualitative methods found in the interpretive paradigm (Kirby & McKenna, 1989). Critical theory owes its origins largely to the Frankfurt School, and its contemporary shape to the influential work of Jurgen Habermas. Habermas has most fully articulated the project of a critical science: a science that could breach the gap between philosophy and the natural sciences. In proposing this critical science, Habermas developed a three-fold classification system of knowledge: technical, practical and emancipatory.

The interest of technical knowledge is control over natural processes. This empirical-analytic form of knowledge incorporates technical control over natural and social reality; it does not ask questions about purposes. In contrast with technical knowledge is the practical interest of Human Sciences or 'hermeneutic science', which includes

collective moral purposes as well as technique: "what is to be done?" Critical science, however, moves beyond the research interests of both natural and hermeneutic sciences (e.g., beyond technical and practical interests). By seeing critical theory as informed by both facts and values, the way is paved for a critique of existing society. Beyond this, moreover, the way is paved for value questions to be argued in a systematic and informed way (e.g., to go beyond a purely subjective relativism). Although Habermas accepts the interpretive insight that social life cannot be explained in terms of generalisations and predictions, he also accepts that the source of subjective meanings lies outside individual action and, therefore, that individuals' intentions may be socially constructed (Carr & Kemmis, 1986). The interest central to this self-reflective form of knowledge is <u>emancipation</u> which ultimately requires paradigm shifts in current ways of thinking (Clarke et al, 1985). Critical research can be used to focus upon class-specific and gender-specific socialisation patterns. The key linkage in relating critical science to human society is the fact that critical theory assumes that people have the capacity to be reflective about their own formative processes.

A critical ethnographic research approach was taken because it was intended to encourage young females to speak for and of themselves, and thereby to be reflective about how they became who they are. It is through ethnographic methods

that one has hope of "seeing the between" (Weber, 1986), and through the ethnographic account that the interplay between structure and agency that is present in the lives of these young women may transfer into the analysis and the reader's experience of it (Willis, 1977). This is vital when culture is viewed:

> . . . not simply as a set of transferred internal structures (as in the usual notion of socialisation) nor as the passive result of the action of dominant ideology downwards (as in certain kinds of marxism), but at least in part as the product of collective human praxis (Willis, 1977, p. 4).

ETHNOGRAPHIC METHODS

Qualitative methods:

> . . . offers a contextual relevance and richness unmatched by any other paradigm. It displays a sensitivity to process virtually excluded in paradigms stressing control and experimentation. It is driven by theory grounded in the data; the naturalist does not search for data that fit his or her theory but develops a theory to explain the data...takes full advantage of the not inconsiderable power of the human-as-instrument, providing a more than adequate trade-off for the presumably more "objective" approach that characterises rationalistic inquiry (Guba & Lincoln, 1982, p. 235).

The qualitative methods most widely used and proven in ethnographic studies have typically been unstructured interviews, participant observation and personal documents. In it's earlier meaning, interviewing was understood to mean

"seeing the between" (entre vue) or meeting to share a viewpoint (Weber, 1986). Both Friedman (1983) and Buber (1965) maintain that it is the 'between' that allows individuals to learn about each other; thus,

> . . .the interview must be a conversation between interviewer and participant that evokes the participant's lived experience, seeking shared understanding (Weber, 1986, p. 68).

The researcher's aim is to establish rapport with his/her subjects. In this instance, rapport was developed as the girls' confidence and trust was won. The girls interviewed became willing to share both their past and present feelings and experiences with an investigator whose interest and whose commitment to understanding their point of view they had learned to trust.

Similar to interviewing, it is important when undertaking participant observation to allow the research to evolve (Bromley & Shupe Jr, 1980): one should remain relatively passive during the first few days in the field.

> . . .the research design in participant observation studies remains flexible up to and including the actual beginning of the research. While participant observers have a methodology to follow, the specifics of their approach evolve as they proceed (Bogdan & Taylor, 1975, p. 26).

In order to minimise the effects of the researcher's presence in the field, the researcher should not tape conversations, nor take notes in the field until relationships are firmly established. Because fieldnotes provide the data for

participant observations, however, the most comprehensive fieldnotes possible should be produced very shortly after the event. Included in these fieldnotes are:

> . . .descriptions of subjects (their appearance, gestures and expressions), events, conversations, and the observer's own feelings, opinions and working hypotheses. The sequence and duration of events and conversations are noted. The fabric of the setting is described in detail. In short, the fieldnotes represent an attempt on the part of the observer to record on paper everything that she or he can possibly remember about the session (Bogdan & Taylor, 1975, p. 61).

Fieldnotes should be recorded after each observation period, as well as after casual contacts with the subjects (e.g., chance meeting with subject while shopping). In fact, detailed fieldnotes should be kept during the process of gaining access to the field, as everything that occurs involving the group is a potential source of important data (Bogdan & Taylor, 1975). Besides recording information about participants' behaviour, the researcher should record his or her own feelings, interpretations and preconceptions. These 'observer's comments' could eventually prove to be an invaluable aid in directing the researcher's attention to important topics and in developing hypotheses.

In my original plan, supplementary data in the form of personal diaries was to be sought. Bogdan and Taylor (p.98) state that "the intimate diary is an excellent source of data because of the level of intimacy and because it contains

reflections of one's immediate experiences." The East End girls, however, did not keep diaries. They preferred to communicate private and personal accounts through poetry. Most of the girls willingly gave me copies of their personal poems, and all who did so were assured of anonymity. Although poems (like diaries) cannot be viewed as 'objective' data, they do capture the expressions of the people who write them, and help the reader whose life is different to "see the between", and to understand the other's outlook and where it comes from. Besides containing reflections of the individual's experiences, the poetry can alert the researcher to potentially fruitful lines of inquiry (Bogdan & Taylor, 1975). The poetry, however, was only one attempt at gaining a supplementary source of data, and the project did not depend upon the subjects' willingness nor ability to write 'good' poetry.

Finally, other supplementary data (e.g., newspaper clippings) were collected. These other forms of data, like the poetry, were treated as subjective expressions of the people who wrote them.

SECTION II

This section provides a description of my fieldwork and data analysis techniques. Included under the subheading Fieldwork is a description of the East End, and an account of the process of my acceptance by the East End teens.

Following this description of setting and access is a description of my data analysis techniques. In this section, Data Analysis: Techniques, I explain how I sorted and categorised what appeared to be an overwhelming amount of data.

THE STUDY

In undertaking this study of young females residing in a northwestern Ontario community, the data collection devices of unstructured interviews with individuals and groups (e.g., as in Willis' and Griffin's studies), casual conversations and participant observations were employed. The participant observation element was achieved while working as a youth leader for a Teen Programme. Informants were met through the Teen Programme and after a few weeks were asked to participate in interviews. Networks were also expanded through friendship links (e.g., as in Willis' and Kostash's studies).

While working as a youth leader at the Boys' and Girls' Club, I was able to interact with teenagers on a daily basis throughout the summer months. The position that I held at the youth centre not only made quick development of rapport necessary, but also facilitated the development of rapport. After working at the centre for a while, relationships of trust were established with many of the youth. At this point in time, I asked approximately eight girls to

participate in formal interviews. From these interviews, five girls were selected for further interviewing on the basis of their willingness to share their past and present feelings and experiences. It was these five girls who formed the core group of this study. It is through them that I checked my interpretations of what was happening at the youth centre, and my interpretations of what others had related to me during recorded and unrecorded interviews. Some girls were therefore identified as 'key' participants, while others provided data to confirm or explore preliminary understandings. Interviews had an agenda of themes and issues which were pursued with the girls, but which were unstructured in their precise format.

All tape recorded interviews were transcribed and preliminary interpretations and hypotheses were discussed with interviewees. The analysis of the taped interview along with participant observations are the main thesis data strategies with supplementary data gathered from poetry, pertinent newspaper clippings and daily reports.

(i) Setting

The Boys and Girls Club was located in the part of town which is commonly referred to as the East End. This section of town is known for its low income and almost dilapidated housing. Travelling towards the East End, one cannot help noticing that the number of small well kept businesses

diminishes. These businesses are instead replaced by an ever increasing number of pinball arcades, pool halls, seedy bars and movie theatres which boast live "XXX" adult entertainment. Police cruisers, a rare sight in other neighbourhoods are suddenly present in droves. The street names become more familiar. They are frequently heard on the evening news as the scene of an assault or a murder. This is the commercial section of the East End. These are the streets on which "East Enders" walk and wait for buses. Between the porno theaters, seedy bars, and run-down residential hotels, are the grocery stores at which they shop.

The residences of the East End are visible 'en masse' from the railroad over pass. On first sight they appear similar to the high density, row housing which is a common sight in England. In the European tradition, very little land space has gone to waste. With little green space, structures seem to occupy almost all of the land area--even the ground underneath the overpass. At the same time, however, the residences lack the substance imparted by the brick construction of their English counterparts. Constructed during the material shortages of WWII, and suffering from a lack of maintenance, most of the homes are in a continuous state of disrepair.

In addition to the homes, which are quite unique to the East End, there are a number of other physical structures

which the teens identify as part of their neighbourhood. The most prominent 'monument' is what the teens refer to as the "subway". The subway is an underground pedestrian walkway which runs underneath the railroad. Excluding the overpass, which involves a great deal of extra walking, the subway is the only legal means for pedestrians to cross the tracks. Because crossing above the tracks carries with it a large fine which is strictly enforced, most teens use the subway in order to access the rest of the city, despite their misgivings. The teens' misgivings about the subway are well founded. Reeking of urine and covered with graffiti, the subway has been the scene of several rapes and muggings. The lack of any commercial gathering places, such as malls or restaurants, in the East End means that the teens are continually exposed to the perils of the subway in order to access their favourite hangouts.

The people who reside in the East End are predominantly welfare or unemployment insurance recipients. Those people that are fortunate enough to have work are employed generally as unskilled labour at the city's factories and mills. Common sights in the East End are the adults, and many teens, in procession through the subway with cases of beer, teens hanging-out on front steps "enjoying a buzz", and little children in dirty, poorly fitting clothing. The physical isolation, the sounds and the sights all combine to create the impression that the East End is stagnant and culturally

inbred. To an outside observer, it appeared quite clear that the East End is both figuratively and literally the wrong side of the tracks.

(ii) Access

In order to meet the teenage women of the East End, I made arrangements to work at the Boys and Girls Club. I contacted the teen programme co-ordinater and explained to her that I was interested in doing research and that I would welcome the opportunity to volunteer at the club. She sounded enthusiastic about my volunteering, and she agreed that I could begin working with the Club the first week of July.

During my first two weeks of the teen summer programme, I was called on quite often to volunteer. Initially, I was happy to volunteer, but after volunteering for a variety of events (bingo, junior dance, equipment pick-up) I realised that the volunteering that I was asked to do acted to keep me separated from the teens. The majority of the teenagers appeared to have better things to do with their time, and rejected most opportunities to work for the youth centre. I considered turning down a few opportunities to volunteer, and I reviewed the progress I had made since beginning work at the centre. I reasoned that as much as volunteering kept me away from the teens, it also provided me with the opportunity to slowly phase into their lives. How else was I going to do

it? Pretend to be one of them? I came to appreciate that the volunteering and the acceptance by the centre staff was central to clarifying my position to the teens. It only took a few days for the teens to accept me as a staff member that knew how to relate to them.

The first time I knew that I had been accepted as a staff member occurred while I was driving with the teens on an equipment pickup. A family in the area had donated an airhockey game to the centre, and I was sent to pick it up. I was unfamiliar with the area and asked some of the teens to come with me in order to navigate. I was actually pleasantly surprised that some of them (Katlain, Shayne and Dodge) did. They were all quite obnoxious in the van, singing and carrying on, but they knew their directions quite well. Most of them did not drive a vehicle, however, and they did not take one-way streets into account. When I backed into a driveway to get us going in the right direction, the teens became completely silent and Shayne hid his head in embarrassment. After the shock wore off, Dodge turned in his seat and warned Katlain, "you better not tell Diane what happened". I did not quite understand what they had been upset about, but learned later that they thought I might not be able to take the van out again.

My relationship with the teens continued to improve through my voluntary role with the junior dance. While I was working in the kitchen, which was being used as a snack bar

for the dance, I was asked to monitor some teens who wanted to work the dance in order to pay for their club membership. It was at this dance that I learned that tensions had recently developed between some of the older female teens, and for the first time, could clearly identify the girls' positions within the group.

After a few weeks, the formal volunteering activities seemed to slow down. I continued to be viewed as a staff member, and acted in a manner which would not likely suggest otherwise. I did do some small things, though, which differentiated me from the other staff. While I was formalising the class change for my license, I picked up half a dozen driver trainer manuals. I took them to the centre for the teens and sat down with them for impromptu lessons. In addition, I secured furniture for the teen lounge, and got them to help me clean it. To be perfectly honest, I had to bribe them with promises of a pop after we were finished cleaning, but they did help. This situation also acted to open up the doors for "coffees", and for group interviews on a regular basis.

One night after cleaning the teen lounge, the teens introduced me to their favourite local restaurant. While we were sitting there having our cokes, the teens asked me what exactly I was doing at the centre. I explained that I was doing research, and that I was really interested in what was important to teenagers. I showed them my tape recorder, and

explained about confidentiality. I got the general impression that they were more impressed with the tape recorder and the idea that they could listen to themselves after an interview than they were with the fact that I was doing any type of research.

The novelty continued throughout the evening, and everytime a new teen arrived at the restaurant, the other teens were always pointing out the fact that I had a tape recorder and a new round of jokes would start. After a few days, the teens began to actively seek me out, hoping to be included in the interviews. It was during my very first personal interview (with Margo), that the teens' desire to be interviewed became apparent. It took the other teens approximately 20 minutes to find us, but find us they did, and they were eager to be involved. The conversation turned away from Margo and towards dreams, sex, parties, and poems. Margo was visibly upset. She became annoyed further, however, when the teens wanted to listen to their conversation. Margo objected, and I agreed with her. The teens, however, continued to badger Margo until she agreed that it would be ok for me to find the section that the other teens could listen to.

The teens became increasingly aware of my departures from the centre, aware that my absences indicated an interview in progress, and they became more interested and more rapid in their pursuit of me and my tape recorder. It

seemed that all of the teens (male and female) wanted personal interviews, and that they were becoming quite adept at operating and maintaining the recorder. I talked to the teens and promised them all a personal interview, but switched my times for personal interviews to the day when the centre was basically closed to the teens, and mainly gave group interviews during the evening. This idea proved to meet with the teens satisfaction, and consequently I ended up with many taped informal interviews. Had the teens not taken such an interest in the interviews, I might not have ended up with all of the interviews recorded. On one occasion, I began an interview with dying batteries in the recorder, and it was not until the end of the tape that the teens pointed out to me that the tape had not recorded the interview. From that point, the teens took the initiative to control the volume, set the tapes and check the batteries. This action on their part reinforced the idea put forth by Bogdan and Taylor (1975, p. 101) "...that all people have at least one important story to tell--their own--and that they want to share it with others".

My role with the teens changed yet again as the teens began to accept me as a trusted friend rather than a mere curiosity. This became apparent during my second meeting with Sarina. She was sitting outside the centre, having a smoke and talking to Lynn. For one reason or another, Sarina decided to tell me that she was thirteen weeks pregnant and

was going to go in for an abortion. I asked her who was helping her out and how her boyfriend felt when she began to tell me the rest of the horror story. Apparently, her boyfriend was in jail and did not know yet because "it wasn't his kid". Nobody knew. She could not tell her father "cause he'd kill me", she could not tell Shawn's parents (her boyfriend's parent's) because she was living with them and they knew where their son was (prison). She was especially afraid that Shawn's mother would find out because she worked as a nurse in the maternity ward at the hospital in the city where abortions were done. The situation looked bleak, and I invited Sarina for coffees in order to talk with her further.

We went to a small Chinese restaurant, took a booth and ordered a few cokes. While sipping the cokes and smoking up a storm, Sarina filled in the details of her situation. I asked who was going to sign as the responsible adult (watch her for 24 hours after surgery), how she was going to spend time in the hospital without Shawn's parents asking questions, and if she had gone for her blood tests, etc.. Sarina had not figured out who would act as responsible adult, or where she was going to get the money for her tests, but she did know that she was not going to "book" into the hospital until Shawn's mother took her days off. She then proceeded to show me what she had done with the hospital forms and asked how she was going to get her father's

hospital insurance plan information without letting him know her situation. In the end, I helped her with the forms, promised to drive her to her test appointments and promised that I would not say anything to any of the staff or teens at the youth centre.

Sarina's crisis brought us closer together, and upon some reflection may be viewed as the turning point in my relationship with the teens. It was during the time that I was helping Sarina that the teens began to treat me as a knowledgeable member of the group, rather than strictly as a staff member. Not a weekend went by that I was not invited to their parties, or invited to hang-out. When I turned down some of the opportunities to be in their company, I was updated almost immediately as the teens had taken to phoning me at home and filling me in on gossip and newsworthy events.

DATA ANALYSIS: TECHNIQUES

Without any studies in the area of ethnographic research, I would have found it difficult to sort and categorise the data that emerged from my fieldwork. Because I had taken some formal courses in ethnographic research, I expected to encounter some difficulties in analysing the data. Once the data had been collected, it seemed that I had an excess of fieldnotes and transcriptions. I was concerned about how I might organise this mass of data, and was amazed that I was able to follow and adapt suggestions put forth by

ethnographic researchers without encountering too many obstacles.

I began my data analysis by photocopying the fieldnotes that I had diligently kept throughout the summer. I then, listened to all of the taped interviews and made note of the date, time, place along with a note of the people involved and the type of interview (group, personal). For each tape, I listed topics of conversation and the gist of the conversation. Each tape then was partially transcribed, and later, I was able to go immediately to appropriate sections of the tape for transcriptions.

I photocopied these "tape indexes" and reviewed the photocopied data. After familiarising myself with the data, I determined three subheadings which my data could loosely be subdivided into. These all began with Females of the East End, and were divided into Relationships with Girlfriends,

Relationships with Male Peers, and Relationships with Authority Figures. Once these subheadings had been developed, I proceeded to cut sections of the data from the photocopies and categorise them according to their assigned subheadings. After all of the data had been subdivided, I read through the categories once again. From this re-reading of the data, I was able to determine which information could be re-categorised within each of the categories' subheadings. For example, under the first category, I developed a sub-sub-category entitled "Best Friends". I took all information

referring to best friends (importance of having a best friend, poems, who was best friends with whom) and categorised them together.

Once all of the categories for each of the subheadings had been developed, I developed a flow chart which visually displayed all of the sub-categories and their sub-sub-categories. From this I found that the outline was complete. Further, it was an outline where all of the 'parts' were displayed. Reporting it and analysing it was all that was left to be done. These are the tasks of the next two chapters.

CHAPTER IV

DATA ANALYSIS

Youth culture for teenaged females of the East End can be best understood when examined in terms of the relationships that they forge with others. Relationships emerged as the main theme of this study as I found that the East End girls' sense of personal identity seemed to be based upon their relationships to others, and specifically upon the distribution of responsibilities held within these relationships rather than on any specific forms of activity. For this reason, I have subdivided the Data Analysis into three broad subsections: Females of the East End; Females of the East End: Relationship to Male Peers; and Females of the East End: Relationship to Authority Figures. A brief summary is offered at the end of each subsection.

SECTION I

FEMALES OF THE EAST END

The first section, Females of the East End, is about friendships. It serves to highlight the empathetic and altruistic nature of the girls' friendships, and also to emphasise the expressiveness involved in these relationships. The section begins by briefly describing the East End girls' peer group in order to give a feeling of the teenagers' norms

and values as members of a working-class subculture. Next, the girls who provided the data for this analysis are introduced, along with a brief character sketch outlining their individual alliances and place within the group. Then begins the actual discussion of the girls' friendship. The subsection, Best Friends, allows for an examination of the relationships that the girls forge with each other. Following is a discussion of shared ideas, expectations, and experiences with regard to romance and birth control. Finally, soap operas and talk shows are discussed in relation to their importance to the East End girls' subculture.

