Learning From Young People’s Lives

An exploratory study of some potentially important psycho-social factors in the lives of teenagers and young adults.

submitted for the Ph.D.
by Nicholas Victor Kern Baylis
of Jesus College, Cambridge University.

May, 1999.
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by N.V.K. Baylis of Jesus College, University of Cambridge.

Summary

This thesis explores tentative hypotheses relating to four conceptually related factors of potential importance in young people's lives; factors which it argues are little acknowledged in the mainstream British literature of psychology and psychiatry. These factors are:

1) young people's 'Relationship with Reality' ( - this is a new concept proposed by this thesis - ) which is characterised by the content, intention and effect of an individual's accumulated cognitive and behavioural traits and to what extent these traits invest in real-life or distort or avoid it.

2) young people's sense of having an 'Occupational Identity'.

3) young people's experience of Careers Education and Careers Guidance.

4) young people's experience of being 'mentored'.

The thesis explores whether these factors are self-reported as potentially important in the lives of some young people, and whether such self-reports differ significantly between individuals. A cross-sectional, retrospective comparative study of 18 to 22 year olds is presented, in which non-randomly sampled participants were assigned to three groups according to their apparent levels of measurable achievement (academic, professional and extra-curricular): High-Achievement, Moderate-Achievement, and Under-Achievement (Imprisonment). As part of an initial
exploration, 50 HAs and 18 UAs were each interviewed for two hours; a 75 minute self-completion questionnaire was then administered to a new set of participants:

- 68 UA individuals (Imprisoned Young Offenders)
- 75 MA individuals (Undergraduates)
- 94 HA individuals (Undergraduates)

The Eysenck Personality Questionnaire and also the Short Imaginal Processes Inventory (a well-established measure of daydreaming) were administered among 50 UAs and 50 HAs to gauge the possible overlap of these established scales with the proposed concept of a 'Relationship with Reality' personality dimension and its component factors. Only moderately low correlations were found.

It is acknowledged that adequate levels of validity and reliability are difficult to achieve when investigating the self-report of sensitive and complex issues, and that generalisations cannot be made from a non-random sample. With these caveats, the findings support the concept of a Relationship with Reality personality dimension, and suggest that all 4 factors studied in this thesis may be amenable to scientific research, are conceptually related, and were self-reported as potentially important in at least a substantial minority of the participants' lives.

The thesis is inspired by and is integrated into a body of existing literature that includes psychoanalytic, humanistic, cognitive and behaviourist perspectives on 'forensic', 'normal', and in particular 'high-achievement' psychology and psychiatry from Britain and the United States.
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In Respect Of The Requirements Of The Cambridge Degree Committee

This doctoral thesis and its appendices were not produced in collaboration with any other party, and is entirely the result of my own original work.

This doctoral thesis and its appendices are not substantially the same as I have submitted for any other degree or diploma or other qualification at any other University.

This doctoral thesis, including footnotes but exclusive of appendices, does not exceed the permitted length.

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This thesis is dedicated to my family and my friends with all the love I’ve learnt these past few years.
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(Intended to orientate the reader as to the relationship between the different chapters of the thesis.)

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2: Review of the general literature relating to this thesis

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Chapter 1

An Introduction to this Thesis
Contents of Chapter 1

1.1 Introduction to Chapter 1

1.2 Preview of the four hypotheses
   1.2.1 The four hypotheses
   1.2.2 Notes on these hypotheses

1.3 Defining the key terms as they are used in this thesis

1.4 Desiderata
1.1 Introduction to chapter 1

This thesis sets out to explore four hypotheses in an attempt to shed more light upon some potentially important issues in the psycho-social development of teenagers and young adults. My goal is to contribute to the research and development of educational measures that might help as many young people as possible make the most of their lives.¹ ²

1.2 A preview of the four hypotheses

Below, I present a précis of my four hypotheses because, as I will argue, the issues to be explored have received relatively little attention in mainstream British psychological and psychiatric literature, and I also introduce some neologisms. I intend this précis to help orient my reader in preparation for my subsequent analysis of the literature in Chapter 2. Each hypothesis will be discussed in full later in the thesis.