ROCKERS RULE

Teens of the East End, like many teens throughout Canada, attempt to gain the approval of their peers. This approval is generally demonstrated through the acceptance of the individual into a social group. In the East End, the desire to be accepted is very strong, for once the individual conforms to East End standards of dress and behaviour, they become part of a tightly knit and powerful group. The feelings of belonging that group membership affords are especially important for young people who are at odds with the holders of power in established social institutions: parents, school authorities and police.

In a manner similar to many such groups, the individuals have focused on one interest and they have incorporated this

interest as part of their identity. In the East End, this common interest was music; more specifically, heavy metal or 'head banging' rock music. This choice in music forms the cornerstone of their identity. The teens of the East End referred to themselves as 'rockers'. They were proud of this moniker and all that it implied; within this self-chosen label was a style of dress and a broad set of attitudes, values, and behavioural norms.

The teens' style of dress forms essentially a yardstick against which they measure the worth of other groups. Clad in the East End 'uniform', tight blue jeans, concert t-shirts, and denim or black leather jackets, the teens emulate the stereotypical 'toughs' that are part of their surroundings in pool halls or pinball arcades. This is, in fact, the image that most East End teenagers wish to present. They revel in the tough rocker image and they use it as a tool for intimidation, as the following 'poem' indicates:

> To all you preppies who think you're
> cool,
> Think again cause Rockers rule.
> We are Rockers.
> We have class.
> Give us shit,
> We'll kick your ass.

This recital was directed to a group of 'preps' while two East End girls were walking home from a bar. Although no altercation resulted from this provocation, the fact remains that the East End females instigated the situation and were

ready, willing, and able to fight had an altercation developed.

One of the discerning factors for distinguishing the Rockers from other youth subcultures was style of dress. Where Preps wore hiking shorts, golf shirts, and deck shoes, Skaters wore jammers, large colourful t-shirts, and high cuts; Rockers wore jeans, t-shirts, and jackets. Although this observation is clear to anybody aware of youth subcultures'style of self-presentation, I decided one night when it was 35°C to wear summer clothing (shorts and a t-shirt) to the youth centre. When the teens' arrived at the centre, I was immediately informed that I was dressed "like a prep". A certain degree of tolerance was extended my way, but after the heat wave I conformed to East End standard of dress.

It became apparent rather rapidly that just as there was a dress code, there was similarly a code of conduct. Almost more dismaying than being told what to wear was being told whom to interview, for the second rule of East End Rockers concerned who qualified as an East Ender. Teens spending the summer months in the East End were not generally extended East End status and attempts at ostracism were continually made. One day when May, a summer visitor to the East End, left the youth centre Kelly and her gang decided to come inside. When May came back into the centre, Kelly and the other girls left. Ignoring these signals, I stayed inside to

talk with May. At the end of our conversation we exchanged phone numbers and May agreed to an interview. After May left, and I was preparing to go home, Kelly cornered me in an attempt to see what was up. "Why do you want to interview her?--she's such a bitch". Kelly continued, explaining that if I really wanted to know what life was like in the East End then I would concentrate my interviews on her or Lynn, even Tracy and Debbie. After all, they had been born and raised in the East End.

I did not wish to pursue the point because I realised that Kelly knew very well that I was focusing the interviews on girls that lived in the East End. She, herself, had just finished participating in a group interview the other day--an interview which included all of her recommended friends. This was just Kelly's way of articulating a group rule which she expected me to honour. Sarina and Kelly's brother Dodge, however, later manipulated this same rule by acting as personal sponsors for May; Sarina in the name of friendship and Dodge as a boyfriend. Dodge appeared to benefit most from this action because Sarina's extension of friendship to May, caused Kelly to terminate her friendship with Sarina.

The third and possibly most important rule in the East End code of conduct concerned attitude. Eagerness and willingness to comply with requests for assistance from authority figures were frowned upon, even if some mutual benefit was involved. For example, during my first night of

work at the centre, myself and a small group of teens were approached by Katlain and asked to volunteer at a bingo. Katlain's parents were instrumental in running club fund raisers and Katlain was sent by her mother to secure these unlikely volunteers armed only with 'incentives' (promises of money, food, etc.). Katlain, possessing a full understating of the East End teens' code of conduct, attempted to explain to the group that if they volunteered for the three hour bingo they would receive free pop and transportation to the bingo hall and back. Further, at the end of the night everyone would have pizza and receive $5.00 for their trouble. Katlain walked away from the group without one recruit. This was an important lesson in 'the ways of the group': the East End teens never voluntarily became involved with plans developed by authority figures.

The ways of the group do not stop here, but carry over to the group's idea of tasteful music and public presentation. 'Crimson Rage', 'Judas Priest', and 'Aerosmith' were favoured rock groups. The music range was, however, extended to include popular slow songs when dances or house parties were held. One rule concerning music was never to dance to fast songs at a teen dance. Dancing to up-beat music was reserved for the bar (Sarina) and house parties where the atmosphere was better (Kelly and Lynn)--a place where you could smoke, drink or get high. Katlain was the only teen that did not follow these rules and would sometimes

dance by herself to fast songs at the centre's dances. She was considered an exception and her incidences of 'rocking' at the centre were tolerated by the group because most of the girls liked to dance--but in a different atmosphere, one which would highlight the physical skill and sexuality that their dancing typically involved (see also Griffiths, 1988; Lees, 1986).

The right atmosphere was a condition that the teens insisted upon, and the wrong atmosphere often had unanticipated consequences. The teen dance held at the end of the summer, for instance, was effectively boycotted by the teens because the youth centre staff had failed to allow the teens to create their own atmosphere. The teens had requested that modifications be made to the youth centre dances which were traditionally held in the gymnasium. The teens wanted the dance to be held in the centre's basement where the lounge was smaller and where there were tables and chairs. They wanted to be able to smoke at the event, and had requested that mock cocktails be sold along with the traditional cases of coke. On the night of the dance the teens were informed that their recommendations had not been implemented; the dance was to be held in the gymnasium. In an unified display of group power, the teens refused to go into the centre. Not only were they upset because their attempt to re-create the intimate atmosphere of house parties and bars had been at best, paid lip service, but also because

the recommendation for the dance represented an attempt on the teens' part to make the centre their own, and they had been denied. The youth centre workers lost a small battle by denying the teens the opportunity to meet their needs: their desire to be treated as adults, and their desire to be recognised as sexual beings (Connell, 1982). The teens stated that they would have gone to the dance had even one of their suggestions been acknowledged (e.g., allowed to smoke). Instead, however, they vandalised the centre's main door, and stole the centre's park bench.

Although no names were mentioned as to who in the group was directly responsible for the damages, it would be my guess that some of the males were responsible. Although the girls were often 'aggressively defiant' in their resistance (e.g., they do not shy away from physical confrontations), it was more likely that the males were responsible for such acts of vandalism because the actions may be seen both to reflect the teens' anger, and to reinforce the physical, street tough image that is valued by the East End males. Most of the teens' acts of resistance, although valuable proving grounds for them, are viewed as self-defeating by adult, or outsider standards.

The show of group unity displayed in the teens' successful boycott of the dance is typical of the East End teens. While the boycott was the result of many teens, the standards of behaviour are set by a handful of teens. These

teens comprise, more or less, the elite group in the East End. The females that make up this group are Sarina, Kelly, Lynn, and to a lesser degree, Carla and Katlain.

THE GIRLS

Sarina is 18 years old, of medium height and would be considered physically attractive by most. Sarina dressed in the traditional garb of East End teenagers. She is conscientious about her appearance and takes care of her body and hair (which at the time of interviewing had orange streaks as a result of a failed attempt at obtaining blond streaks). A long stemmed comb referred to as a 'rat tail', was always within reach, be it tucked in a purse or back pocket. Sarina's pastimes and interests included poetry, swimming, talking over coffee, partying, cars and motorcycles, and her boyfriend Shawn. Until recently, Sarina and Kelly had been best friends. A falling out brought on largely by a change of attitude on Kelly's part has, however, left the friendship in limbo.

Kelly is a 16 year old who seems to command a great deal of authority in the East End because she is allied with drug dealers. This alliance with the dealers can in part be explained through her physical attractiveness, but also through her use of the pill, her reputation as a partier, and her penchant for physical violence, all of which have played a part in her acceptance among the dealers. Her penchant

for physical violence was illustrated when, unprovoked and without warning, she walked up to another East End youth and punched her in the mouth. It is this type of behaviour--behaviour which is referred to as 'psycho' by other youth--which has aligned her with the powers of the East End and that has created a great deal of fear on the part of many East End teens.

One of the principal beneficiaries of Kelly's social status is Lynn. As a result of Kelly and Sarina's recent falling-out, Lynn had been propelled to best friend status. Lynn was Kelly's 'yes' person. She offered few comments, but was there for support. As a result she enjoyed the privileges associated with her connection to Kelly, namely getting high. Wanting to appear aloof, Lynn would not allow herself to be photographed or allow her tightly permed hair to get wet. Lynn is a very thin, attractive youth who is approximately 5' 2" tall. Dressed all in black and rarely without her black leather jacket, even on the hottest summer days, Lynn was forever trying to improve her relationship with Kelly, even when this meant betraying another friend's confidence.

As hard as Lynn tried to get closer to Kelly, Carla tried to avoid her. Carla is approximately 5'4", has blond hair and an athletic build. Knowing first hand the 'psycho' behaviour that Kelly was capable of through an attack on her sister, Carla confessed a fear of Kelly and tried to

maintain a safe distance. Carla did have some protection from Kelly, however, as Carla was not generally 'picked on' as was her younger sister. Further, Kelly valued Carla's influence on her older brother, Mike, who Kelly has 'liked' for a long time. This provided Carla with some degree of immunity. Although she was accepted within the group, Carla often chose to forego group activities and usually opted for more innocent pastimes with a younger crowd where she enjoyed a higher status. Foregoing the partying, sex and drugs of the older crowd, Carla instead could usually be found swimming, or hanging-out with the younger crowd. When she did hang-out with the Rockers, her principal companion was Katlain.

Katlain was somewhat of a misfit in the East End. A serious student with a strict mother, Katlain liked to be involved with the other teens, but never really did fit in. A tall, overweight, redhead, Katlain appeared isolated even in terms of dress. Perhaps unable, due to her weight, to wear the tight blue jeans of her counterparts, Katlain usually wore comfortable, stylish cotton slacks and attractive sweaters, often pink in colour. Although closest to Carla, she was even isolated here because she was the butt of many of Carla's practical jokes.

BEST FRIENDS

Alliances between these girls seemed to be ever changing. Sarina reflected back on the times that she and Kelly shared together. Sarina talked of pictures taken together at the fair, of how they used to treat each other to concerts and t-shirts, and how they used to wear each other's clothes. They used to do almost everything together. Now, however, Kelly is continually sniping at Sarina, referring to her as the "bitch". This change in their relationship occurred when Sarina defied Kelly's wishes and accepted May as a friend.

May, a petite, attractive girl, came to live with her father for the summer. Within a short time, she had developed a relationship with Kelly's brother, Dodge. Although May now had a sponsor, Kelly would not accept her as part of the East End group. Sarina, realising Kelly was hoping for a mismatched physical confrontation with May, intervened by telling Kelly to "cool it". This act created a tension in Kelly's and Sarina's relationship. Because neither girl, Sarina in particular, desired a physical confrontation, this tension was not relieved immediately. Rather, it continued on throughout the summer and resulted in Kelly and Sarina continually antagonising each other; Kelly greeting Sarina with "fuck off bitch" as she entered the centre, or on another occasion with "you're a fat bitch" (two days after Sarina's abortion). Kelly was not alone, however,

in her use of verbal abuse. Sarina responded to the "fat bitch" remark with "well, at least I don't flaunt myself at the Puerto Ricans". On another occasion, Sarina and May composed a song about their mutual enemy. Sung to the tune of 'Manhunt', the lyrics went as follows:

> Kelly's going on a manhunt,
> driving around,
> screwing every guy that she sees.
> She's a sleaze bag.
> She loves to get laid...

In addition to the stream of verbal abuse, there was a second consequence of Kelly and Sarina's falling out; namely, that Kelly found a new best friend.

Lynn played the role of a silent sidekick. She was with Kelly throughout the summer, offering more or less silent support, but did not take a vocal role in attacks on Sarina. Despite Lynn's alliance with Kelly, Sarina still considered Lynn to be her friend. On the rare occasion when Lynn was at the centre without Kelly (more often than not because Kelly stood her up), Sarina and Lynn would talk. After all, they shared a common concern; both boyfriends were in jail. Such was the case one evening when Sarina told Lynn how 'pissed off' she was at Kelly. Lynn, however, always wanting to strengthen her relationship with Kelly, passed this information on to Kelly. Kelly's reaction was to phone Sarina at home and to threaten her. Sarina responded by hanging up on Kelly. Sarina, however, bore Lynn no ill will for her part in this scenario, stating that "it's a best

friend's job to tell their friends what they know--besides, it wasn't news".

Confrontations, similar in nature to Kelly's and Sarina's, seem to be important in strengthening friendships. In the case of Kelly and Lynn, Lynn no doubt displayed her loyalty to Kelly by betraying Sarina. Similar confrontations have yielded similar results. When Sarina and her friend challenged 'the preps' with their poetry recital, the two of them were bonded closer together. In a slightly different sort of way, thefts from a local convenience store strengthened the bonds between the females of the East End. The girls regularly 'raid' a neighbourhood corner store. The first time I witnessed this, the girls said "put your money away...". Thinking my past generosity was to be returned in kind, I did. The teens then went on, "...we don't pay for anything in here. We just wait until the other customers are gone. Last week, we got Tracy over $500.00 worth of groceries". It seems that bonding together against the common enemy, and the support they show each other in so doing, acts as a proving ground and strengthening agent for friendships. In the case of Kelly and Lynn, they have become best friends.

The term 'best friend', however, means different things to different individuals. For Kelly and Lynn, it meant support and loyalty on Lynn's part, and the benefit of Kelly's popularity for Lynn. For Katlain and Carla, a similar

situation existed. Katlain was loyal to Carla, and consequently enjoyed a limited acceptance within the group. Carla, however, was accepted by most within the group and appears somewhat oblivious regarding the group anyway; consequently, she was not bound to Katlain in the same manner. This left Katlain at something of a disadvantage since her personality and upbringing prohibited her from many of the proving grounds for friendship. As a result, Katlain was subject to the whims of Carla's personality.

Carla was a self-described practical joker. One night while at an outdoor concert, she ate the pizza which Katlain was saving for herself while Katlain went to the booth to buy a pizza to take home to her mother. Carla had not only eaten Katlain's piece of pizza, but had also replaced the piece with crusts leaving Katlain to carry them home. Take them home she did, and Carla at no time showed any remorse at not letting Katlain in on her joke. Thus it would appear that the term 'best friend' meant different things to each of the girls. For Lynn and Katlain, it was support and also a means to an end. For Kelly and Carla, the more powerful individuals in the friendships, it was a matter of convenience. This self-serving element of friendship was important because the East End girls enjoyed having a best friend. While the girls of the East End conceded that "best friends aren't forever", they also added that "it's nice to have someone to talk to--to hang-out with".

Sarina, since her falling-out with Kelly, does not have a best friend. She does, however, have a knack for making friends wherever she goes. Her friendly and outgoing nature made it easier for her when she was in the hospital. Although only one of her East End girlfriends came to visit her, Sarina quickly made friends with other patients on the ward. The person Sarina became closest to while in the hospital was a young 20 year old unwed mother of twin girls, who had little to offer in terms of job skills. Perhaps Sarina sensed in her acquaintance some of the mutual hardships they had experienced as a result of coming from the East End. In any event, they became friends fast as they read each other stories from the Eng[illegible] People Magazine, and together they regularly went on pantry raids. As a result, while Sarina states that she has no best friend, she is never really without a friend.

The subject of what makes a 'best friend' appears clouded in many cases. For Pat, a 20 year old who has moved from the East End, the notion of a best friend appeared to be romanticised. "I don't have any girlfriends that are single or don't have kids". She wanted a girlfriend that she could do things with: one who could just pick up and go, "you know, like 20 year old girls are supposed to do. Have a good time". Although she did have friends who would drop everything on a moment's notice, Pat refused to acknowledge this behaviour as 'best friend' behaviour.

Different rules govern the girls' behaviour with each other while they pair up as best friends. Their best friend status may last a year, a season or only a few weeks, but most of the girls have accepted that "best friends aren't forever". The idea of a best friend, however, remains the same. A best friend is one to whom you commit the best of yourself: your time, your attention and your loyalty. Best friends know everything about you and yet do not pass judgment. In the event that best friends part, (as was the case for Kelly and Sarina) a memory of intimacy is maintained, an intimacy that results from having been understood; understood in a way that only females of the same time, place and age could possibly understand.

Even after Sarina's rather rough falling-out with Kelly, Sarina was able to capture on paper exactly what a best friend was to her. She expressed her sentiments on the subject of 'best friends' in a poem:

MY BEST FRIEND

Whenever I need a friend
you always seem to be there.
You help me with my problems
and our joys together we share.

I can't imagine life
without a friend like you.
Once we get together
we are an invisible two!

All the fun I've shared with you
can never be replaced.
Together we've had many good times,
and conquered the problems we've had to face.

So I want you to know
that I am always if ever you need a friend,
to make your thoughts clear.

And when I must leave you,
as many good friends sometimes part,
I leave you with good memories
and an impor[illegible]place in my heart.

ROMANCE

For the teens of the East End, poems, such as Sari[illegible] poem about best friends, were a common method of communication. Usually used to express very personal feelings, these poems may also express feelings which are prohibited as a result of the East End code of conduct. It seemed that because the teens wanted to appear tough, they shied from subjects which required a certain eloquence in speech and thought. They, therefore, resorted to poetry to communicate about such subject[illegible] as romance.

The females of the East End shared common ideas on the subject of romance. Perhaps inspired by the soap operas which they religiously watched, the girls all appeared adamant in their romantic expectations. Kelly, for example, claimed "I won't get married unless my hubby-to-be gets down on his hands and knees and asks me properly". Despite this desire for romance, when romance was presented willingly,

they were at a loss as to what to do. In one instance, an admirer brought Sarina a dozen roses, a rather blatant display of romance. In response, he was dismissed as a "geek". Incorporated with, and yet separate from, the girls ideas on romance, is the subject of birth control. While the girls can go on at length about what they expect with regards to romance, they seem to possess little formal knowledge in regards to birth control.

BIRTH CONTROL

One night while working at a dance which was put on for the junior crowd that frequented the youth centre, a young girl came in, gave Lynn a jubilant hug and announced with relief that she was not pregnant. Lynn briefly introduced the girl as Jenny, and then listened intently to Jenny's recollection of the past day's events. According to Jenny, everything went smoothly. She had boarded a bus in the morning in order to go to the Free Clinic for a pregnancy test. The decision to visit the Clinic had been made after her home test results had indicated that she was pregnant. She said that she had heard somewhere that home tests were not always reliable and, she wanted a second opinion before her options became limited. While listening to this conversation it became more and more evident to me that this girl who looked to be, and acted as though she were at least 16, was in fact, 13 years old.

I listened as the conversation continued, with Lynn eagerly awaiting the details. Jenny described her fears, her relief, the details of the Pap, and the doctors' disdain regarding her age. Additional details also came out in the conversation concerning Jenny's plan to abstain from intercourse in the future, and her rejection of free birth control pills. In retrospect, the conversation seemed ironic as I listened to a 16 year old badger a 13 year old for the details concerning birth control, details in which I normally would have expected a 16 year old to be better versed. Another observation made while listening to this conversation had to do with the way in which Jenny was received. Here was a 13 year old girl, normally a fringe member of the group, who, because of her experience and insight into a subject of common concern, suddenly became very well received among her more popular peers. The situation was similar for Sarina concerning her abortion, because, in the East End, knowledge on such subjects represents a subtle form of power, power that can transcend the normal barriers of popularity.

After the dance I drove Lynn home, and it was not long before the conversation turned, again, to Jenny's situation. Lynn could not believe that Jenny had declined the offer of free birth control pills. According to Lynn, "that was stupid". Lynn understood that after the 'freebies' ran out it would be difficult to pay for the pills--especially when one

can only make $2.00 an hour babysitting--but what happens if she does have sex again? The first time was not planned and happened when she had been drinking. "She said she wasn't going to give up that".

After a while, Lynn stopped worrying about Jenny and began to ask general questions about the pill. Lynn was not quite sure whether or not she could "get any diseases from them", if the doctors could notify her parents and the number of months that "you were allowed to be pregnant before you couldn't get an abortion". I tried to answer as many of her questions as I could, and then I asked her if she and some of the girls would like to go for coffee the next day to continue our discussion.

When I returned home from dropping Lynn off, I went downstairs to visit Kevin, a friend of mine who worked as a nurse at the General Hospital. I figured that he would be able to answer some of my questions, and I now had a lot.

Q. "How do girls under 16 years old going in for birth control pills get access to their Health Insurance Plan numbers?

A. Ask their parents.

Q. What if they don't want their parents to know?

A. From their wallets, but doctors must inform the parents of girls under 16 years of age.

Q. They're all under 16 years--some 13. Isn't there a way for them to have 'safe sex'.

A. Should be using condoms. Anyway, 13 year olds shouldn't be having sex--their bodies aren't ready for it.

Q. Well, they're having sex and most of their boyfriends won't wear condoms."

A. (No answer).

Q. "OK.. Hypothetically speaking, if the girl is put on the pill by her doctor, can she get her prescriptions at a subsidised rate anywhere here in town?

A. No.

Q. How are they supposed to afford to keep up their supply?"

A. (No answer).

The next day I got a panicked phone call from Lynn. She had obtained her Health Insurance Plan number. While her mother was doing up the dishes, Lynn found it in her purse. Lynn wanted to know whether she should keep the slip of paper or whether the doctors would take it copied out by hand. I assured her that she could copy the number and confirmed that I was still 'on for the coffees'.

The girls and I met at the Chinese restaurant for coffees. The conversation started with general talk about Jenny and became more pointed when the discussion turned to Sarina and her upcoming abortion. Finally Lynn announced that she wanted to go to the clinic as soon as possible, and Jenny stated that she would like to go as well. I told the girls what Kevin had related to me last night, and they passed him off as a flake. I pointed out that he may be a flake, but that he knew what he was talking about. This statement served to bring up more questions.

Lynn: "What happens if you're on the pill and you have to go to the hospital for something?

Kim: You go...

Lynn: ...but they ask you if you're taking any pills. My mother takes me for my shots you know."

The conversation continued with me doing my best to answer any questions. I could only wonder what was being taught during Health Education, and what the boys' knowledge level was like.

SOAP OPERAS AND TALK SHOWS

Soap operas such as Young and the Restless, All My Children, and General Hospital, act to fill a void in most of the girls' lives during the summer months. Lacking summer employment, they spend their time following the lives of the rich and famous. Before beginning any interviews (group interviews in particular), I was always subjected to an update on the soaps. The girls particularly liked 'the bitches', and they spent much of their time mimicking their dialogues. Often the lines that were adopted were used in a joking manner. The other females always knew when they were being insulted, but the males suffered a definite disadvantage. One day, after watching soaps all afternoon, Sarina went to the youth centre. Before joining the group outside for a cigarette, she sat in the office talking with some of the staff members. Dodge barged into the office without knocking, and Sarina accused him of having "brittle knuckles" while one of the staff members lectured him on the

centre's rules: when the door is closed, knock. The line that Sarina used was a private joke between herself and the other girls who followed the soaps. It was a line that their favourite villain of Young and the Restless used in a very sarcastic manner when reprimanding her secretary (male) who had not knocked on her door before entering her office. All the girls laughed hilariously at Sarina's wit. The staff and Dodge were lost.

Talk shows were another favourite diversion for the girls. Their favourites included, Oprah Winfrey and Sally Jesse Raphael. At first, I was not certain why the girls followed these shows, but as I got to know them better, I realised that these talk shows supplied the girls with an important source of knowledge. Talk shows provided the girls with information and a context for them to develop their understanding of the information. Talking about talk shows and soap operas allowed the girls to link the information to their own lives and situations, and was an important context in which the girls come to realise that they are normal and that they are experiencing the same feelings and reactions as others. These shows, therefore, serve to help the girls work out their common ideas which translate into common bonds for friendship.

SUMMARY: THE IMPORTANCE OF RELATIONSHIPS WITH FEMALE PEERS

Peer culture is an important element of teenagers' lives. It is here that they are ultimately provided with the feedback as to whether or not they are acceptable human beings. For the East End girls, it is also the place in which lessons in life are learned. Through their friendships and romances, they learn to develop their interpersonal skills of negotiation. These skills will affect their future relationships in a central manner as most of these girls will unlikely finish their schooling, and will enter into the adult realm at an earlier age than many of their middle-class peers. Youth culture thus represents a phenomenon of consequence: one that is very important to young females' lives.

Friends are central to the concept of youth culture. For the East End girls, friends are essential. Not only are they nice to have, but they also help to ensure survival in the East End environment. This 'insurance of survival' is sometimes self-serving, but Katlain and Carla, and Kelly and Lynn, seem to have adapted to this element of friendship in the names of acceptance and/or convenience. To the girls in the East End, friendship is, however, more than merely self serving. This is especially true where best friends are concerned. It is with best friends that information is traded, loyalty is demonstrated, and most importantly, one is accepted unconditionally. Often best friends change as the

girls themselves change and grow, but most of the girls are not long without a best friend.

Pairs of best friends usually run with the same group. Such is the case for the girls of the East End. When a change in best friends occurs, the new best friend is generally taken from this group. The group is an important foundation that the girls attempt to maintain. The group provides the setting for the exchanging of ide (birth control, romance, poetry), and is always there to return to when things go wrong. The group is especially important to the girls as their relationship to male peers take on more importance. Male peers generally begin to gain in importance as best friends begin to take second seat to boyfriends. These heterosexual relationships are fairly new to the girls (if not technically, then sentimentally), and many hearts are broken (Kostash, 1987). A return to the group allows time for healing. The other girls understand what is perhaps beyond their male friends' and authority figures' grasp. They are friends, drawn together through an intimacy produced from understanding each other as teenage females.

SECTION II

FEMALES OF THE EAST END: RELATIONSHIP TO MALE PEERS

This second section is about heterosexuality and power imbalances. The first subsection, Importance of Having a Boyfriend, seeks to underline the value that the East End girls assign to heterosexual relationships. Following subsections then deal almost exclusively with the relationships cost to the girls. Responsibility for birth control, for example, and the East End girls' experiences as sexually active females are examined in the subsection, Birth Control. Next, romance is discussed. Particular note is made of its strength during initial dating stages and its relative non-existence in established teenaged relationships. The subsections following this discussion of romance deal with rejection, jealousy and the sexist nature of youth culture as the girls experience it. Finally the subsection Drugs and Violence sketches out some of the horrid situations that these young women find themselves in as a result of the power imbalances so evident in their heterosexual relationships.

IMPORTANCE OF HAVING A BOYFRIEND

The tightly knit group of East End teens comprises both males and females. For this and many other reasons, it is therefore important to examine young females' relationships

to their male peers. In as much as the girls of the East End bonded together to boycott the teen dance, so too did the males. When two male teens, Rob and Dodge, were banned from the youth centre, not one teen, male or female, entered the centre's doors until the ban had been lifted. Even Katlain took on an extra shift at work, thus removing herself from the situation. The observation, by Rob, that the "East End kids are like a big family", that they "all stick together", seems to hold true. When one teen feels like she or he has been wronged, all of the teens band together.

In addition to the support roles that the males play, they also play important roles as individuals within the group. Much of the information about the males of the East End was gathered through conversations with the girls about their boyfriends. Because the topic of conversation so often switched to their boyfriends, and because the girls' boyfriends were so often present, the importance of having a boyfriend became rapidly apparent. Cindy and Rob do everything together. She had told me that, but I did not understand that this would include my personal interviews. I got the picture when I met Cindy for her first personal interview. Rob had just bought her a new pair of blue jeans, and Cindy wanted me to interview both her and Rob. I felt that Rob's presence could act as grounds for Cindy to change the nature of some responses (to questions dealing with potentially sensitive issues such as sexuality), but under

the circumstances I felt it was necessary to acquiesce and interview the two of them together. The situation actually turned out to be quite opportune because together, Rob and Cindy gave me some insight into aspects of the teens' heterosexual relationships (e.g., stereotyping, double standards) that might not have been obvious otherwise.

Most of the other girls in the East End had boyfriends, with the exceptions being Carla and Katlain. However, not all of the girls with boyfriends were spending their summer with them. Sarina's and Lynn's boyfriends, for example, were spending their summers in jail. Shawn had visiting privileges, and Sarina was able to see him one hour a week. Curt had not yet been sentenced, so Lynn was unable to visit him at all. These short or non-existent personal times with their boyfriends did not seem to weigh heavily with the girls because they were able to maintain the status that the East End teens extended to couples.

As having an intimate friend of the opposite sex increases in importance, most of the girls choose to establish a relationship with an East End male. Where young men of this subculture can get away with sexual promiscuity (e.g., promiscuous behaviour is considered natural, or encouraged: 'stud'), young women cannot. They must appear to be a 'one man woman' at all times or suffer the consequences (e.g., being devalued, labelled 'slut' etc.).

Although the stereotyping and the double standards are strongly sexist, the East End girls seemed to have accepted the situation. They neither resisted this stereotyping nor demanded to be seen as individuals who were in a position to participate in sexual activity outside the boundaries of a defined relationship. Being thought of in relation to a male worked briefly in their favour; it acted to legitimise their sexuality and, more often than not, their sexual activity. For the young women of the East End, caught up with the difficulties of being a teenager, "lost in between being a child and an adult" (Bibby & Posterski, 1985, p. xv), and desperately wanting to be recognised as an adult, the girls find that acceptance by their male peers is worth the cost.

BIRTH CONTROL

In the East End, masculinity is defined in terms of toughness, physical strength, and a stereotypical male 'role'. This poses some serious obstacles in male-female relations. One of the many obstacles relates to birth control. East End males know little about the female body and its functions, and they do not seem to think that it is a subject of importance. In one group discussion at a local Chinese restaurant, Dodge repeatedly demonstrated his ignorance of the female body and his utter lack of concern for birth control.

Dodge: "You know who else had a miscarriage?

Sarina: Who, Tara?

Dodge: No, Sherry. She went to the washroom, glub, glub, glub, glub, glub, glub, too much drugs and alcohol. Anyways she was pregnant for a month I think and started doing dope like crazy cause I broke up with her and drinking like crazy. Today she went to the washroom and blub, blub, blub...

Kim: This is the second time? Don't you take any precautions, or do you just leave it up to your girlfriends?

Sarina: (laugh) No!

Dodge: I was drunk both times and you can't tell when you're drunk."

It seems that in most matters of birth control and pregnancy, should it occur, the males completely remove themselves from a situation of responsibility. When Shawn was released from prison, Sarina was just recovering from her abortion and her usual method of birth control was not an option for her. Birth control, however, was seen as Sarina's responsibility and she was the one who secured the 'safes'. Dodge represents a prime example of what happens in the event of pregnancy. When the 13 year old, Jenny, feared that she was pregnant, Dodge simply abandoned her. This appears to be the standard reaction. In all cases, birth control and pregnancy were of little concern to the males. One exception occurred, however, in Cindy's and Rob's summer relationship. Cindy asked Rob to accompany her to the doctor when she went in for her internal examination, a general necessity in order to ensure renewal of her birth control prescription. Rob's

concession, that "he might", represented the closest incident witnessed to a male becoming involved in birth control.

In most cases, the girls accepted the fact that birth control was deemed their responsibility. Those who suffered the feelings of humiliation (buying the safes, having the internal examination) and guilt (doing all of this behind their parents' backs) were far better off than their counterparts, who avoided the difficulties and failed to take precautions. Not only did these girls suffer anxiety until their next periods, but often they had to face the reality of pregnancies. In most cases, a teen pregnancy in the East End is an unwanted pregnancy. The father takes no responsibility, the girl's formal education ends, or she faces a situation far worse than seeking birth control in the first place when she requests an abortion.

ROMANCE

Birth control is not, however, the only aspect of male-female relations where the East End males' sense of masculinity creates pain for females. As mentioned earlier, romance and the realisation of the girls' romantic ideas proves to be a never-ending battle. It seems that incorporated within the males' definition of masculinity, public displays of emotion (other than rage) and romantic affection are limited, if not non-existent. This essentially reduces romance to a battle of wills. One such incident

occurred between Sarina and Shawn. While walking home from a movie, following Shawn's release from prison, Sarina wanted to hold Shawn's hand. Shawn casually dropped Sarina's hand and put himself into a position where holding hands would be awkward. Sarina challenged him, intimating that he was afraid to hold her hand. Shawn acquiesced, but spent the remainder of the walk explaining that he was not afraid to hold her hand, he just was not "that kind of guy". It appears that for Shawn (and other East End males) being seen engaging in 'soft' behaviour, or being seen doing what his girlfriend wants, is a threat to the code of masculinity which is dominant in this milieu.

Although Shawn shies away from public displays of romantic affection, he is quite able to come through with romance when it suits his purposes. Shawn fulfills Sarina's romantic notions through the East Ends' principal means of communication for emotions and feelings--poetry. In total, Sarina had 17 poems that she had received from Shawn. The poems which Sarina treasured were written while Shawn was in prison. Although Sarina began to believe that Shawn's poems and other romantic gestures meant that he was serious in his proposal that they be married shortly after his release from prison, she began to have anxiety attacks in the form of nightmares and sleepless nights a week before Shawn was to be released. From what I could gather, these anxiety attacks seemed to foreshadow Sarina's doubts--doubts which suggested

that things would not change as Shawn had promised, but would remain the way they were before his confinement. These doubts underlined the fact that this display of romance was enforced, and did not represent a real change in Shawn's feelings, let alone a lasting shift in the dynamics of their relationship.

Romance is rarely given freely in the East End teens' heterosexual relationships, except in the initial courting stages. It is during the initial development of the relationship that the East End girls find that they havethe power to demand romantic gestures, gestures such as flowers, poetry, and holding hands in public. These romantic gestures, which signal to the girls and others that they are treasured, cease once the relationship is established. In a reversal of events, power changes hands. Now the double standards and the stereotyping of the public sphere are enforced. As Kostash (1987) explains,

> Her attachment must be seen as monogamous, her affection demonstrable and unconditional, her need greater. Suddenly it is he who has something she wants: a fondness for her that is not only sexual. If he refuses to give it, that is the sign of his power to satisfy his need without ceding an inch of his self-containment to the claims of love (p. 99).

Once the relationship is established, romance in the public sphere generally only occurs in isolated situations such as in Shawn's and Sarina's relationship.

REJECTION AND JEALOUSY

A fear which is related to doubt, and is typically thought to be held by teenage males is not confined to the boundaries of gender. The fear of rejection is understood by females. Some of the East End girls have experienced rejection and these experiences often hold very real consequences for the girls. For example, one night after the youth centre had closed, Sarina, Cindy, Rob and I decided to do a group interview at a local pizzeria. After we had ordered, Rob told Cindy that she was "going to get fat". We all had a laugh since Cindy is near anorexic looking, and then I inquired about Margo. Margo had told me yesterday that she had not eaten for three days. I asked the group if they knew why. Cindy was quick to report that Margo was not eating "because of him [Rob]". I asked what had happened and before Rob could explain, Cindy volunteered that Margo was lying, and Sarina joked that Rob had told Margo that "she was fat and ugly and that her mother dressed her funny". Although Rob laughed at Sarina's comment, he was anxious to explain his position.

Rob described how it all had started. He began by accounting for how he had met Margo. He explained that Margo was a friend of Jean's and that she was living in the East End for the summer. Because Rob and Jean had been good friends since grade two, Rob accepted Margo as a friend. The situation became complicated when Margo misunderstood Rob's

intentions. "I just hung around with her and Jean. And she thought, oh ya, this is getting real serious". Not only did Margo misunderstand Rob's intentions, she also told everybody that she wanted "to jump Rob's bones". In her pursuit of Rob, Margo would play 'games' with him. She would begin speaking French and ask Rob to answer yes or no to the questions she had asked; like, 'Voulez vous couchez avec moi ce soir"? Rob claims not to know French and "shit like that", but after a few times "anyone could figure it out".

While all of this was happening with Margo, Rob had begun to "see" Cindy. This was where the real trouble began. After spending the day with Cindy, Margo came over to the group and sat down "right between his legs" and tried to hold his hand. Not only does Rob find it difficult to tell people to "get the fuck away from me, I don't want you around me, and stuff like that", but Cindy was there when this happened. When I asked Rob if he was suggesting that Margo was not eating because he had rejected her, he confirmed the notion. Cindy consented that Rob was "probably" correct, but that she " ...can't believe that she's not eating. Not a person her size".

When the girls revealed feelings of jealousy as a result of rejection, words of insult often followed about the female who had sparked the jealous reaction. For example, Cindy attacked Margo's weight, and Margo attacked Cindy's figure

and manner of dress, suggesting Cindy might be "loose". Both arguments were based on female sexual insult.

The Margo/Cindy dilemma did not end with Rob's rejection of Margo. Cindy now suffered from Margo's jealous remarks. Sarina brought the matter out into the open when she heard that Margo wanted "to punch Cindy out". Sarina told Margo, "Rob said, that if you plan on touching Cindy, he'll give you a good shot across the face". Cindy prompted Sarina to tell me "...all the rest too. That I'm an ugly dog and a bitch and..." Sarina took over with "Yup, and she wears skimpy skirts just to turn Rob on". We all had a good laugh when Cindy informed us that she wears "the skimpy skirts because I feel comfortable in them".

Rob was quick to get back into the conversation in an attempt to reassure Cindy of his feelings for her. He reminded Cindy that Kelly, who "doesn't compliment anybody on their looks", had told him that Cindy was pretty and that "it's just that Margo's jealous". Cindy agreed. She confirmed that: "that's all it is. Margo is just jealous".

SEXISM

Most of the East End girls have experienced the feelings associated with jealousy and rejection, but they remain ambivalent about the blatant sexist attitudes of their male peers. Cindy, for instance, has found that by accepting the sexist attitudes of her male peers, not only did her

popularity at school increase, but also her desirability to her male peers was reaffirmed. While having cokes at Joe's, Rob and Sarina told Cindy and me about 'The Battle of the Bands' contest, their favourite special event that had been hosted last year at the youth centre. Cindy added that she had also participated in the Battle of the Bands. Both Sarina and Rob were interested and asked her which instrument she had played. Cindy said, "None. I couldn't make it to all of the practices". Instead, she was the band's mascot. When asked what a mascot's job involved, she replied, "being up on stage...a sex symbol". She claimed not to "care too much about it". She explained that she and a girlfriend were "made to dance to my favourite song". When I suggested that she might have been a dancer rather than a sex symbol, she disagreed and added, "it was the way that I was dressed". Sarina had a good laugh while Cindy went on to explain that she was serious:

> I was wearing a shirt that came up to here [just under breasts]. It was really short. And I had this skin tight skirt that just barely covered.