1.2.1 The four hypotheses

These hypotheses are only tentative, and they were posited in order to help focus and guide my empirical exploration of certain concepts. They were never intended to be proved or disproved, as hypothesis-testing would have been beyond the means of my methodology. Moreover, it should be noted that because my sample of participants for my empirical research was a non-random one, my tentative hypotheses and the findings which relate to them

¹To which end, I set-up a charitable project called Trail-Blazers, that launched in September 1998 for the 15 to 21 year olds serving time in Europe’s largest high-security Young Offender Prison. Trail-Blazers is intended to develop and eventually test some of my hypotheses, and I detail the scheme in Appendix G.
²I use the term ‘young people’ to mean any male or female aged 12 to 25. This same definition is used by Rutter, Giller and Hagell (1998).
are only intended to apply very specifically to my participants and should not be taken to imply generalisations beyond my sample.

Hypothesis 1a:
My research participants will self-report a group of cognitive and behavioural traits which can be viewed as forming a distinctive personality dimension that I term ‘Relationship with Reality’.3

To elaborate: I hypothesised that for many of the young people among whom I would research, some ubiquitous and seemingly benign activities can sometimes comprise an ‘Anti-Reality Syndrome’ which, to varying degrees among individuals, might impair their psychological and social development. For example, some cognitive activities such as fantasising about impossibilities, wishful daydreaming or worrying about the future, and reminiscing about or regretting the past, may not always be the relatively harmless and fleeting activities that they are often presumed to be. In just the same way, common behaviours such as listening to music, watching television, reading novels and playing computer games can be inadvertently or deliberately deployed by the user to distort, diminish or escape his or her first-hand experience of real-life. This Anti-Reality syndrome is conceived to be one end of what I propose is a Relationship with Reality personality dimension on which Anti- and Pro-Reality personalities constitute the polar opposites of a continuum.

Strongly Pro-Reality personalities would be characterised by those who are not only reality-oriented in thought and behaviour, but are actively investing in real-life: i.e. they are intent on improving their longer-term experience of real-life. Their dominant cognitive traits might include step-by-step planning towards longer-term goals, imaginative rehearsal of activities so as to improve their real-life performance, and day-to-day problem solving in a way that does not jeopardise or compromise their longer-term well-being. Their predominant behavioural traits might include investing in health and educational regimes.4

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3 Dowson and Grounds (1995) define ‘personality’ as an individual’s pervasive attitude and approach to life.
4 The concept of Relationship with Reality as I propose it and discuss it in this thesis does not include reference to delusional or hallucinatory thoughts which are commonly regarded as the domain of serious mental illness and beyond wilful or conscious control (see Marzuk, 1996).
Hypothesis 1b:
My research participants' self-reported history of their Relationship with Reality will correlate with substantial differences in observable life-outcomes.

To elaborate: I hypothesise that Relationship with Reality, as measured by an individual's cognitive and behavioural traits, will correlate with 'life-outcomes' as measured by a rudimentary index of observable attainment in academic, occupational, and/or extra-curricular endeavours (denoted by my three-group classification: High-Achievement, Moderate-Achievement, and Under-Achievement, which are defined at the end of this introduction).

(Relevant to hypotheses 1a and 1b, I describe my Relationship with Reality personality dimension in full detail in Section 4.1., pages 84 to 105).

Hypothesis 2:
My research participants' self-reported history of their sense of 'Occupational Identity' will correlate with substantial differences in observable life-outcomes.

To elaborate: These young people's self-reports as to what extent they had a significant role or occupational goal with which to identify, will correlate with 'life-outcomes' as measured by a rudimentary index of observable attainment in academic, occupational, and/or extra-curricular endeavours (denoted by my three-group classification: High-Achievement, Moderate-Achievement, and Under-Achievement, which are defined at the end of this introduction).