When asked as to whether she had wanted to play the role of sex symbol, Cindy explained that she had offered to be with the band, "but I didn't know that I had to do that".

Apart from actively exploiting their female peers, young males harbour a sense of proprietorship towards them. Combined with this sense of ownership is the males' notion that they must protect their property. Dodge flew into a

rage when he witnessed Todd flirting with Kelly. He explained to anyone who would listen that Todd must think Kelly was his old girlfriend, and he promised the group that if "he touches her ass, I'll fucking kill...".

In this instance, Dodge only verbally vented his anger. The males in the East End, however, often vent their frustrations in a physical manner. Rob told of a time that a group of preppies came to stay a few days in the East End. Apparently, a bowling team from southern Ontario was in northern Ontario for a tournament. They had been billeted to a woman's home in the East End and the East End teens were surprised. "We're not used to seeing preppies walking around in the East End. And they think, oh ya, we're hot shit, you know". Well, the guys followed the preppies around to keep their eyes on them. Once, some of the preppies were rude to them, but the guys let it pass. "We didn't want to cause no shit". When the preppies made the mistake of calling Katlain and Kelly a few choice words, that was different. The guys "took care of it" in the park the following night.

DRUGS AND VIOLENCE

Many of the physical confrontations involving the males of the East End are sparked while they are under the influence of drugs or alcohol. Shawn, like many other East End males, has a drug and alcohol dependency. These dependency problems have caused conflict between Sarina and

Shawn. Despite Sarina's liberal views concerning drugs, she stands in opposition to Shawn's use of "the hard stuff". Sarina has frequently paid a price for her stance.

One such incident occurred in a shopping mall. Shawn had prepared a 'coco puff' (cocaine smoked from the end of a lit cigarette) for Sarina. Shawn had told Sarina that he was "off of it [coke]", and Sarina assumed that they were sharing the cigarette. When she realised that the cigarette was a coco puff, she threw it on the floor and stomped it out. By this time, Shawn had another smoke going, and when he saw what Sarina had done, he flicked it down the front of her shirt. For her efforts, Sarina received a burn on her stomach and a burn hole in her shirt. Sarina, however, looked to the bright side: "at least that wasn't as bad as the time that I broke all of his needles...boy was he pissed". While Sarina seems to pay a price for her intervention in Shawn's drug use, she does have a specific motive in mind. This pertains to Shawn's criminal past, and to the happier future that Sarina intends to share with him. In addition to the prison sentence Shawn served during the summer, he has served time for drug related offenses. The threat of future prison terms may play a large role in Sarina's attempts "to stop him from using that shit".

Shawn's drug related dependency is not, however, his only form of substance abuse. In fact, alcohol was largely the cause of Shawn's most recent prison term. Shawn and an

old friend were reminiscing over a 60 oz. bottle of rye. When the bottle was done, they decided to go to a local bar "to watch the peelers". They invited Sarina's brother-in-law, since at the time Shawn and Sarina were living at Sarina's sister's house. When Sarina's brother-in-law declined the invitation, Shawn's friend became incensed and started insulting both Sarina's brother-in-law and her sister. The situation rapidly grew out of hand, and the police were summoned. While the police were being summoned, Shawn was attempting to convince Sarina "to mind her own fucking business" by hurling bricks from their shelves onto the waterbed where he had first pushed her. When the police arrived, Shawn's friend was identified as the source of the problem, and was handcuffed and escorted to the police cruiser. When Shawn attempted to intercede, he too was handcuffed. Instead of becoming subdued, Shawn assaulted one of the officers, hospitalising him for a week. The result of this incident was a hangover and a nine month prison sentence.

Shawn was not the only East End boyfriend that had a drinking problem. Pat, a former East End resident, made the following claim of her boyfriend. "Pierre, you don't run your life, O.V. does". Both Sarina and Pat are well aware of their boyfriends' dependency problems. Sarina's method of dealing with, or attempting to reform, this problem is "to set a good example for him". Since he loved her, she

believed, he would eventually stop drinking (at least the hard stuff). Pat, however, comments very little on Pierre's drinking because she realises that any articulation on her part will meet with the standard reply, "there's the fucking door, use it".

Physical abuse from the hands of males does not begin with marriage. The popular term, 'spousal abuse' coined by health professionals ignores the abuse of unmarried, teenage women. Perhaps this abuse is not acknowledged because the young female does not posses a legal contract validating her relationship; she is 'free' to leave it at anytime. This myopic societal attitude effectively shuts the door on frightened young females who do not feel that they are free to leave the relationship.

Pat's relationship with Pierre is in many ways similar to Sarina's relationship with Shawn. Pierre is an alcoholic and like Shawn this dependency has had serious implications. Pierre worked as a truck driver and has had several drunk driving convictions. His latest conviction has left him unemployed, and without a driver's license. Pierre's drinking problem has also had implications for his relationship with Pat. Like Shawn, Pierre is prone to outbursts of physical violence. The most serious episode was brought on largely by Pierre's jealousy and further complicated by his inebriated state. The incident started innocently enough at a bar, where Pat was talking to a mutual

friend. On the way home from the bar, Pierre started in on Pat, calling her a slut and accusing her of trying to pick up his friend. The situation escalated once they were home, as Pierre soon became physical. When calm was restored, Pat was left with bruises and cuts as a result of being thrown through a glass coffee table. Plants, dishes and leftovers from dinner were strewn around the apartment, and Pierre sat in a drunken stupour on the couch with a rifle cradled in his lap.

Once Pat was removed from the situation, her attention turned immediately to Pierre. After being beaten by him and claiming she would never return to him, Pat immediately went in search of a friend that would stay with Pierre and stop him should he make good his suicide threat. With Pierre safely guarded, Pat spent the night at her mother's apartment with a friend. Pat later reflected on a small measure of good fortune. She was happy that she had left her most prized possessions stored at her mother's apartment, because Pierre, in his blind rage, had destroyed many of her belongings.

Pat was isolated by her relationship with Pierre. He had effectively stopped her from socialising with her girlfriends, and often flew into a jealous rage when she talked to their mutual male friends. Pat does not have enough money to live on her own, and most of her girlfriends are either married or not yet ready to leave their parents'

home. She understands clearly that Pierre is an alcoholic and that he is generally drunk when he beats her, but because she has few concrete options (no job, no skills, no money, and a desire for parental independence), she continues to try to keep the atmosphere smooth at home and waits for the day when Pierre will give up alcohol as a result of her love for him.

The abuse and the threats that these girls are prepared to live with clearly demonstrate their realisation that they are essentially powerless in their relationships, and that they are willing to suffer feelings of fright, guilt and shame in order not to lose what little they believe they have.

SUMMARY: RELATIONSHIPS WITH MALE PEERS

The males of the East End seem similar in many respects to their female counterparts. The males abide by the same dress code and code of conduct, and in many ways their behaviour is similar--with one notable exception. It appeared that in their attitudes, in their drug or alcohol use, or in their use of physical violence, the males' behaviour was often taken to extremes. In contrast, the East End girls seemed to act as voices of moderation. As a result, there seems to be a continual battle of wills between the males and the females.

The lives of the East End females and their relationships with the East End males indicate that youth culture is sexist. This condition acts not only to separate young males from young females, but it also staunchly reinforces patriarchal norms. It usually does not take teenage femaleslong to discover that teenage males tend to hold most of the social power, and that their social status can rise precisely because they are seen in relation to a male. Thus, for the teenaged female, the importance of having a boyfriend becomes readily apparent.

However, the consequences of having a boyfriend in a society where double standards regulate sexual morality are very familiar to young women seeking adult status. It is very clear to her that it is her body, and should it become impregnated, it is she and she alone that is affected. This becomes especially difficult when the initial romance of the relationship is lost, and the relationship becomes very one-sided, on the boyfriend's behalf. In all cases, though, the girls eventually suffer, whether it be the shame of admitting to authority figures that they are having sexual relations, or whether they are considered a fool or a slut for having become pregnant. When physical abuse is added to the young female's reality, again she suffers alone. It is quite probable that she has lost contact with her female friends (this generally happens to young females who enter what might be described as a serious heterosexual relationship), while

he has maintained his friendship ties. Further, most of the girls find it difficult to confide to parents etc. that their boyfriends hit them. They faces few concrete opportunities, and they tend to see their futures through their boyfriend's eyes. Instead of resisting, they usually accept their isolation by retreating into themselves, and they continue to try to please their boyfriends, their one reality.

SECTION III

FEMALES OF THE EAST END: RELATIONSHIP TO AUTHORITY FIGURES

The girls of the East End are, due to their age, and the circumstances of day to day life, exposed to many people who possess some form of authority over them. Their relationships to authority figures vary with the individual, but by and large, they are rife with fear and distrust. In some cases, the fear and distrust are the result of past experiences. More often though, the fear or distrust seems to stem from the teens' desire to be seen as responsible adults. As such, they frown upon people who have power over them. Often their resentment of authority figures stems directly from the fact that their input is not recognised as important. As a result, a lack of communication is often the outcome. This lack of communication often creates frustration on the part of the teens which further contributes to the fear, distrust and sometimes animosity they feel towards authority figures.

POLICE OFFICERS

In many cases, the teens' knowledge gained through past experiences acts as a stumbling block in their relationships to authority figures. This is the case with the teens' relationship with police officers. Most of the East End girls have either had a run-in with the police themselves, or else their boyfriends have. Shawn is one of the largest drug

dealers in the East End, a fact known to the police, who have arrested him in the past for drug related offenses. On one occasion, the police asked Sarina for her co-operation in providing them with information concerning Shawn's drug related activities and friends. In return, the police offered Sarina protection and possible relocation, should the need arise. Sarina declined the opportunity to 'rat' on Shawn, and wondered if they truly understood the implications and possible consequences of her cooperation. If so, why did they only offer possible relocation? Because Sarina would not co-operate with the police, she was listed as a known associate and possible accomplice. As a result, she was photographed by the police, and now has a file of her own.

Like Sarina, Lynn's experience with the police was gained largely through her boyfriend. Lynn's boyfriend spent the summer months awaiting sentencing on a murder charge. Although Lynn was not implicated in any way, the actions of the police in this case have affected her view of police officers and the law.

Where Lynn and Sarina have been exposed to situations of criminal arrest indirectly, Kelly's dealings with the police have been direct. Kelly has spent a night in jail, has been fined for drinking in a public place, and has on several occasions come close to being arrested for assault. It is her obstinate and often pugnacious attitude, moreover, which may cause further problems with the police in the future.

In relating the details of their experiences, the girls' contempt for the police becomes readily apparent. In Sarina's case, when her picture was taken for her file, she flashed 'the bird' for the camera. Kelly's contempt for the police is shown even more flagrantly. One night when the police came to the youth centre to issue Rocco a restraining order, Kelly started mouthing off to the cops. "Get the fuck out of here. Leave us alone. What did he do? Cock suckers...". For their part, the cops largely ignored Kelly. However, she was not making anything any easier for herself should she be picked up in the near future.

Kelly, Lynn, and Sarina have each experienced the effects of police officers' personal power. While Lynn seems to accept that there is a power imbalance, Kelly and Sarina perceive their interests to be legitimate, and they openly resist co-operation and respect for authority. By openly resisting values of importance to the police (say no to drugs and alcohol), the girls publicly assert that, even though the police had the power to dominate them legally, they reserved the right to resist them publicly. Although the girls may have harboured a hope that their resistance might affect change, their acts of resistance typically served to be self-defeating in nature, as Kelly demonstrates when she calls the officers 'cock suckers'. In order to understand this self-defeating behaviour, her actions must be viewed in relation to both her gender and her working-class position.

DOCTORS

Similar in origins to the girls' dislike of police officers is the girls' fear of doctors. This trepidation is not attributable to one single factor, but rather to a combination of factors. These range from the fear that their parents will be notified (usually regarding birth control requests), to painful encounters experienced in the past, and to the fact that many physicians are male.

The night that Pat was beaten up by her boyfriend, she refused to go to the hospital. She had a split lip, possibly a broken nose, a cut wrist and buttock. No amount of badgering would make her change her mind. I later found out that not only did Pat fear the pain associated with going to the doctors (e.g., Paps and needles), but also that she would never voluntarily go to see a male doctor. She would not risk going to the hospital because she was convinced that the person treating her would be male. She figured that it was bad enough "to have to bare it all for a female", but she would "never do it for a male". If her doctor could not see her "because she was on vacation or something like that, then forget it". Pat says she would rather die.

Two days after Pat had refused to go to the hospital, she was forced to visit her doctor when she ran out of birth control pills. The visit was especially difficult for her as she fears Paps (once a Pap smear had left her bleeding for a week), and her injuries had just begun to take on some rather

brilliant hues. She need not have worried, however, since her doctor was especially compassionate during this visit. The doctor had given Pat two free months of pills and had checked her injuries without passing judgment. The doctor did tell Pat, however, that if she was planning on moving back in with Pierre that 'this' could very well happen again. The doctor told her that she was lucky. There was no clotting in her breasts, her nose was not broken, and her buttock would heal quite nicely, leaving only a small scar.

Other women have felt feelings similar to Pat's. In 1969, a group of these women formed the Boston Women's Health Collective, in order to protest and resist the medical profession's idea that women were not capable of making informed decisions about their health and bodies. They resented that doctors treated them in a condescending and often paternal manner. In an attempt to inform themselves, they developed a book for themselves and other women entitled, Our Bodies, Ourselves. Despite this positive action of the Boston Women's Health Collective, information regarding birth control, prenatal care, and abortions has not reached the teenage women of the East End. For example, although Lynn wanted to begin taking the pill, she waited until she was 16 to make a doctor's appointment. Lynn was afraid to go to the doctor alone, she worried about what people (nurses, and doctor) "might say"; but her greatest fear of all was that her mother should find out. For Lynn,

this was a very real fear as her mother's best friend worked at the Free Clinic. If she ever told Lynn's mother, Lynn's mother "would kill [her]...but at least she wouldn't tell my dad".

Like Lynn, Sarina does not trust doctors or nurses to hold information about her confidential. Sarina put off having her abortion until it was almost too late because Shawn's mother was a nurse at the hospital where abortions were done. Sarina did not want to share with Shawn's mother that she was pregnant, and she was certain that her situation would be staffroom gossip. As it turned out, Sarina's worst nightmare came true. Shawn's mother was the nurse that wheeled Sarina down to O.R.. The fact that Shawn's mother was the nurse responsible for Sarina's care did not have further embarrassing consequences for Sarina. Her fear and mistrust in this situation were based on a misunderstanding of Shawn's mother's motives and likely reactions.

In addition to the above fears concerning treatment itself and confidentiality, there is an additional hurdle, namely administrative procedures. In Sarina's case, she was not only worried about checking into the hospital because Shawn's mother worked there, but was also intimidated by the forms she had to complete in order to be admitted. She was worried because much of the information required meant an increased risk that her parents might find out about the planned abortion. This was a situation that Sarina wished to

avoid because she was certain that her father would make her go to term with her pregnancy if he ever found out. She felt that she was in a precarious situation since she needed her father's hospital insurance plan number, and the details of his family medical plan.

She managed to clear this obstacle, but then ran into a second hurdle with the receptionist at the admitting area. The endless stream of paper work proves to be very frustrating for the girls. But in addition to this, there is often a very real prejudice on the part of the hospital staff. The receptionist made Sarina wait two hours (until she had served everyone else), and paid no heed to Sarina's explanations as to why her form was not submitted a week in advance. When the receptionist finally began to go through Sarina's forms, she complained that Sarina was a "messy writer" and that it was obvious that she was "another one whose parents didn't know".

PARENTS

In the girls' relationships with doctors, there is a common, underlying fear that their parents will find out about their personal lives. For some of the teens, the desire to be seen as adults capable of making their own decisions creates a barrier in their relationship with their parents. Often this barrier is displayed through a lack of respect, or a lack of communication. For other teens, the

relationship with their parents is a more important part of their lives. For these teens there is a respect, a love, and in some cases a sympathy for their mothers and their plight. In almost all cases, however, the girls admit to feeling closer to their mothers than to their fathers.

(i) Mothers

Lynn's relationship with her mother appears to be characterised by a lack of respect. In one incident, Lynn searched through her mother's purse and wallet in order to obtain her family's health insurance number. While this breach of privacy was brought on by Lynn's desire to maintain her own privacy, the callousness she displayed towards her mother's feelings, when later questioned, revealed how little respect she had for her mother. For other girls, physical confrontations with their mothers were not uncommon. Tracy admits she often fights (physically) with her mother. One night Sarina slept over at Bobbi's house. She and Bobbi had decided to go to the bar and she did not want to return to Shawn's parent's home late. Bobbi is a friend who has been living on her own for several years and currently rents a room from Tracy's mother. When they came home from the bar, Tracy (14 years old) and her mother were having a fight. Sarina said that she and Bobbi walked into the house, saw the plates flying and walked out. An hour later, they came back (3:00 am) and everything had calmed down. Sarina did not

know what the fight had been about, and she had no desire to make it any of her business.

Katlain's relationship with her mother appears to fall into the opposite end of the spectrum. Katlain's mother can be described as a strict disciplinarian in relation to the other East End girls' mothers, and while this strictness is often the cause of arguments, Katlain defends her mother stating that they have "an understanding". Katlain will follow her mother's advice, no matter how difficult it makes her life as a teen in the East End. Katlain understands that her mother only wants her to have a better life than she has had. In addition, Katlain's father is present and he strongly backs Katlain's mother's position. During the summer, Katlain got braces. She is now working towards saving her paycheques. She needs to save $160.00 from her job, which pays minimum wage, so that she can pay for them. Her mother does not have the money, and Katlain needs them so they agreed that Katlain would pay for the braces now, and her mother would save to pay her back. Through their actions, and the mutual co-operation displayed, their love and respect is demonstrated.

Sarina's and Pat's relationship with their mothers appears to occupy a middle ground. While both have left their parents' homes, or at least are absent for long periods of time, they have maintained a bond with their mothers. This bond has developed such that their mother/daughter relationship has grown to include the girls as sympathetic

friends. Since Sarina is not living at home, she can forget the now trivial arguments that she and her mother used to have. Sarina sympathises with her mother's position because she feels that her mother's life has become more difficult since she left home. Her mother is now the only female in the house. Besides holding down a full time job, she is responsible for all of the housework. According to Sarina, the "boys wouldn't help out if you begged them". Sarina usually returns home every few weeks to lend a hand while her mother is at work. She figures that her mother's life will improve a little, however, now that "the house is almost done". It has taken 15 years to get the house fixed up (new roof, added bedrooms, and other renovations), and now her mother had saved enough money to buy carpet for the living room. Since it is unlikely that Sarina's mother will ever live in a place other than the East End, Sarina wants her to at least have the satisfaction of enjoying her own home.

Pat's relationship is similar, and she often finds herself assuming a nursemaid role. She is always available to help her mother out. I once interviewed Pat at her mother's apartment because Pat was spending most of her days there while her mother was in B.C.. While her mother was gone, Pat was taking care of her place; doing the spring cleaning; paying the bills; and watering the plants. When I arrived, Pat gave me a tour of the apartment. It was the standard one bedroom apartment found in shabby, run-down

neighbourhoods. Pat and her mother kept it clean and the only thing odd about the place was that the bedroom housed two single beds rather than one. Pat explained that one of the beds was hers and that she had never fully moved in with Pierre. She said that she often spent the night at her mother's when Pierre was drinking heavily, and when her mother was sick. Pat continues to refer to her mother's place as home, and frequently stayed there because she figured, "Why sit at Pierre's home [with Pierre] and be alone, when I can go to my mom's [while her mother is in British Columbia] and be by myself?" I discovered, as Kostash (1987) discovered in her research on teenage females, that "there was nothing...that would suggest that the mother is anything but the single most influential person in her daughter's life" (p. 125).

(ii) Fathers

While most of the girls claim to have a workable, if not pleasant relationship with their mothers, the same cannot be said about their fathers. Many of the East End girls do not have relationships with their fathers. Pat, Tracy, and Kelly have never met their fathers. Bobbi has not seen hers in years, and in the case of divorce, all of the East End girls lived with their mothers. Sarina and Lynn, however, have both parents living at home. Their relationships with their fathers can be considered rocky, at best. The relationships

between the teens and their fathers seem plagued by double standards and harsh, sudden discipline.

The double standards of Sarina's father are manifest in his treatment of his daughter compared to his sons. One night while Sarina and I helped the younger teens make candles, her brother, Tony (13 years old), had a tantrum that resulted in hot wax being sprayed about the kitchen. Tony wanted Domino's candle mold and when Domino would not give it to him, Tony smashed his mold on the floor. I grabbed Tony, and when I let him get to his feet, he left the youth centre for home. Tony was running quickly with Sarina fast on his heels. She insisted that "he's not going to get away with this one". When she came back to the centre, she showed me the bruise on her leg. Apparently, Tony had stopped running long enough to heave a boulder at her. Sarina did chase him home, however, and told her father what had happened. Her father did not make a move to punish Tony until Tony began calling Sarina "a fucking slut". Then Tony "got what he had coming, and I just stood there and laughed".

Sarina and her father fail to see eye-to-eye on Sarina's dating. Although he encourages his son (Sarina's younger brother), Rob, to "go out and have a good time", Sarina's boyfriends are continually criticized. When Sarina began seeing Shawn, her father asked her what she saw in this "fucking drug dealer". Sarina was furious. Even though Shawn had just been released from prison for drug related

charges, Sarina reminded her father that "no one is perfect". She reminded him that he was once a biker and that he still smoked pot. Her final comment to her father on this topic was, "Well what if Shawn thinks you're an asshole?" Her father told her to stop being so cocky and two weeks later, Sarina moved in with Shawn. The result is that Sarina and her father speak very little, because any discussion generally ends in an argument, and Sarina and her father consequently have little that resembles a relationship.

Similarly, there is no love lost between Lynn and her father. Lynn claims to hate her father and looks forward to living on her own. One night while at the youth centre, Lynn related to me that she had been 'kicked out'. According to Lynn, she did not want to go camping with her parents for the weekend and she told her father that she would not go. He told her that if she did not get into the car that she might as well pack her bags. When Lynn made no move to comply with his wishes, he told her that he wanted her out of the house when he came home.

Interaction between the girls and their parents is far from being a smooth process. The unequal authority wielded by parents and the young female is a direct cause of tension. This is a characteristic of family life which extends to adults important privileges concerning sexuality, property and control over behaviour from which the girls are excluded

(Connell et al, 1982). This makes the East End females feel like outsiders within their own families; it forces them into an adversary role where they perceive their interests to be divergent from their parents. What is at stake is the teenage females' right to define the content of their own experiences as acted out in relationships with others.

YOUTH CENTRE WORKERS

The youth centre workers represent another group of authority figures with whom the teens had considerable dealings over the summer. The youth workers assumed what amounted to a substitute parent role since they were responsible for the teens' supervision during the many hours that the teens chose to hang out at the youth centre. The relationship between the teens and the youth workers was, to say the least, tense. The difficulties in this relationship are due to a number of factors. The teens, first and foremost, distrusted the youth workers. The roles and the duties of the youth workers, as the workers perceived them, created a great deal of friction with the teens. While the teens always seemed to be struggling for their independence and personal autonomy, the youth workers were attempting to live up to what they perceived as their job requirements. The teens resented this as the workers were not, after all, their parents.

The youth workers' unwanted intervention in personal matters left the teens feeling betrayed and violated. When Sarina first mentioned to me that she was pregnant, she asked me not to relate this information to other staff members. I gave her my word, but Paula, one of the workers, had already heard about Sarina's situation, and questioned me anyway. I suggested that she talk to Sarina, and Paula told me to tell Sarina that she wanted to see her. When the teens (Kelly, Lynn, Dodge, Rob, and Cindy) came into the office, I asked them if they had seen Sarina. They informed me that she was on her way upstairs to talk to Paula. I groaned, thinking that Sarina would think I had betrayed her confidence. The teens, however, did not notice my discomfort, and went on bad-mouthing Paula in very descriptive terms. They were upset that Paula "was sticking her nose" into a situation that was none of her business.

Paula is in a difficult position as a youth worker in the East End. While she is not old enough to physically separate herself from the teens, separation from the teens is one of her job requirements. As a youth worker in the 'wrong end of town', she must attempt the impossible: providing leadership for the teens while remaining detached from the teens. Rather than understanding Paula's position, that she must acknowledge rumours about teen pregnancies, the teens instead denounced her as insensitive and nosy.

There were, however, several other reasons for the teens' animosity towards the youth workers. One was the feeling that the workers did not listen to, or show any understanding towards the teens. Throughout the summer, the teens made several suggestions for improving the centre's facilities and functions. In all cases the teens' suggestions were disregarded. One such incident concerned the teen dance held at the youth centre, described previously on pages 68-69. They were quite upset that they had been misled, and nothing Diane could say or do would get them to come inside.

The amount of power these youth workers held over the teens was extensive. Not only did they exert an influence over the teens' social lives, but in some cases they also controlled part-time jobs. This was the case for Rob, Carla and Katlain. Rob's relationship with his bosses at the youth centre quickly deteriorated as a result of a confrontation with the Executive Director of the centre. Rob was over an hour late for a teen employment opportunity workshop. The director lost his temper, telling Rob that he was "a fucking loser" and that the rest of the East End kids were too. The director continued explaining that they did not appreciate an opportunity when it was given to them and that Rob would never make it. Rob stood there until Jock was finished and then he left the centre. The other teens (Carla, Katlain, and Dodge) went back to join the workshop. Later Katlain

informed me that she and another girl from the other side of town might be the only teens left in the work experience program. She said the other teens were 'P.Oed.' and probably would not show up for the rest of the program.

In addition to the distrust and communication problems which almost all of the teens experienced, there were individual relationships which, in some cases created a double standard, and in other cases brought about a heavy-handed form of justice. One night when Kelly was doing her best to pick a fight with Sarina, Sarina lit a cigarette and more or less ignored her. Kelly continued with her insults, and Sarina was 'kicked out' from the centre for smoking. Before joining Sarina, I watched Diane light a cigarette, and prompt Kelly to continue to explain about her falling-out with Sarina. Smoking is against the youth centre's rules. When Paula is working, she allows the older teenage girls to join her for a smoke in the office. When Diane and Paula work together, the girls are also allowed to smoke. Sometimes the teens are allowed to smoke when Diane is working alone. Sometimes they are not. The teens often have a difficult time reading when it is ok, and when it is not.

On another occasion, Dodge, along with the rest of the teens, had left the centre because Diane had made them turn their music off. I asked him if they had been fooling around, but he said no. When I asked Diane what was wrong with the teens' music (the same music they play almost every

night), she said that it was "because they are not allowed to listen to Heavy Metal in the club". I did not really take her very seriously, as Heavy Metal was pretty much the only music I had heard since I had been working at the club, but then I remembered the other double messages I had seen her send over the past month.

I told Diane that I was going to take the teens for coffees. She said that it was a good idea. She was not feeling well and the teens were really getting on her nerves. As much as I could have wished her to have more patience, I could understand what she meant. The teens can be very demanding. When she reminded me to take Lynn and Kelly along (they were upstairs in the centre's kitchen making dinner), however, I thought Diane needed a vacation. Not even a week had gone by since Kelly's and Sarina's abusive name calling had gone on in her office. They had been avoiding each other since, and I think the next step would have been physical violence; something both girls were probably trying to avoid.

The gap between the youth workers and the teens was never more apparent than on a July night when I arrived at the youth centre to find a police cruiser outside. Kelly was hurling insults at the officers and there was a general air of excitement. When I asked what was going on, I was told that Paula had "called the cops on Rocco". I asked why, and was told that Rocco had beaten Paula up. Although I would not think that this was funny if I thought it could be true,

I could not comprehend that the teens were serious. It was not until I saw Rocco in the back of the cruiser that I understood that they had not been joking. I went inside to see how Paula was and she was fine. I asked what had happened and she explained that Rocco had punched her. I asked how long the restraining order would be in effect, and she said that he was banned from the centre's property until she decided otherwise. Although Paula proved a point--one cannot physically attack another and expect to get away with it--the point was lost on the teens. Rocco was young (twelve), and he was a dwarf, weighing not more than seventy pounds to Paula's hefty 200. The teens would have had more respect for Paula had she picked Rocco up and kicked him outside.

WAITRESSES AND WAITERS

The teens' problems in relating to authority figures were not confined solely to those with power over them. These problems, in fact, extended to the teens' day to day life, and often resulted in the teens being intimidated, to some degree, by such little authority as that possessed by waitresses and waiters. Because going for coffee was a common event with the teens, many of our interviews occurred in restaurants. Consequently, I was able to observe the interaction between the girls and the waitresses and waiters.

One evening, we went to our usual restaurant to find it closed. We had to choose between Kentucky Fried Chicken and Joe's, a pizza restaurant. I opted for Joe's because I thought the atmosphere was better: controlled lighting and the privacy that the booths afforded. The girls were dubious, figuring that the waitresses would not let us into the restaurant. They had been turned away before because they had only had money for coffees. I assured them that we would be welcomed and we had our coffees. Kelly and Lynn both claimed that they would not have gotten a seat if I had not been with them. I tried to tell them that they just had to be confident. It was the wrong word and Kelly did not let it slide. I was informed that she was confident and that she "didn't take shit from no one".

Another time, both Cindy and Sarina decided that they would like a chocolate sundae. When the waitress brought them two chocolate shakes, I almost fell out of the booth looking at the expression of horror etched on their faces. The waitress must have seen it too as she was quick to explain that she realised she had made a mistake. Cindy looked at Sarina until Sarina began to stutter. The waitress gracefully interrupted and said "of course, they'll be free". While Cindy and Sarina gathered themselves, I kicked them under the table and they both managed a meaningful "thank-you".

It would seem that the power that the teens assign to waitresses is similar to the power they extend to their parents, in that both parents and waitresses are role models for the East End females. It would seem improbable, that the girls would choose doctors or police officers as reasonable authority figures to model themselves after. In their own personal experiences, they have never actually known anyone from the East End, or anyone in situations similar to their own, who has ever made it in one of these professions. When most teens from the East End barely finish high school, it is difficult to imagine ever becoming a doctor, and who would want to be a cop? Waitressing is a job within their realm. Their mothers did it; their friends are doing it; and they can do it too.

SUMMARY: RELATIONSHIPS WITH AUTHORITY FIGURES

Throughout the summer, the teens of the East End were exposed to a number of people who, in the teens' eyes, represented some form of authority. The actual authority these people had varied from the power of the police to the power of waitresses. In most cases, however, the relationships the teens had with these authority figures were plagued with either fear or distrust. Although these feelings were in many cases founded, they lead in many cases to avoidance, animosity, and disassociation. In either case, there is a break down of communication between the teens and

the authority figures, and an increased dependence on peers of the teens' group. This lack of communication and the corresponding dependence on other teens, can have serious implications because it opens the doors to hearsay, and limits possibilities for personal growth.

At issue are the girls' interests, priorities and their fight for autonomy. The issues that often cause conflict between young women and authority figures can be very different from each other on the surface, but the issues of conflict all appear to stem from the teens' desire to define the content of their own existence. The teens' desire to be recognised as sexual beings is one such conflict. While parents (especially fathers) would like to restrict and therefore define the nature of their daughters' activities with boyfriends, their daughters wish to be recognised as sexual beings, capable of making their own decisions. This can be difficult when parents want them to remain children and doctors control their access to birth control.

Quite often, feelings of frustration are experienced in the teens' relationship to doctors, police officers, youth workers and parents. The teens are very aware that the power imbalance is not in their favour. These authority figures have important privileges (sexuality, property, and control over personal behaviour) that the teens desperately want. As seen from the eyes of the East End teens, this makes them

outsiders from the adult world, and forces them into a position of resistance.

CHAPTER V

REFLECTIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

SECTION I

In this chapter, the data presented in Chapter IV will be analysed thematically, in order to try to capture the most significant effects of youth culture in constructing these young women's social relationships and their lives. These ideas will then be related back to the literature introduced in Chapter II, in order to try to theorise how young working-class women end up in the circumstances they do. The final section will address what remain, for me, difficult and outstanding questions.

GROWING-UP FEMALE

Youth culture for teenage females residing in the East End is central in constructing their lives as young, working-class women. It is their culture, the part of life that matters most to them. It is through youth culture that the East End girls gain experience that is essential to their futures as working-class women, and in that culture that the girls can pursue their immediate interests of music, clothing, conversation and sex. It is important to the girls that these interests be pursued with their peers, beyond adult control because peer opinions are valued most in this culture. Friends, not authority figures, provide the valued

feedback indicating whether or not one has learned the appropriate values and responses of one's own generation.

Youth culture plays a large role in the East End females' construction and projection of femininity. Symbolically, dress is perhaps the most direct outlet that these girls have available to them to express femininity in ways that project their sense of self. Although the girls generally dressed in tight fitting blue jeans, t-shirts, and jackets, all of the girls were adept at bringing a sense of personal style to their outfits. For example, personal style was quite often reflected in the way a girl chose to wear her hair. While Sarina and Kelly had streaked their hair, Lynn had her hair permed, and the girls as a group were most familiar with curling irons and blow dryers.

While the construction of their femininity started at home through personal grooming, the projection of their femininity continued in the girls' public behaviour. Dancing, flirting, and having a boyfriend were all examples of the girls' public claims to femininity. Their femininity, however, was also expressed in less public ways. The girls often wrote poetry and discussed romance. These activities seemed to provide an outlet for feelings that the girls' shared among themselves. It was not often that these feelings were shared with male peers, and never was an incident witnessed when these feelings were shared with authority figures. The discussion of feelings with

girlfriends provided a private outlet for these young women, where they did not have to worry about playing a role, or living up to a code. As modes of self-expression, these activities reflected a personal femininity.

Female peer friendship was revealed as profoundly important to the East End girls. Although the girls associated with a group of female peers, most of them had an especially close friend from within this group. This close friend was referred to as a best friend, and most of the teens desired to have such a relationship. Best friend relationships were highly individual, and very often self-serving, but in all cases there was a mutual sense of benefit. Lynn, for example, traded her loyalty for the benefit of Kelly's popularity, and Katlain enjoyed acceptance by the group while Carla was free to express the whims of her personality. The important idea behind having a best friend, however, remained the same: the girls experienced intimacy that was grounded through being accepted by someone on their own terms.

The proving grounds for female friendships are many, and the contexts and events in which these young women forged friendships varied with each individual situation. When Sarina and Bobbi were making their way home from a local bar, they together recited a 'poem' to a small group of female preppies. The recital was given with the intent to insult and to provoke the other females, but the other young women

ignored the provocation. Had the girls decided to react, Sarina and Bobbi would have been willing to fight. Their disrespect for other young female subcultures, and their willingness to act as a unit in a physical confrontation (or potential confrontation) is a proving ground for their friendship.

Although a willingness to participate in physical confrontations was a proving ground for some East End teens, other opportunities to demonstrate loyalties were available. One such manner in which they could demonstrate their friendship was by participating in the ostracism of teenagers visiting the East End. Although Katlain and Lynn did not verbally attack May, as Kelly did, they supported Kelly's actions through their silences and made no attempts to befriend May. Another way of demonstrating belonging was through participation in 'store raids'. The East End girls regularly stole 'munchies' (usually pop, chips, and penny candy) from one East End convenience store. All of the girls were involved in this petty theft, even Katlain in so far as she allowed 'raids' to occur while she was working. As important as their specific behaviours was the attitude they expressed--an attitude of tight solidarity within the group, and hostility towards outsiders and especially authority figures (pp. 66-67).

Another more positive kind of proving ground for East End females is in their use of 'soap opera language'. Most of

the girls regularly watched soap operas during the summer months, and they adopted 'lines' from these soaps into their everyday conversations. Soap opera language was a language which the girls' shared and which acted to bond them together because it was thought that one was clever when one could use these lines in regular exchanges. Apart from soap operas, the girls enjoyed watching talk shows. Like soap operas, talk shows provided the girls with information and a context in which they were able to understand the information. Through discussing talk shows, the East End girls reassured each other that they were experiencing the same feelings as others. Talking about talk shows served to help the girls articulate their common ideas which acted to identify common grounds for friendship.

Most important of these ideas were feelings about relationships, especially about love, sexuality, and romance. Sometimes this talk took on a very practical character--for example, about birth control, or about problems in their own relationships. More generally, though, the plots of soaps, and the problems aired on advice shows, gave these young women opportunities to sort out their feelings about the relationships with men and with family that would profoundly shape their lives.

The East End girls experienced feelings of intimacy in their friendships with each other. Their intimate feelings developed through a sense of mutual understanding which

occurs when one feels accepted as an equal, and when one 'lives' the same experiences as young working class women. Their friendships also provided the girls with a context in which they were free to develop their interpersonal skills. These caring skills which are developed become very valuable to the East End girls as most of these young women will enter the adult realm at a significantly earlier age than young females in other youth subcultures. Female friends, thus, become essential to the East End females' development as young adults.

It is worth noting here that at no time was there any discussion of homosexuality. Although the girls were able to--and did--express strong feelings for one another, and although these friendships were important to them, there was also a shared understanding that friendships would not be as important, in the overall context of their lives, as romance and heterosexual relationships. Homosexuality, in contrast, was a topic that was almost taboo, and would have been very difficult for any of the girls to claim. If any of them experienced any desire to extend female friendships into sexual relationships, these were not things they felt it was safe to talk about in front of anyone else in this subculture.

RELATIONSHIP TO MALE PEERS

In other important social relationships, the East End girls do not experience a similar sense of equality and understanding. When they 'hang-out' in a group, for instance, their male peers are socially central. The East End girls seemed to have accepted this fact, and value the idea of being seen in relation to a teenage male. Being seen in relation to a male acted to elevate their social status and often acted to legitimate their sexuality.

When an East End female first entered into a tentative relationship with an East End male, she had some power to dictate the terms of the relationship. She could insist on some romantic gestures (e.g., holding hands publicly), and it was she who determined how far the relationship would go sexually. Once she had given herself to a sexual relationship, however, power changed hands. Now the female must appear to be a 'one man woman', yet he had the power to withhold his affections. Shawn demonstrated this by refusing to hold Sarina's hand publicly only three days after his release from prison; and some of the other behaviours described in the previous chapter represent "power tripping" of a humiliating and hurtful sort.

This often produced feelings of frustration in the girls. Sarina confronted Shawn about his unwillingness to hold her hand, but it was only after several minutes of arguing and after Sarina questioned his masculinity that he

consented. Sarina knows that Shawn will largely do what he wants, when he wants, and that by comparison she is powerless within the relationship. This sense of inequality within relationships, and powerlessness, was experienced by all of the East End girls unless they were willing to 'leave'.

This sense of powerlessness was perhaps most evident in situations of physical abuse. Both Pat and Sarina have experienced situations of abuse in their relationships with their boyfriends. Both boyfriends have dependency problems with Pierre being an alcoholic and Shawn abusing both drugs and alcohol. Since most physical outbursts occurred while under the influence of drugs and/or alcohol, both Sarina and Pat found themselves in positions that demanded careful management. Sarina tried to moderate Shawn's behaviour because she one day hopes to marry him. Similarly, Pat attempted to moderate Pierre's drinking and keep the atmosphere tension free at home, because she believed that Pierre would one day 'see the light' and give up alcohol as a result of her love for him. The abuse and on going threats of abuse clearly indicate that these girls understand that they are in no position to make demands, that their only option is "the door". They continue, however, to act as voices of moderation because they continue to believe in 'the best' of these men, and because they are accustomed to being both direct and indirect victims of extreme behaviour,

both in their parents' culture and their own working-class peer subculture.