Hypothesis 3:
My research participants will self-report that they want to receive more 'Careers Education and Careers Guidance'.

To elaborate: Research by the Confederation of British Industry (1993) warns of the vast hidden cost of the unrealised potential of young people pursuing personal and working lives that are inappropriate to their aptitudes and needs. Commentators believe that occupational opportunities and the work-market are increasingly complicated subjects which need to be taught by specialists and afforded much more time and status in the British educational
curriculum for students of all ages (CRAC 1996; CBI, 1993). This issue is arguably of particular importance when one considers that:

- A typical British teenager can expect just one interview per year with a qualified, full-time Careers Counsellor (Watts, Law, Killeen, Kidd, Hawthorn, 1996).

- Schools Inspectors have acknowledged that financial pressure on state and private schools is inadvertently motivating many of these institutions to deliberately distort or omit vital careers information so as to gain financially by keeping their students in school for longer (Watts et al., 1996).

- It has been argued that Careers Education and Guidance is severely marginalised by the academic community in both schools and universities where it is widely regarded as a third-class subject. (NICEC, 1998a).

Hypothesis 4:
My research participants will self-report wanting to receive one-to-one holistic ‘Mentorship’ to foster their personal and occupational development.

To elaborate: I hypothesised that the young people among whom I would research, would self-report wanting a one-to-one, long-term relationship with a respected and competent (non-parental) adult with whom to discuss personal, academic and vocational life-issues. (This mentor-mentee relationship is sometimes called ‘life-coaching’ in the USA). Such mentorship of youngsters has only blossomed in the UK since the beginning of 1997, and in its present form is still regarded as an educational resource reserved for young people at severe risk of delinquency or school failure (NICEC, 1998b).

1.2.2 Notes on these hypotheses

If some or all of the above hypotheses appear at first sight to be ‘common-sense’, it should be noted that common-sense is not always sufficiently

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5 NICEC is The National Institute for Careers Education and Counselling whose aim is to develop theory, inform policy and enhance practice.
applied. For instance, the landmark study *In Search of Excellence* by the McKinsey & Co management consultants, Peters and Waterman (1982), found that there were eight basic commonalities of the USA's sixty-two most successful large organisations. These eight features were widely regarded by business managers as so basic that they were thought to be naturally occurring and commonplace. However, the authors concluded that it was only the overwhelming and rigorous intensity with which the top companies applied these eight basic strategies that distinguished them from other companies.

**The proposed relationship between the four hypotheses**

In Section 4.5, (page 212) following my explanation and empirical evidence concerning the concept of Relationship with Reality, I offer a pictorial model and explanation of the proposed relationship between Relationship with Reality and the three other psycho-social factors which comprise my thesis. I argue that there are sufficient theoretical grounds for integrating these four factors together in one research project, not only because they may be strongly interactive in my participants' lives, but because an understanding of each factor can help illuminate the others. For example, in understanding why some young people may wish to distance themselves from their experience of the real-world, it can be helpful to appreciate how daunting even everyday life can be if one has too little sense of one's own worth and role, if one has too little prospect of achieving such, and if one has too little advice and encouragement on how to engage with reality so as to improve the situation. Conversely, an appreciation of an individual's Relationship with Reality can potentially help explain his or her attitude to career prospects, school work, and relationships with adults.

**The structure of this thesis**

It should be noted that I have divided my literature review and my results into four sections corresponding with each of the four factors. That is to say, as well as a General Literature Review of material that is relevant to all four factors (Chapter 2), at later stages in the thesis I also include reviews of literature specifically relevant to each one of the factors. Similarly, my results are divided into four sections corresponding with each factor. My intention
with this juxtaposition of a specific literature review with the specific results to which it relates, is intended to render both the review and the results more vivid, more accessible, and more obviously pertinent to a particular hypothesis. (The thesis structure is represented in the Flow Diagram in the preface.)

The personal motivations for researching these particular factors

My research focuses upon these four hypotheses very largely because of my own experiences in adolescence and early adulthood, and my subsequent roles as a remedial tutor for delinquent teenagers held in custody. My daily life as a practitioner seemed to present me with certain explanatory possibilities concerning these young people, possibilities which I was surprised to discover were absent from or highly marginalised in the mainstream British literature for the caring professions, as will be detailed in the literature reviews. (I elaborated upon my personal motivations for pursuing the research topics that I have, in Appendix H).

1.3 Defining the key terms as they are used in this thesis

In discussing such terms as ‘achievement’ and ‘reality’, I appreciate that I am using potent words whose definition I feel it is important to begin to address, though perhaps not resolve, as early in my thesis as possible. (The terminology and the premises which underlie my work, and the theory and practice of how I fully operationalise my concepts, are discussed in further detail in chapter 3 titled ‘My Research Methods’. There is also a more compact Glossary of My Key Terms located in Appendix A.) To what extent my reader accepts the definitions below or the criteria upon which they are based, will, I appreciate, affect the reader’s judgement as to the validity of my conclusions.

Achievement will have different meanings for different individuals - both for the person who achieves and for the person assessing that achievement.
Moreover, even a consensus of external opinion on a level of accomplishment can change very dramatically over time. For example, the achievements of President Nelson Mandela in South Africa were initially denied by the dominant white South African society but eventually honoured by the majority of his nation and the Western World (Mandela, 1994). Similarly, Simonton (1984; 1996) notes how the Zeitgeist - the political and cultural leanings of an era - determines whether a scientific or artistic endeavour or achievement is lauded or rejected.

Notwithstanding these complications, I have attempted to take a cross-section in time, and define some sufficiently objective criteria by which a level of accomplishment might be assessed. In doing so, I have tried to label not the individual but rather the accomplishments themselves. That is, I wish to suggest that a person is not inherently a 'moderate achiever', for example, but rather by the very specific and limited criteria and foci of my thesis, I choose to class his or her particular accomplishments in certain domains as 'moderate' relative to other levels of a same-age cohort. Hence the following key:

- **UA** = Under-Achievement
- **MA** = Moderate-Achievement
- **HA** = High-Achievement

In the interests of exploring the hypotheses I have outlined above, this research uses 'key indicators' of recognised achievement. By 'recognised', I mean a consensus of opinion among some of the dominant institutions of British society. Hence:

*Under-Achievement* refers to the group of individuals who were imprisoned Young Offenders at the time of research i.e. serving a custodial sentence for a criminal offence in England or Wales. I reason that this group characterises at least one important form of 'under-achievement' because their social performance on some crucial behavioural criteria is so far below that which society deems acceptable for their age cohort, that society's representative bodies have elected to imprison them.
**Moderate-Achievement** refers to the group of individuals who have attained, ostensibly on merit, nationally recognised levels of educational, occupational or extra-curricular achievement that are widely considered either statistically average, or only a little above or below an average for someone of their age cohort.

**High-Achievement** refers to the group of individuals who have attained, ostensibly on merit, nationally recognised levels of educational, occupational or extra-curricular achievement that are widely considered very much above the statistical average for someone of their age cohort. Their particular attainments must be ones that are much sought-after and highly competitive and thus accrue high status among general society. For instance, ‘occupational high-achievement’ (i.e. in working life) is measured by indicators such as nationally recognised qualifications, salary level, the social status of the work-type, and the reputation of the employer.

**Life-Outcomes** refers to a number of key circumstances of an individual’s life at a given cross-section in time. These key circumstances include attainment in the domains of education, occupation and extra-curricular activities. This thesis is most interested in well-established and objective benchmarks of such outcomes, for instance the admittance to a largely meritocratic group or institution or, at the other extreme, imprisonment.