These girls are very aware of the sexism within their peer culture. This sexism acts to create a gap between the genders and to reinforce patriarchal norms. However, being seen in a relationship with a male can raise a female's social status within the peer group. This seems to be a key factor in understanding the strength of their desire to have a boyfriend. Even though Sarina's and Lynn's boyfriends were serving sentences through the summer, both Lynn and Sarina maintained the status assigned to couples. Shawn and Curt may have been 'out of sight', but in the minds of Lynn and Sarina, and indeed the other East End teens, both girls' were 'taken'.

When these young women were dating, and the relationship became sexual, it was the female who assumed responsibility for birth control. This particular double standard was enforced by the peer group; an East End female who becomes pregnant ceases to be a peer in a very real sense. Thus, the fear of being alone acts to legitimate this unwritten rule regarding birth control responsibility. Should an East End teen become pregnant and decide to keep the child, she will likely be alone, as it is very rare that the father of the child will acknowledge responsibility for his part in the union. Second, she will be experiencing something that is foreign to most of her female peers. This causes stress on

the relationships as her female peers are unable to identify with the new 'problems' that she will be encountering, and once again, she is alone. Finally, she has become 'a mother', and therefore has entered into the adult realm. She is alone here because she is not accepted as an equal by adults: she is just a teenager with a baby.

Many of the teens, however, have benefited through their acceptance of their peer group's sexist attitudes. Cindy, through her participation in The Battle Of The Bands contest, experienced affirmation of her desirability as a young woman, and realised an increase in her popularity. Accepting sexist attitudes and behaviours, and indeed reinforcing these attitudes and behaviours with their compliance, is part of being a teenage female in the East End, as their peer culture is ultimately pointed towards marriage. For the female possessing few marketable skills, marriage is quite often an institution formed out of economic necessity. Their peer culture rejects conventional standards of behaviour necessary to achieve 'success' in adulthood (e.g., they ignore homework and eventually drop-out of high school). This choice not only limits the girls' employment opportunities to "women's jobs", low paying and non-prestigious, but also deprives them of the opportunity to network outside of their own culture--an opportunity extended to those that stay in school.

Marriage, however, cannot be viewed as an institution formed entirely out of economic necessity. The girls have other reasons to view marriage quite favourably. Marriage, for instance, allows the East End girls to realise adult status. By being married the girls find that adults (former role models) are willing to extend adult status to them. This legitimation of their claims to adult status is precisely what peer culture is all about--the transition from childhood to adulthood.

Further, marriage and parenthood offer working-class girls adult roles that are legitimate and indeed respected acr ss ociety. Rosegrant (1985) illustrates this point in her tudy of working-class girls in a low-income housing development (United States). Her actual explanation addressed motherhood, but can be extended to encompass marriage and motherhood in the East End girls' situation. She bases her explanation on the idea that working-class women face a future that holds little promise. Besides the barrier of class, working-class women face patriarchy as a mode of domination. They can, however, realise a goal that appears to offer respect within the social structures they are growing-up into.

> As teenagers, the women of this study...underwent the same hardships and lived the same stigma that their brothers felt. Certainly they knew their families were poor, that they were living different lives than the ones they saw depicted on T.V., and that somehow it was their parents'--especially their fathers-

> "fault" that they were in this position. They certainly felt bad when they did poorly in school, they did not look forward to the jobs they would hold in their lifetimes--work at least as dull as that for which the boys were headed. However, the girls could react to these pressures and find a respite from them, that the boys could not. Within the mainstream of our society, a clearly defined and lauded path existed which they could follow. Thanks to this "escape route," the girls were not forced to cope with an overwhelming image of themselves, either personal or societal, as failures. No matter how poorly they performed in school, or how dismal their employment outlook might have been, they had a route to respectability...one of which society supposedly approved. They could be mothers...and no one could keep them from realizing this goal (Rosegrant, 1985, pp. 125-126).

Finally, marriage symbolises the girls' acceptance of their own working-class culture and their subordinate position as women within this culture.

RELATIONSHIP TO AUTHORITY FIGURES

The East End girls are exposed daily to many people who possess some degree of power over them. The actual authority that these people held ranged from the legal power held by police officers to the power that the teens assigned to medical personnel and waitresses. The central issue was usually the teens' desire to define themselves as adults.

The East End girls' past experiences with the police have generally not been pleasant in nature, and hence any officer in uniform was subject to the teens' feelings of

fear, distrust and hate. The contempt that the teens held for the police was readily apparent in both the girls' discussions about police officers and in their behaviours while interacting with the police. Sarina gave the cops 'the finger' when being photographed at a local shopping centre. When asked why she did it, she explained that she wanted the plain clothed officers to know that she was on to "their game". Kelly not only demonstrated her contempt for police officers through her postures (arms folded across her chest while in their presence), but she also publicly vented her frustration. Kelly displayed absolutely no qualms in telling cops where to go and how to get there, as was evident in the verbal abuse she directed at the police officers arresting Rocco.

Part of the issue that the girls have with the police was common to all East End teenagers. The police are a common sight in the East End, and beyond mere patrolling, they are often in the neighbourhood to handle specific situations (vandalism, fights, and drunks). Most of the East End girls feel certain that one way or another, the police "don't give a fuck" about East Enders. This feeling was compounded when the person of arrest was a parent, sibling, friend, or boyfriend.

The East End girls resisted the values held by the police whenever they could. They liked "to party" and drugs and alcohol were central to their partying. The use of drugs

is against the law, and all of the girls who drank alcohol were drinking it underage. Part of the fun of partying was challenging established authority, and asserting that their interests in drinking and sex were not only real, but legitimate.

While the East End girls would openly display their contempt for the power held by police officers, the girls resisted the power held by doctors by avoiding them. This stemmed primarily from fear. The girls were afraid that doctors would notify their parents about birth control requests; they associated pain with the doctor (Paps, needles etc.), and they were shy about having their bodies examined by strangers, especially if the stranger was male.

Often the girls' avoidance of doctors had the potential for serious consequences (pregnancy, abortions, infections). Although the girls knew that visiting the doctor's rationally represented a sound idea, rationality was easily displaced by very strong emotions. All of the girls knew someone whose parents found out that they were sexually active because they were notified by the doctor the girl went to see, or because a medical bill had been sent to the house. And all of the girls assumed that the information doctors received from them would not be held as confidential. This fear that her personal situation would become public almost stopped Sarina from obtaining an abortion.

Underlying the East End girls' relationships with

doctors is a fear that the doctors will not recognise them as adults and therefore breech their rights to privacy by informing their parents. When a girl knows that she is essentially seen as a child in the eyes of her parents, she knows that they are unlikely to be thrilled when they find out that she is sexually active. Tension is created when, confronted, the daughter states her wish to be recognised as an adult capable of making her own decisions. The girls' desire to be seen as adults and their parents attempts to maintain control over their daughters' lives created barriers in these relationships. These barriers differed with each family, but in most cases the largest barrier was created in father/daughter relationships.

In general, the girls tended to feel closer to their mothers than to their fathers. In fact, many of the East End girls did not even have relationships with their fathers: some do not know who their fathers are (Pat, Tracy, and Kelly), and others never saw their fathers again once their parents were divorced (Bobbi). When the girls' fathers were present in the home, the relationship that the girls had with them could hardly be described as ideal. It was the general experience of East End girls that fathers were the more powerful parent within the home. He was the enforcer of both double standards and harsh discipline.

On a daily basis, East End females face discrimination in their homes. Not only do they take on substantially more

household chores than male members of the family, but they also face double standards in regards to dating patterns. The position taken by Sarina's father, that Rob should "have a good time", but that Sarina should be discriminating about who she dates exemplifies parents' attempts to control their daughters' behaviours more than they attempt to control their sons'. This attempt to control Sarina's dating illustrates what may be interpreted as a misguided attempt to 'protect' Sarina. Possessing a basic understanding of working-class youth culture, her father may only have been trying to protect her from the sexist realities of that culture, and interfering in the name of parental love. However, it is exactly this protective stance that the East End girls resist. The further her father interferes, the more Sarina resists. Her resistance often ended up being self-defeating in nature as when she quit school, and moved in with Shawn.

Generally the East End girls have more developed and often more positive relationships with their mothers than they do with their fathers. When Pat and Sarina moved from their parents' homes, both girls developed friendships with their mothers. Sarina knew that things were more difficult for her mother since she had left home. Besides working full-time, her mother now had to take on sole responsibility for the family housework. Sarina returned home every few weeks to help her mother out. Pat's relationship with her mother was similar in that Pat's mother's life had also

become more difficult since she left home. Pat understood this and did all she could to make her mother's life more comfortable. Indeed, Pat contributed so much to her mother's welfare that it could be said that she effectively managed two households. Where Sarina and Pat have developed a friendship with their mothers', Katlain has developed 'an understanding' with hers. Although Katlain's mother could be described as strict in comparison with the other girls' mothers, Katlain understood that her mother only wanted the best for her. Mutual co-operation and understanding underlined most interaction within this relationship.

Not all of the girls' relationships with their mothers, however, were like this. Lynn did not respect her mother, as she viewed her as a figure of powerlessness within the household. Lynn resented the fact that her mother stood by when Lynn was threatened in the home by her father. Because of her silences, Lynn assumed that she must either be weak (and therefore pathetic), or that she was siding with her father. Tracy saw herself as possessing equal authority to her mother in the house, and would physically fight her mother should a confrontation develop. On the whole, however, the girls tended to view their mothers as the most influential adult they had reason to interact with.

Another group of adults the teens had considerable contact with throughout the summer months were youth centre staff. In a sense, the youth workers assumed responsibility

which amounted to a cross between a substitute police officer/parent role. Because the youth workers were responsible for the teens' supervision during the many hours that the teens hung-out at the centre, the relationship between the teens and the youth workers was somewhat strained. The teens, struggling for their independence and personal autonomy, resented the workers' policing of their actions.

The youth workers' power over the teens' activities was most evident with respect to centre activities: smoking policies, acceptable music styles and lyrics at dances. In addition for many teens, centre workers had the power to give and take away summer jobs. The teens recognised the youth workers' power, but became very upset by the inconsistent way they enforced centre rules. Sometimes, for instance, the teens were allowed to smoke in the centre, and sometimes they were not. The whole concept of centre rules and their enforcement seemed to be dependent upon who was working, and what kind of a mood they were in.

The youth workers indeed had a difficult role to play. Leadership, not friendship, seemed to be the way in which they perceived their jobs. And yet, their position was complicated because to be effective on the job, the teens must acknowledge and respect their authority, and this respect was not given freely. The teens insisted that in

some respects they be treated as adults, or friends, and this made for tension in the relationships.

The teens understand that the power held by authority figures is greater than the power they hold as individuals and thus the group becomes an important factor in the teens' resistance. Kelly openly harassed officers of the law when she was with the group, and the group was often used for cover as was the case when the youth centre was vandalised. Personal resistance, however, was also evident in many cases when the teens faced interacting with adults. Sarina and Lynn harboured no qualms about provoking argument with their fathers, and Tracy would physically resist her mother. The teens' desire to be recognised as young adults, and authority figures' refusal to assign them this recognition, sets the stage for both individual and collective acts of resistance.

It has been suggested in the last chapter that the girls' acts of resistance were often self-defeating in nature. When Kelly shouted verbal abuse at the police officers, she did not appear to be concerned with the idea that she might encounter these same officers at some point in the future. Her stance in this situation illustrates quite well the 'nowness' of East End peer culture. Rarely do the girls ponder upon what their futures might entail. The girls' visions of possible futures seldom 'imagine' beyond apparently predetermined paths. They will get married, raise their children and perhaps work when their children are in

school. Beyond this, when pressed to discuss future aspirations, a general air of hopelessness is evident. Exasperated, Pat sums up her feelings on the subject rather clearly when she explains that she "has no future."

SECTION II

In this section, the findings of my study are related back to the literature on youth culture. The section is subdivided into four subsections. The literature on Youth Subcultures is addressed first, followed by discussions of Reproduction, Resistance, and Leisure, Friendship, And Gender Relations.

It has been established that working-class culture is a culture to the dominant middle-class culture. To clearly understand the constraints that the East End girls face, it is important to understand their position within their own working-class culture. As young working-class women, they find themselves at the bottom of several hierarchies. Not only is their teen subculture subordinate to their parents' working-class culture (itself subordinate to the dominant culture), but they are further subordinated within their own subculture as a result of their gender. Their position is therefore constructed from a particular framework of possibilities and constraints. The way in which the East End girls respond to the limitations of this framework is open-ended, however, and clearly varies with individuals; the outcomes are not predefined.

YOUTH SUBCULTURES

With respect to class, Kostash (1987) has noted that "There is no single teen culture" (p. 50), there are several. Each subculture (e.g., Skaters, Preppies, Wavers) holds different interests as central to their peer group identity (e.g., skate boarding, designer clothing, New Wave music). The East End teens distinguished themselves from other youth subcultures in the city by holding heavy metal music as central to their images of themselves. They referred to themselves as "Rockers" and have adopted a broad set of attitudes and behaviours particular to their group.

In order to more fully understand the East End teens' subculture, their group should be examined in relation to their parent working-class culture. This is necessary because the East End teens' culture shares certain structural circumstances with their parents' culture. Different parent cultures exist in relations of domination and subordination to one another, and working-class culture is subordinate to the dominant middle-class culture. Middle-class leadership is reinforced through the promotion of middle-class interests and ideas in key social institutions, institutions which help establish middle-class ideas and interests as "common sense". This process is perhaps best understood using Bourdieu's concept of cultural capital, the "general cultural background, knowledge, disposition and skills that are passed from one generation to the next" (MacLeod, 1987, p.12).

According to Bourdieu, children who are from middle and upper class families amass different kinds of cultural capital than children who are from working-class families. For example, children who are encouraged to read books and attend theatres and concerts (or who grow up watching their parents attend theatres et cetera), acquire a familiarity with the practices of the dominant culture, and an appreciation (which they can apply to their own performances) of when these practices are performed well. Conversely, children who grow up learning skills such as carpentry, cooking, or cleaning, find that their very real mastery of these skills is not valued in an academic environment. Because educational institutions have embodied class interests and ideologies, the cultural capital of the middle-classes is valued more in the culture of schools than the cultural capital of skilled or unskilled workers. Middle-class students are rewarded for linguistic and cultural competencies that they have acquired by virtue of being raised in a middle-class family. These linguistic and cultural skills serve as the means for the appropriation of the knowledge offered by the school. This process is legitimised:

> . . . by making social hierarchies and the reproduction of those hierarchies appear to be based upon the hierarchy of 'gifts', merits, or skills established and ratified by its sanctions, or, in a word, by converting social hierarchies into academic hierarchies . . . (Bourdieu, 1977, p. 496).

In order for children to be successful academically, the educational system requires children to master the dominant culture; thus, the school "serves as the trading post where socially valued cultural capital is parlayed into superior academic performance" (MacLeod, 1987, p. 12). The process comes full circle when academic performance is translated into economic capital by the attainment of superior employment. The school, therefore, not only reproduces social inequality, but also legitimates the entire process (MacLeod, 1987).

The East End teens construct their culture from the cultural patterns established by their parents, even though the teens' specific interests and activities (music, partying, and hanging-out), and their valuation of these activities vary from what their parents now do in middle age (Clarke and Critcher, 1981). The East End teens live in the working-class sections of town, or "down the same mean streets" (Clarke et al, 1981, p.56) as their parents. The teens hold as their main role models working-class authority figures, and they hold similar values as their parents towards education and employment, material possessions and leisure. Therefore the East End teens reproduce working-class culture, even as they take existing cultural patterns and rework them to meet their own wants and needs. Sometimes transformation occurs when young women choose to adopt middle-class cultural values, as Katlain has learned to value

education. Katlain's acceptance of school and the work involved in order for her to move successfully through the academic system is not supported by her East End peers, but rather by her family. Her mother, particularly, promotes these ambitions because she wants more for Katlain than a working-class lifestyle can offer. It is, however, more typical that East End girls choose to highlight elements of their own parent working-class culture. Sarina, for instance, was willing to immerse herself in working-class culture without any striving towards a middle-class lifestyle. Her actions repeatedly demonstrated her acceptance of working-class culture: quitting school, dating Shawn, and ambitions for marriage before her twentieth birthday. This process of self-definition is constructed from a given framework of possibilities and constraints: gender, region, class and age (cf. Willis, 1983; & Deem, 1988).

Choices which provide a framework for the girls' personal and collective identity are articulated and reinforced in the East End girls' peer culture. These are choices which will ultimately effect their futures as adult women: choices such as Sarina's decision to quit high school, Pat's and Sarina's decisions to live with their boyfriends rather than with another girlfriend or at home (this was heightened since both boyfriends sustained dependency problems), and all of the East End girls' desire to marry as soon as possible. When these choices are

examined within the 'framework of possibilities and constraints' they appear as obvious, or at least as the path of least resistance. As mentioned previously, the East End girls find themselves at the bottom of the social hierarchy. They are working-class, teenage females living in a hinterland community where masculinity is celebrated and femininity is devalued. In short, they find themselves at the bottom of the totem within their community. It is much more difficult to overcome the subordinate positions they find themselves in (as a result of their age, class, gender and region) than it is for them to accept their circumstances and get on with their lives, making the decision to 'get out' very difficult to imagine.

REPRODUCTION

Theories of reproduction generally attempt to explain how social institutions produce the attitudes and social relationships necessary to perpetuate existing structures of capitalism and patriarchy. Reproduction theory in the sociology of education, for instance, emphasises the ways in which schooling works to reproduce existing inequalities rather than counteract or overcome them, as liberal accounts of the functions of schooling would suggest. Schools produce inequalities through the structure of competitive grading, which acts to gradually reduce the number of people that are offered higher education. Because competitive grading is

structured such that individuals are judged comparatively (in relation to their peers), an elite is produced; and when these competitions reward cultural competencies more likely to be possessed by young people from middle-class families, class inequalities are legitimated.

There are many ways in which the East End girls re-enact existing patterns of class relations and male-female relations. One of the most striking of these involves their pursuit of a heterosexual partnership, and marriage, despite the inequalities and sometimes the abuse which characterise these relationships. Romance plays a key role in the East End teens' heterosexual relationships during the initial courting stages. Before an East End female formally begins to "see" an East End male, she can expect to be a recipient of poetry, flowers and other gestures which signal that she is worthy of his attention. Like the girls in McRobbie's and McCabe's (1981) study, I found that the East End girls place great store in romance because it is through romance that:

> . . . they can demand that boys go through at least some of its motions to prove their commitment and this in turn works as a kind of lever in the power game in which in every other way they are disadvantaged from the start (p. 165).

However as Kostash (1987) has found, power effectively changed hands when the East End girls formalised their heterosexual relationship. The East End girls realise that once they took a boyfriend they risked losing what little power they initially held. They will, for instance, no

longer be able to come and go as they please, do what they want, when they want, or see who they want, when they want. Like Kostash (1987), I noted that:

> All the apparent power of the girl--to judge what a boy is worth, to decide what will develop between them and where it will stop, to draw him to her with sexual allure and to hold him at bay while she decides whether or not to satisfy him--is compromised in the actual commitment she makes to him. The power is reversed in the process of the relationship (p.99).

The East End girls, however, accepted these terms in their relationships, and continued to value the idea of hetero-sexuality. Without understanding how the East End girls make sense of their lives, it is difficult to imagine why they would sacrifice their freedom as young women to be part of such a relationship.