**Reality** I define as the physical environment containing animate and inanimate objects that are subject to immutable and universal laws of physics. By my definition, thoughts and emotions only have impact upon reality once they impact on *physical reality*, via language and other behaviours. Although it could be argued that ‘realities’ might be individually perceived and socially constructed, I do not consider that such elaborations would contribute to an explanation of my theory of a Relationship with Reality as I present it within the strict confines of this exploratory thesis.

**Participants** is the term I choose to denote all of the individuals who kindly took part in any aspect of my research, as I feel it conveys the sense of willing collaboration in a good cause, which researchers such as Reinharz (1983) suggest may be beneficial.
1.4 Desiderata

In my enthusiasm three years ago, I may have embarked too quickly upon my fieldwork with a too limited conceptualisation and operationalisation of the term 'achievement'. I feel now that I did not question people proactively enough about what defined achievement in their own eyes; for instance, I did not sufficiently evaluate accomplishments in terms of 'personal relationships' or effects on their local community. During the course of this research, I have also come to think that personal success is less about how far one has travelled, and more about how many obstacles one has overcome.

Having been privileged to study the self-reported recent life-histories of hundreds of young people over these past years, I am more keenly aware now that to ignore the more subjective benchmarks and measures of life-accomplishments, perhaps because of the inherent difficulty in agreeing upon and then measuring an apparently nebulous concept such as 'life-satisfaction', is to ignore a crucial component of the human experience. I now consider that this omission severely limits the scope and meaning of the terms 'accomplished lives' or 'high-achievement' as I use them. In respect of this growing awareness on my part, I include a section titled Pyrrhic Victories? The potential costs of high-achievement in chapter 2, in which I discuss some of the ideas and empirical evidence that can inform such an important debate.
Chapter 2

Review of the General Literature Relating to My Thesis
Chapter 2

Review of the General Literature Relating to My Thesis
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### 2.4 Literature on resilience

- **2.4.1** Introduction
- **2.4.2** Research on resilience

### 2.5 Conclusions to Chapter 2
2.1 Introduction to Chapter 2

My hypotheses, my sample groups, and my theoretical perspectives are broad-reaching. In consequence, the following literature review must by necessity be equally far ranging in my attempt to demonstrate where my work is located relative to well-recognised theories and studies. (In Appendix B is a glossary of those authors that I reference most frequently in this thesis.)

I have divided my review of the general literature into three main sections: section 2.2 examines the research relating to high-achievement and eminence; section 2.3 examines the literature on normal adolescent development, adolescent psychiatry, forensic psychology and criminology, as it relates to my four hypotheses; and section 2.4 examines the evidence that relates to resilience.

As has been explained in the Introduction, my reviews of specific literature relevant to the four factors will follow in later chapters. What follows in this chapter is a review of the general literature that is relevant to all four hypotheses.

2.2 Literature on High-Achievement

2.2.1 The benefits of studying high-achievement and eminence

Part of my research strategy in this thesis, has been to study what I call 'high-achievement'. Studying high-achievement as an end in itself and so as to learn about comparatively average and below average development and performance, is by no means a new endeavour, and the quotations below illustrate this.
In *The Farther Reaches of Human Nature*, Maslow argues that we should study the "healthiest young adults to see what human beings are capable of". Maslow warns that:

even when 'good specimens', the saints and sages and great leaders of history, have been available for study, the temptation too often has been to consider them not human but supernaturally endowed (1971: 6).

In their analysis of 'Management Skills', Klemp and McClelland advocate:

identifying top and average performers in a given occupation and then studying and analysing them to uncover and measure the characteristics that distinguish the outstanding performers from the average ones (1986: 107).

They conclude:

as we accumulated more and more information it became apparent that certain competencies are generic; that is, they appear in all the top performers of jobs of the same general type (ibid.: 109).

In *Creativity*, Csikszentmihalyi notes that:

psychologists have learned much about how healthy human beings think and feel from studying pathological cases. But we have learned little from the other end of the continuum, from people who are extraordinary in some positive sense.