It is very important, therefore, to understand that the East End girls <u>live</u> a hetero-reality. Their entire culture and all that it entails (school, music, parents, leisure...) is based upon relating to the male sex. Being seen in relation to a male may cost the East End female personal freedom within a relationship, but the East End girls perceive many benefits from the entire situation. When dating a fellow Rocker, or at least a male that emphasises his working-class status, the East End female experiences a rise in her own social status. Being partner to a hetero-sexual relationship also acts to legitimise her sexuality,

and furthers her climb towards adult status (at least in the eyes of herself and her peers).

In many ways, the relationships that the East End girls establish with their boyfriends are similar to the relationships that their mothers have established with men. They have learned caring roles, self-sacrifice, and their ideas about what constitutes women's place in society from the extremely sexist realities of their families. They are fully aware that their mothers are responsible for nurturing the children, caring for the household, working outside the home, and that they are overworked and feel they can do little to alter their situations. They have seen their fathers' power (when they are around) full force within their households, and have witnessed countless cases of domestic violence--usually sparked by drinking binges. Yet they have probably also seen that the options for a working-class woman who leaves such a relationship are bleak in the extreme: a lack of sympathy and support from others, and a future of poverty, outside the only 'society' they know.

In the East End girls' own relationships with their boyfriends, physical outbursts also seemed to be sparked while the boyfriend was under the influence of either drugs and/or alcohol. Like their mothers, the East End girls found themselves acting as voices of moderation, in an attempt to make the best of their situations. Pat and Sarina are accustomed to the physical element of their boyfriends'

anger. They do not really question their boyfriends' right to raise their hands against them, as much they ask why, and seek to modify their own behaviour in attempts to disarm their boyfriends' assaults. Although this self-sacrifice may seem curious to outsiders, the East End girls are not alone in their abusive situations. In fact, it was not until Bennett and Evans began research for the Battered Women's Support Services in Vancouver, that any documentation came into being on battered teenage women in Canada. Kostash (1987) explains:

> We have not heard these voices because they belong to people to whom we have not been accustomed to lend an ear: young, female, frightened, demoralized, often poor, and on their own (p. 105).

When an East End female lives with a male who has a dependency problem, she also often lives with abuse or the on going threat of abuse. I have found as Kostash (1987) has found that the reasons she stays are usually financial in nature; she has lost contact with her girlfriends (and she is usually forbidden by her boyfriend to have male friends); and she is no longer welcome at home. The options are therefore few, and physical abuse becomes just another extreme behaviour which many East End girls simply come to accept as part of their culture.

Finally, like Connell et al (1982), I found that male power and female subordination persist in families even where there were factors which might have been influences for

change (mothers employed full time outside of the home, and divorced parents). The East End girls continued to hold conventional ideas about their future employment opportunities (e.g., waitressing, sales clerk), and about young women's position in society. Most of the girls allowed their boyfriends to control the terms of the relationship, and looked forward to the time that they were married and in a position to care for a home of their own. The East End girls did not harbour many illusions regarding married life and motherhood, but like the girls in Thomas' (1980) study, the idea of marriage and running their own home was viewed much more positively than living with and being dependent upon their parents. In the East End girls' pursuit of independence, they therefore both learn and reproduce conventional definitions of femininity.

The process by which individuals come to accept their position in the social order and the inequalities of the social order as legitimate can be further understood in relation to the achievement ideology. According to MacLeod (1987), the achievement ideology plays a central role in the legitimation of inequality, and in the long run, in social reproduction. Achievement ideology "maintains that individual merit and achievement are the fair and equitable sources of inequality of American society" (MacLeod, 1987, pp. 112-113). It is an ideology which is understood by most people to be an accurate description of the social order. It

is legitimated because merit is thought to be the basis for the distribution of rewards, and members of the lower classes have learned to attribute their subordinate position in the social order to personal deficiencies rather than to an unjust social order (Scully, 1982). For example, working-class youth honestly believe that their success or failure in school is determined on the basis of merit. By accepting that academic failure is based on merit, these young people generally opt to drop-out of high school rather than participate in what they find to be a losing battle. They accept the responsibilities which occur as a result of their actions and take the low paying jobs which are theirs as a result of what they feel are their own academic shortcomings. By feeling responsible for their own position in society, the process of reproduction is continued with very little concrete criticism being directed towards the social order by working-class youths themselves.

RESISTANCE

Having grown-up in a working-class section of a hinterland community, however, the East End girls have learned that the connection between effort and reward is not as straightforward as the achievement ideology states. Growing-up in an environment where success is uncommon--friends and families have not 'made it'--the achievement ideology accounts for the East End girls' situation in the

most negative of manners. Accepting the achievement ideology is in the words of MacLeod (1987, p. 129) "to admit that their parents are lazy or stupid or both." The achievement ideology therefore runs counter to some of the girls' experiences of significant others, at the same time that it assaults their own self-esteem. Rather than accepting such an ideology, completely, then and the pain that acceptance entails, the East End teens both accept and reject the achievement ideology, and develop a paradoxical value scheme that devalues the conventional understanding of success.

In this reframing of values into a kind of 'oppositional' ideology, the peer subculture plays a central role. Their subculture not only protects them, but also offers them alternative ways to generate self-esteem through the group value system. The resistance of this peer group is both symbolic and self-defeating. The group turns the achievement ideology upside-down,and the members reject school and generally view those that promote the 'straight life' through reference to the achievement ideology (teachers and youth centre workers) with antagonism. The East End teens organise themselves around a rebellious peer group where to be bad is to be good (successful). Their rejection of the achievement ideology must be viewed as a cultural response to domination.

Resistance is also an important concept to consider when attempting to understand the East End girls' lives as young

women. Not only does it highlight the reality as well as the limits of their ability to define their situation; it also underlines their ability to act as well as to be acted upon. In order to more fully understand the East End girls' resistance, it must be examined in relation to both their class and gender position. McRobbie (1978) and Thomas (1980) have made the dual oppression of working-class girls (capitalism and patriarchy) central to their studies of working-class girls' subcultures. While McRobbie found that her girls resisted the class-based and oppressive features of the school by asserting their sexuality, Thomas' girls resisted school authority in two ways, by asserting their sexuality and/or by being aggressively defiant.

Sexuality is one of the few forms of power available to these young women. Unlike other female youth subcultures, the East End girls cannot support the bargaining power or status afforded by their sexual attractiveness with other recognised forms of power (e.g., education and wealth). Thus they highlight what they have been taught is their key female attribute (their sexual desirability as young women), and redefine it such that it becomes central to their identity. Sarina, for example, enjoyed dressing in what she considered provocative clothing when she went to the bar, as she felt that she looked both older and sexier. She received affirmation of this notion as she was complimented by her

girlfriends, her older sister, and men at the bar. She explains:

> I passed to get into the bar for the first time [17yrs. old] with my sister's ID for 22. I wore a black mini skirt, and her white jacket that goes with it, white heels and everything: dressed right up. Did my hair, make-up, everything. How old do I look? "You look about 20-21. Here, use my ID." And I got in like that.

The East End girls, therefore, actively introduce their physical maturity in such a way that they are noticed. McRobbie (1978) and Thomas (1980) have noted that this emphasis on sexuality in working-class girls' dress is one way in which the girls can challenge the dominant culture's concept of acceptable female behaviour. The statement that the girls are making, however, is broader in scope. The girls are also challenging a norm for female behaviour (demure, submissive) which is not confined to the East End alone. They strive for some element of control in self-definition. Through their choice in dress, the East End girls effectively exaggerated particular concepts of femininity while rejecting others. Cindy liked her skirts short, and her blue jeans tight. She saw nothing but attractiveness in her style of dress. This was reinforced through the attention she received from her male peers and in the sense that her girlfriends dress similarly (except for Katlain).

The East End girls' active development of their sexuality and heterosexual attractiveness extends beyond the

private world of personal sexuality. The secondary use the girls have of their sexuality is to resist patriarchal definitions of acceptable female behaviour. Although Sarina's older sister and friends, for instance, appreciated Sarina's style of dress, Sarina's father did not. While Sarina thought she looked sexy, her father likened her style of dress to that of a slut. Sarina took her father's summation in stride, and seemed to enjoy contesting his attempts at parental authority. Further, when going to the bar underage, Sarina also effectively used dress to help her sidestep bouncers, waitresses/waiters and ultimately the law.

Not only are the East End girls fully aware of the temporary power their sexuality affords them, but so too are the East End males. Nava (1984) has documented how young males attempt to monitor young women's sexual independence:

> . . . in the public and less structured context of youth centers, the regulation of girls is enforced largely by boys through reference to a notion of femininity which incorporates particular modes of sexual behaviour, deference and compliance. In the culture outside the home, girls are observers of boys' activities and boys are observers and guardians of girls' passivity...(pp.11-12).

Dodge certainly did not appreciate that Todd found Kelly sexually desirable and threatened to kill him after Todd had given Kelly a hug. This was the reaction of a brother. The general sense of proprietorship towards the East End girls increases when the male involved is a lover. Sarina has been

thrown against a wall because she has talked to males with whom Shawn was not acquainted, and Pat has been beaten and had her life threatened by Pierre for talking to a mutual, male friend, 28 years older than herself.

When male peers are not attempting to control the East End girls' behaviour, their fathers are. Connell et al (1982) has observed how fathers tend to define their teenage daughters as children and therefore as sexless. Nava (1984) explains:

> On the whole, parental policing over behaviour, time, labour, and sexuality of girls has not only been more efficient than over boys, it has been different... (pp. 11-12).

Fathers employed different tactics to monitor their daughters' sexual independence but all tactics had their basis in sexual double standards. This is illustrated in several of the families discussed above (e.g., Sarina's and Lynn's). It is this external monitoring of their sexuality (both in the home and outside of it) that the East End girls resist. Their resistance, however, is often self-defeating in nature. The East End girls emphasise femininity in the most stereotypical and limited (e.g., sexual attractiveness and 'caring' for boyfriends) sense, and as a result they end up exploited through unpaid labour in the home, and by the marginal pay they will receive as unskilled workers in "women's" jobs. Working-class girls' rejection of schooling and accomplishment only sinks them deeper "in the culture of

domination and submission, of double work, both waged and non-waged" (Weiler, 1988, p.4). Their resistance effectively helps to reproduce the gender relations of a patriarchal society.

Besides using dress to highlight their sexuality, the East End girls used dress to project their streetwise identity. Lynn was never far from her black leather jacket, and even Katlain had her jean jacket on hand every evening she spent at the youth centre. It was through the East End girls' style of dress that they actively reject the class dimension of domination and subordination. They were critical of middle-class teenage female subcultures, and their favourite group to hate were the preppies, young women who 'wear their class on their ass' or young women who demonstrate their class position by wearing designer clothing, a trend which began with the introduction of designer blue jeans: Calvin Klein, Jordache etc.. While in public places, Sarina and Bobbi were critical of other girls' dress as soft, precious, and over refined. The girls' hostility towards other female subcultures was quite often enacted as when Bobbi and Sarina challenged a group of preps on the way home from the bar. This confrontational stance assumed by the East End girls was entirely based upon the fact that they did not like the way in which the other girls chose to identify themselves. Both Sarina and Bobbi were prepared to claim their working-class position as superior

and were ready to back it up through a physical confrontation.

The East End girls resist patriarchal definitions of femininity not only through their sexual power, but also through their active aggression, or what Thomas (1980) has labeled aggressive defiance. Several of Sarina's experiences demonstrate this concept rather well. For instance, Sarina claims that she has "lost count" of the number of times that she has been suspended from school. Although she can readily recall many of the situations resulting in her suspensions, she cannot understand that the general theme underlying her suspensions relates back to her active aggression, a form of resistance that is considered inappropriate within school culture.

> Susan pulled a chair out from under me and I landed on the floor. So I got up and hit her, and she hit me. Teacher comes in, she sees us and started running down the hall to get a guy teacher. That guy teacher just grabbed both our heads, smacked them together and then the principal gives me the pink form and I'm suspended.

Another time:

> I was sitting in science class and there was like five minutes to go so I went to the bathroom for a smoke with a couple of friends. A teacher came in and said, "you, you, you, all down to the office for smoking. You're going to get suspended for a couple of days". So I'm still sitting there smoking my cigarette and she says, "Sarina, get off your ass right now and get down to the office". And they're all wondering why I'm not getting up to put out my smoke. They all

> put theirs out-- threw them out the window, put them in the sink, in the toilets and everything. But I thought, well if I'm going to get suspended for two days, I might as well enjoy my cigarette. Then the teacher grabbed me by the arm, so I took a big haul of my cigarette, and blew it [smoke] in her face and I stood there and finished my cigarette.

As Sarina's experiences with her teachers, and Kelly's experience with the police demonstrate, the East End girls' open aggression is generally used in situations defined by others (especially authority figures), where the teenagers felt that they held little control. This form of resistance, however, is self-defeating as it invites those with more power to do battle in what can essentially be described as a 'no win situation' for the East End girls.

LEISURE, FRIENDSHIP, AND GENDER RELATIONS

The East End girls encountered many barriers which they found difficult to negotiate in almost all areas of their lives. Their leisure time, a time which according to many definitions represents freedom from constraints, is no exception. The East End girls, although free when in each other's company, experience a regulation of their leisure when in mixed social settings. Accordingly, the girls place a high value on female friendships where they do not have to 'work', either at presenting themselves to males or at resisting authority figures attempts to define or control them.

Mackie (1983) has noted that young women's friendships differ from young men's friendships in that women's friendships tend to stress expressiveness while men's friendships seem to express activity. She and Griffin (1986) have also observed that teenage males and females structure their friendship groups differently. Where young men usually hang-out in groups, young women have a best friend, or a small group of close friends. Kostash (1987) describes best friends as two girls who understand each other and commit the best of themselves to one another. Although these friendships do not often last forever (best friends are displaced as the girls cross over into heterosexual relationships), the girls are able to experience the satisfaction that derives from having been understood: "a reminder of what is possible between women" (Kostash, 1987, p.28).

After Sarina and Kelly realised that they had grown apart (no longer held the same values and beliefs), they no longer considered themselves to be best friends. Their break-up was difficult, yet Sarina was able to capture on paper quite easily what Kelly's friendship had meant to her. In her poem about best friends, Sarina described Kelly as being a person who was there for both the good times and the bad; a person with whom her spirit had connected; and that she realised best friends did not always last forever, but that they always were held in the fondest of memories.

Sarina's and Kelly's experience exemplifies the experiences shared between best friends, the experience of intimacy that arises from having been understood in a way that only other young women of the same time, place, and age could possibly understand.

One leisure activity which the East End girls enjoyed doing together was dancing. For most of the East End girls, this activity took place at house parties (although a few of the girls enjoyed going to the bar), where the atmosphere was intimate: controlled lighting, loud music, drugs and/or alcohol, and the company of friends. The girls would generally dance with each other to fast songs, and would pair up with the boys for slow songs. Griffiths (1988) has recorded similar findings; she proposes that young women enjoy dancing precisely because they can dance with other girls rather than being dependent upon a boyfriend to have a good time. She also notes that dancing provided the girls with an activity that they could shine at. In this sense there was an element of showing themselves off to the boys, and enjoyment was in part derived from "the unusual freedom this afforded them" (p. 118). Lees (1986) offers a further interpretation regarding teenaged women's enjoyment of dance which further support my findings. She views young women's enjoyment of dance as stemming from:

> the active yet acceptable sexual expressiveness involved: this provides at least a temporary escape from girls' daily subordination, where any form of

> open sexual display, through dress or behaviour, is regarded as provocation and liable to give girls a bad reputation (Griffiths, 1988, p. 118).

Another leisure activity specific to the East End girls' subculture involved watching soap operas and talk shows. The girls enjoyed these programmes as they provided the girls with information and a context in which they were able to understand the information. The popularity of commercial cultural products such as soap operas has been acknowledged by feminists and has sparked some debate among feminist researchers. Soap operas have, for instance, been condemned by mainstream feminist media as "an expression and instrument of patriarchal ideology" (Wimbush & Talbot, 1988, p.xx). It is argued that these commercial leisure products fail to grasp women's <u>actual</u> needs and interests, and instead cater to the stereotypical needs and images of women as portrayed in the media (cf. Deem, 1986). In contrast, Steinem (1983), a radical feminist, argues in favour of soap operas. She argues that soap operas are popular because:

> they are the only place in our culture where grown-up men take seriously all the things [e.g., illnesses, divorce, sexual jealousy, problems with the kids] that grown-up women deal with all day long.... For at least a few hours each day, a fictional world takes them seriously, too (p. 370).

In this way, soap operas validate the routine concerns women deal with in the private world of the home.

An important element of the East End girls television watching, however, lies in the discussion which occurs during the airing of the programme. Morley (1986) has discovered in his study of approaches to television viewing that men and women view television differently, and that when men and women viewed television together, tension often resulted. He argues that men prefer to be passive while watching television, absorbing every word of what is said, and that women like to discuss what they are watching. I, like Morley, have found that the East End girls actively experience soap operas and talk shows, through their discussions during and after the programme, and that this talk serves important functions, not least in the articulation and sharing of 'world views' among friends.

Apart from television viewing and dancing, most of the East End girls' leisure was spent in the company of their male peers. This time spent in mixed social groups was very different from the time spent with girlfriends. When the East End girls lived with their boyfriends, one form of control that the boyfriends exercised over the girls' access to leisure was economic control. When girls' boyfriends controlled access to the household's disposable income, the girls frequently lacked the economic resources to pursue leisure activities of their choosing. Pat worked outside of the home and assumed responsibility for the household bills while Pierre was unemployed. Pierre's income (unemployment

insurance benefits) was used for entertainment and groceries. Pierre's idea of a nice evening was going to the bar for a few cold ones. Pat was welcome to join him. She often did, but her leisure was constrained as Pierre became jealous if she spoke, looked at, or danced with any other men, all activities which Pat associated with having fun at the bar. Pat was not allowed to go to the bar without Pierre, and Pierre did not give her any money such that she could pursue leisure interests of her own such as shopping, or going to the movies.

A further major constraint upon the East End girls' leisure time was that they assumed more than their share of responsibility for domestic work. According to Green et al (1987),

> Male refusal to contribute to domestic tasks is a common way for men to effectively restrict women's access to time and space for leisure (p. 82).

There is a whole range of strategies that men employ to control women's access to private and public leisure. Males refusal to assist with domestic tasks limits women's access to free time and the range extends to more explicit control such as when males forbid women to go out. Another manner in which men control women's leisure is through fear. For example, in order to access popular leisure venues, the East End girls must walk through the subway. This short underground tunnel which links the East End to the rest of the city has been the site for murders, rapes, and muggings.

It is unsafe to walk the subway alone, and most of the East End girls will only walk the subway at night in the company of a male. The fact that men dominate public places and ultimately control women's access to public places acts to restrict women's leisure in a very real sense.

Men's attempts to control women's leisure activities in a non-coercive manner can be enforced by the underlying implications of both implicit and explicit threats or actual use of physical violence. According to Green et al (1987), male social control over female leisure involving the implicit possibility of violence, generally have the same consequences as its actual use. For example, Smart & Smart (1978) explain that:

> It is not rape itself which constitutes a form of social control, but the internalisation by women...of the possibility of rape. This implicit threat of rape is conveyed in terms of certain prescriptions which are placed upon the behaviour of girls and women, and through the common-sense understandings which 'naturalise' gender appropriate forms of behaviour (p.100).

The majority of the East End girls' decisions to avoid conflict by participating in 'acceptable' leisure pastimes (doing what their boyfriends wanted to do) often meant that independent leisure was forgone. This social control of the East End girls' leisure,

> . . . relying as it does on norms about respectability, can to a large extent be regarded as control through 'consent' rather than through 'coercion. Should this form of control break down,

> men have a range of more directly coercive methods available for regulating women's behaviour both inside and outside the home (Green et al, 1987, p.91).

Gender power underlined all activities, with the East End girls' male peers or boyfriends controlling them in many ways. Green et al (1987) capture the findings of my own study in their proposal that it is during leisure time--the area which is portrayed in much of the academic literature on leisure as representing the ultimate freedom from constraint--that women's behaviour is actually regulated most closely. This regulation of the East End girls' behaviour assumed many forms: control of sexuality, control of relationships with women and with other men, even control of access to 'own' time and to public spaces.

SECTION III

In this final section, I want to address three questions that remain, in some senses, puzzles, or at least hard for outsiders to understand. First, given the support and confirmation that female friendships afford, why is it that the East End girls are willing to give-up these friendships or at least subordinate them so completely to relationships with males? Secondly, why do the East End girls accept powerlessness in their heterosexual relationships? Finally, why do a few young women from basically the same kinds of structural circumstances take the steps that enable them to achieve some measure of change in their lives? The first question will be addressed under the subheading Support, the second under the subheading Powerlessness, and the third under the subheading Achieving A Way Out.

SUPPORT

Peer friendships are perhaps the relationships valued most by teenagers. Friends seem to be held in higher regard than authority figures (parents, teachers, youth workers) and younger people (boppers, siblings etc.). Teenagers share many kinds of friendships: same sex, opposite sex, sexual, non-sexual, best friends and acquaintances. Within this scheme of things, all friendships are valued, but at some point in time (somewhere between 13 and 18 years of age) most

youths elevate heterosexual relationships to being the most important relationship of all.

One might wonder why these young women so readily leave behind the support they have found in female friendships for the position of subservience offered to them in a typical heterosexual relationship. The most obvious explanation has to do with the development of the girls' sexuality. They like to spend time with boys because of sexual attraction, and they find their boyfriends' company to be more exciting than the company of their girlfriends. What they do not fully recognise is that male company seems especially desirable because the element of sexuality is new to them, whereas female support is not. As they come to terms with their sexuality, they may learn to place more value on female friendships and on the support that these friendships afford.

A further explanation has to do with the idea that their girlfriends encourage them to do so, because of a shared belief that heterosexual relationships are more important than same sex friendships. The girls all recognise that male peers are extended more respect by others in their culture (as well as by parents, teachers, etc.) and that young men are in a position that the girls would like to share. The easiest way for the girls to receive attention is by being so and so's girlfriend. They have learned to depend upon others for affirmation and their self-esteem remains dependent upon other people's acceptance and love. Thus their self-

definition remains fixed, relative to someone else (usually men). Being seen as someone's girlfriend also acts to increase their status within the peer group--something that the East End girls all value.

POWERLESSNESS

The problems that the East End girls encounter in their heterosexual relationships derive in part because their physical and emotional desire for such relationships, and their desire for the status and sexual expression that 'having a boyfriend' promises, means that they try too hard. They attend to their boyfriends in such a manner that their subservience in the relationship is obvious. They have accepted an image of themselves in which adulthood resides in obedience to men, rather than developing an image of themselves in a position of independence and strength. If they worked as hard at school, for instance, as they do to establish or maintain a heterosexual relationship, then the girls would at least be on the way to establishing a basis for independence as adult women, with their own earning power. Instead, the girls continue to place their boyfriends' needs and well-being ahead of their own.

One reason, arguably, that the East End girls accept subservience in their heterosexual relationships is because they are not familiar with women being in a position of power. They have grown-up in an environment where their

mothers were subordinate to their fathers, and where they, themselves, were subordinate to their brothers. They have essentially lacked adult female role models whose relationships with men were grounded in equality. The girls also do not have peers who are able to model other ways of having relationships with males. If, for instance, the dynamics of middle-class peer heterosexuality were at all different from that of the working-class, the East End girls would still not be able to see it. They usually opt to quit high school, the one place where they could mix with different peer groups; and even while still in school they do not socialise with middle-class peers outside school. They reside in a section of town which is isolated from the flow patterns of the city and which is located in a very working-class area. Middle-class teens do not under normal circumstances frequent this section of town, and even if they did, they would not be welcomed by the East End teens. Given this situation, the girls cannot familiarise themselves with other ways of doing things. Here we can see, in real peoples' lives, the kinds of effects that theorists of 'cultural capital' and cultural reproduction suggest are predictable.

Although the East End girls find themselves to be in a position of powerlessness in their heterosexual relationships, they continue to anticipate that their boyfriends will be 'different' from other working-class young

men, and will care for them and treat them with the respect that they deserve. This, they eventually realise, is mere wishful thinking. They continue, however, to attempt to ensure the relationship's success. They manage their own emotions and actions so that they may appease their boyfriends. Thus, for instance, Pat has learned not to discuss Pierre's drinking with Pierre. This stance becomes particularly difficult to maintain when the the young woman is in an abusive relationship, or in a relationship with an alcoholic or drug addict. The belief that she cannot change her boyfriend, and that she, therefore, ought to work to change herself so that her boyfriend is not driven to violence (verbal and physical), or abuse of drugs and/or alcohol, clearly demonstrates how ideology can contribute to the reproduction of poverty and abuse.

ACHIEVING A WAY OUT

Consideration of the effects of the achievement ideology allows a partial understanding of how the East End girls learn to accept their position in society and the inequalities of the social order. As mentioned previously, the achievement ideology plays a key role in legitimating inequality. It is an ideology that "is proffered to the subordinate classes as an accurate depiction of the social order" (MacLeod, 1987, p.113), but it is an explanation of the world which fails to do justice to the real intelligence

and energy of many working-class teens. In addition, it obscures the extra obstacles that young people from 'the wrong side of the tracks' have to overcome (relative to more privileged teens) if they are to succeed in the competition for educational qualifications.

Working-class teenagers' opportunities are limited from the beginning. They live their lives within a framework of possibilities and constraints that include factors such as geographical location, mobility, education, ethnicity, class, gender and peer association. When a variable within this framework is changed, unique combinations of associations and experience can create effects that allow for different constructions of meaning. This creates for a few, the possibility of an entirely different outcome.

The East End girls, like the working-class girls in Rosegrant's (1985) study and the working-class boys in MacLeod's (1987) study, view their prospects for upward mobility as remote. Most of the girls' occupational aspirations were limited to jobs available in the local service sector (waitressing, shop assistants), or to the private environment of the home (marriage and mothering). They attach little real significance to their own occupational preferences because they essentially view the opportunity structure as closed. Besides, most of their mothers have worked within these areas and the girls themselves have most of their own work experience in these

areas. When secretarial work requires a minimum high school education, and most of the East End girls do not come close to meeting this requirement, their estimation of their prospects for upward mobility are realistically low. They find themselves at the bottom of the socioeconomic ladder, and are often viewed as failures, by others and sometimes themselves. The East End teens' subculture, however, acts not only to provide shelter from these judgements, but also to create a context in which self-respect and dignity can be achieved and maintained. 'Success' in this subculture is achieving the symbols of adulthood, especially early entry into recognised adult leisure practices--smoking and drinking, sexual activity, driving. However this is an adulthood without achievement of the skills or qualifications which would in the long run afford them the earning power of an independent adult.

The girls' subculture like other youth countercultures (cf. Willis, 1977; & MacLeod, 1987) features both defensive and independent elements. The East End girls have their own distinct set of values, and their subculture provides expression for these values which are often explicitly opposed to those of the dominant culture. Their subculture provides a realm in which to be tough, to be good-looking, and/or to have a boyfriend are the main criteria for respect. In this way, the East End teens' peer group reverses conventional cultural norms in a manner which redefines

success to emphasise alternate criteria from those established in the achievement ideology. Through developing alternate criteria for success they are able to define themselves in a positive way. They are also able to understand their situation in a way that defends their status; they learn to see themselves differently from the way the rest of society sees them. The East End girls' way of understanding their situation not only helps them to protect themselves from what other people think, but it also teaches them to be successful within their own culture, by its own definitions. Like almost all subcultures, however, the East End teens cannot escape the dominant culture's definition of success. No matter how tight the group, contact with the dominant culture is inevitable (school, work, media); and in these contexts they are likely to be defined in negative ways, and to be treated as failures and as threatening. Although the East End girls' subculture affords its members only partial protection from the negative judgements of the dominant culture, it does provide a setting where the girls can salvage some self-respect. All of the East End girls have chosen to tread this path of a redefined success, except for Pat. Pat has recently graduated from secretarial training, and now has a government job.

However most of these young women prefer to stay with the group. The solidarity of the East End teens is strong, and group values such as 'sticking together' generally act to

restrain individual teens from breaking away and trying to 'make-it' in the dominant culture, according to its definitions of success. Like Pat, Katlain tried. She worked hard at school and seemed to enjoy having friends from outside the East End. Now, however, Katlain claims to "hate school" and that she "can't wait to get out". A year older, Katlain has more first-hand experience of the class-based barriers to conventional success. She has chosen which version of 'success' she wishes to identify with, and it is clearly that of her East End peers.

There is also a tendency among the East End girls to resist raised aspirations because to act on them would involve breaking one's ties and leaving the group. This is not only considered a disloyal idea; it also represents a frightening move towards the unknown. As Pat explained it, she had two choices. She could choose a path that was unfamiliar to her and her friends; or she could make it in the East End, where the problems she has encountered and the ones she will encounter are familiar. Most of the teenage females residing in the East End opt for a lifestyle of familiarity and support. The few who choose the unknown, tolerating a sense of isolation from their peers, have as their only recourse their own aspirations of breaching the barriers of a working-class existence. Sometimes these are cold comfort.

Therefore the East End girls' peer culture helps to construct the choices that are made. Whether these are consciously recognised as decisions or not, they are choices which will affect their futures. The girls' rejection of success as conventionally defined was based on the premise that the realistic prospects for social mobility were not worth the attempt, given the costs involved in the try. This is a calculation they all may come to question as they live their lives as adult working-class women.

Some young women from backgrounds similar to the East End girls, however, make different choices. Girls who make different choices reconstruct their image of themselves around skills (e.g., academic skills, athletics, 'leadership' etc.) rather than around their peers. These young women do not embrace the 'nowness' of youth culture, but rather learn to make some commitment to their own futures as adult women. By staying in school and by developing skills which will be beneficial later in life, these girls forego immediate rewards offered through association with the peer group, in favour of a different and possibly brighter future. By seeking experiences that are not normally pursued by other members of their immediate peer group (other East End teens), these girls demonstrate their willingness to take steps they experience as risky.

However in developing these skills they start to experience themselves as more capable women, and they become

less dependent on men. New experiences lead to new interactions (with peers and adults) and further changes in expectations and actions. They are able to feel greater confidence in themselves and become able to interact with different people, rather than being restricted to the working-class peer group. Transcending these barriers requires a steady effort, but positive reinforcement from teachers and other adult role models is available for those that can establish such relationships. For a few, the idea that one can succeed if one continues to extend effort becomes an experienced reality.

The three questions I have addressed here were questions that emerged for me during the writing of this paper. I had as my original task, set out to record youth culture as the East End girls experienced it. As I was writing, I wondered why they did not try to change some of their mutual experiences (e.g., less emphasis on having a boyfriend, more store in same sex friendships, less emphasis on the peer group). From having spent a summer with the girls, I can attempt to answer these questions myself from the observations made, but more insightful responses would likely have resulted had I gone into the field with the questions that I am left with. Further research addressing these questions is needed.

CHAPTER VI

CONCLUDING REMARKS

In the past sociologists concerned with youth culture had a tendency to focus their ethnographic studies on the lives of white working-class males. The problems and aspirations of young females were of no real concern. What I hope to contribute to the literatures concerned with youth culture is an analysis of cultural experience that reflects the lives of white working-class teenage women living in a Canadian hinterland community. The study builds on previous youth culture studies by addressing not only the issue of class, but also the issues of gender and region. Insight into a further dimension of subordination could have been addressed by a study of young native women, but this was not possible in this study group. However, it is hoped that this study will increase our understanding of the significance of cultural production and leisure among subordinate groups, in the dynamics of social reproduction and resistance.

An ethnographic research approach was taken because it is only through ethnography that it is possible to truly share, and then portray, the lived experiences of others. Denied the opportunity to hang-out with the East End girls, this study would have been meaningless, the 'understanding' yielded trivial. It is only when one is invited to share the

real life experiences of others that an understanding of any depth can be developed.

Having collected the data, and attempted to portray the events of the summer, it has been my task to develop an analysis of the East End girls' cultural experience. The links I have drawn between the girls' lives and the social structures of class and gender are not grounded in any one theory of reproduction or resistance, but draw on the work of several writers who have addressed these issues with respect to different populations of subordinate youth. What has emerged as common to all theories is the active role of young people in the production of a self image that is both desirable to them and realistic for them.

The main theme that emerged from the data was the importance of relationships, or relationality, in the construction of self-image. Much of these young women's sense of personal identity was based upon their relationships with others: female peers, male peers, and authority figures. The girls' construction of identity was accordingly analysed in terms of these central relationships.

Head-Banging or Heavy Metal music formed the cornerstone of the East End teens' identity as a peer group. The immediate peer group was exclusive in that its members were all residents of the East End. They projected an attitude of aloofness from others and were well practiced at bonding

together against the common enemy (authority figures and middle-class peers).

Bonding together against others was a proving ground for female friendships. Never was a confrontation (verbal or physical) witnessed or heard about where the girls did not back each other up. Other proving grounds, however, existed, and these were especially important because they were highly individualised. Although these relationships could be viewed as one-sided and instrumental, they were also giving and caring. The girls each had personal needs that someone else was willing to fulfill. Best friend friendships were not friendships that lasted forever. As the girls' needs changed, they sometimes had to find someone else that was willing to meet them in the middle. By late teens, best friends were usually supplanted altogether. They typically found themselves taking second seat to steady (serious) boyfriends.

Heterosexuality played a large role in the girls' construction of their gender identity. As teenage women, the East End girls found themselves to be living a hetero-reality. It was a matter of course that they would be interested in young men, and that young men would be interested in them. Being party to a heterosexual relationship acted to legitimise the girls' adulthood; it also acted to elevate their status within the peer group, almost to the extent that being so and so's girlfriend

increased their own sense of self worth. The girls also found, through their involvement in heterosexual relationships, that these relationships were not partnerships. This realisation, however, in no way deterred the girls' desire to be involved in such a relationship.

Some of the problems that the East End girls encountered within their heterosexual relationships included: sexism, birth control, drugs and/or violence. Yet the importance of having a boyfriend in this peer culture cannot be underestimated; the establishment and maintenance of heterosexual relationships was of constant concern. Most girls had a boyfriend and their topics of conversation were almost always either directly or indirectly about their boyfriends (discussions of birth control, romance, expectations etc.). Their belief that changes could be made after the relationship was established (in the name of love) proved to be in most cases hopelessly naive. Their desire to make claims to adult status (sexuality, sexual activity, marriage, motherhood etc.) was entirely centred around their male peers. In this way the girls helped to reproduce a traditional system of gender relations: a system of male power and female subordination, not at all unlike the positions that their own mothers are in.

Of all the adults the East End girls had reason to interact with, their relationships with their mothers were generally viewed as the most positive. More often than not,

mutual co-operation and respect typified these relationships, even when there were tensions while the girls still lived at home. When the girls left home, these relationships seemed to expand into important and mutually supportive friendships. In contrast the girls relationships with their fathers, and few of the girls had father figures in the home, were usually based on double standards and according to the girls, unreasonable disciplinary actions (being told to leave the home and physical discipline). In all, it is clear that the girls felt much closer to their mothers than to their fathers. Like most authority figures, however, the interaction between the girls and their parents was far from being a smooth process. Parents tried to maintain perogatives that the girls desired to claim for their own, namely, control over their behaviour. Attempts to control the girls' sexual behaviour were particularly resented, as these directly conflicted with the claim to adult sexuality that was so important in these young women's lives.

Other groups of authority figures the girls often resented were police officers, doctors and youth centre staff. Essentially, the girls' resentment of these authority figures was based on the control that these people were able to extend over their activities. From the teens' point of view, these authority figures did not have the right to define the teens' desired activities as illegitimate (e.g., drugs, alcohol, sexual activity, or violence). The teens

responded by organising themselves into a rebellious peer group, and generally viewed those that promote the 'straight life' with antagonism.

Youth culture for the females I investigated was central to their lives as young women. It was within this peer culture that these young women attempt to cross from childhood to [illegible]ithood and to construct adult identities. Among their [illegible], the East End girls clarify their goals and values, based on their shared experience of their class and gender positions. As children, the East End girls may have had some protection from ideas that men were better than women, and perhaps not a full realisation of what 'poor' really meant. In youth culture, where teenagers begin to lay claim to adult status, no such protection is afforded. Reality is unmasked and the girls must make decisions concerning their own futures.

The girls found themselves to be in a super-subordinate position. As teenagers these young women find themselves to be subordinate as a result of age, as well as class and gender position. Faced with the efforts necessary to better one's lot in life, or the insulation that a rebellious peer group affords, it becomes easier to understand that most of the East End teens opt for peer support. Such an outlook renders 'making-it' conventionally extremely difficult, because conventional success demands time away from the peer group. The East End girls, however, generally found it far

less complicated to redefine status and success and to have fun in the short run, than to work towards realising a problematic version on success in the future. This acceptance largely reflects the 'nowness' that typifies East End peer culture.

Distinctive and class-specific cultural capital is amassed and transmitted by each social class at the same time that middle-class cultural capital is valued more in the 'outside world' of public institutions than is working-class cultural capital. Teenagers generally first come to understand their cultural worth in the school system. While middle-class teenagers find that they are rewarded for their competencies that have been learned simply by being raised in a middle-class family, working-class students find themselves to be disadvantaged. In order to be successful academically, working-class students find that they are required not only to master their lessons, but also to master the dominant culture because the education system has converted social hierarchies into academic hierarchies. If they are unable to do this, they can expect to be further disadvantaged as their academic performance is later translated into inferior employment opportunities.

Young working-class women respond to this situation differently: some conform, more resist. The structures of class and gender offer particular sets of possibilities and constraints. These sets of possibilities cannot be described

as absolutely constraining, but are limiting in that cultural norms construct very difficult choices for young people in the subordinated circumstances described here. In order to understand the process of reproduction, one must understand real practices as they are undertaken by real people as they respond to real situations. Reproduction is a consequence of immediate choices as well as life strategies, and the East End girls' sense of identity is in part derived from the different choices that they have made. Their choices are generated out of the situation before, and unless special circumstances arise, barriers presented by gender and class will not be overcome and social strides will not be made.

Region or geographical location also plays a role in the girls' identity construction. The working-class is very traditional in the way that it values male labour. This value of male labour is especially pronounced in a hinterland community, as the most prestigious working-class employment opportunities are extended to males and centred around jobs that are traditionally thought of as masculine: mining, shipping, and forestry. What the East End girls essentially have to look forward to as members of this community is work that is little valued. For wages, they can work outside the home to supplement their husbands' seasonal income or unemployment insurance, and when they return from work (or before they go to work) they can look forward to managing the household and children with little help from their husbands.

Yet, their identity is reproduced by both personal and collective choice. Individuals make different choices concerning the adoption or rejection of peer group values, and this choice is not made once and for all, but is really an accumulation of choices: in different situations, different relationships, at different times. When the choice is made to stand with the group (and it is often considered a logical choice because peer opinion carries more weight than the opinion of authority figures) then successes are not only personal but shared. Perhaps even more importantly, pains are buffered. It is more typical that the girls choose the group over trying to make it individually. Class and gender identities are reproduced, therefore, when the girls take the cultural capital available to them and turn it to their own use, in attempts to define their common situation in ways that are consistent with self-respect.

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