He continues:

the result of creativity enriches the culture and so they indirectly improve the quality of all our lives. But we may also learn from this knowledge how to make our own lives directly more interesting and productive (1996: 11).

Gardner supports this view:

If we want to understand how some individuals manage to become exceptional in a positive sense.... we will need to know more about brain and biology; but we will equally need to know more about the experiences that
pluck a few of us out of the crowd and give us the opportunity to become a special kind of person (1997: 49).

Gardner (1997) argues that through understanding better the minds of, for instance, Mozart, Freud, Woolf, and Gandhi, we can not only accomplish more as human beings, we are also more likely to make a meaningful contribution to our society. Gardner (1996, in collaboration with Emma Laskin) has also studied the biographies, letters and papers of eleven world leaders so as to better understand the development of high-level leadership skills:

By pretending that leadership will happen naturally or that leadership can be inculcated incidentally, we ensure that there will be an unacceptably low number of individuals who can fill the essential desiderata of leadership... We need to begin to think of leadership as a subject that can be mastered and a role that can be achieved, should one be willing to invest heavily in such enterprises (1996: 304).

In respect of the above authors and the others that will be cited in this chapter, I suggest that theoretically there are at least five reasons why studying high-achievement is a valuable endeavour. These are:

1. to determine the means by which newcomers to a field of endeavour might achieve more and so potentially increase their sense of satisfaction.

2. to increase the likelihood of outstanding contributions to a field, contributions which could benefit society as a whole.

3. to act as a point of comparison with negative or under-achievement in a field so as to better inform remedial interventions.

4. to add to our understanding of the possibility of there being generic characteristics that apply to all high-achievement no matter the domain of endeavour.

5. to contest myths and misunderstandings that might deter some from attempting high-achievement while isolating others who have already attained it.
2.2.2 Pyrrhic Victory: The potential costs of high-achievement

The challenge is to pursue excellence but to do so without destroying the rest of your life.
Terry Orlick (1990:92), Olympic Coach for Canadian Teams

The above section could be criticised for presuming that high-level performance or accomplishment always enjoys a positive linear relationship with desirable outcomes and satisfaction from life. With the benefit of hindsight, I think now that when I embarked upon this thesis, I assumed that ever higher levels of accomplishment were almost always a good thing for the individual. The following section considers this assumption and related issues.

The Terman Study (Terman and Oden, 1959) concluded that its 1500 very high IQ individuals were healthy, reasonably wealthy and content with their lives. However, it seems possible that individuals of international and historical stature may not enjoy the self-reported happiness which apparently correlates with the levels of high-achievement studied in my thesis. For instance, Gardner (1997:141) notes that “most of the extraordinary individuals I’ve studied have turned out to be very difficult people - often tortured, often inflicting suffering on those close to them,” and he attributed this directly to their having been so dedicated to their cause. Gardner (September, 1997, BBC Radio 4) discussing some extraordinary achievers of the likes of Virginia Woolf and Freud, Gandhi, and Mozart, remarked how:

as people become a master of the domain in which they are working......at a certain point they want to make a difference. They devote all of their energies to it, they’re quite cruel to other people who get in the way, and they become mono-maniacal by mid-life.

On the other hand, Howe (1990) suggests that some prodigies will be desperately unhappy unless they devote themselves to their vocation; and Roe (1952) observes that the great majority of the 64 internationally eminent natural and physical scientists whom she studied, reported enjoying their work more than any other activity, which suggests that good relations with
other individuals may not always offer the optimal source of satisfaction from life.

A second point of debate is whether excelling in a single domain is the best way to maximise one's sense of satisfaction from life. On the one hand, Maslow operationalised 'self-realisation' for a group of his students:

You must want to be a first-class psychologist, meaning the best, the very best you are capable of becoming. If you deliberately plan to be less than you are capable of being, then I warn you that you'll be deeply unhappy for the rest of your life. You will be evading your own capacities, your own possibilities (1971:35).

On the other hand, I would argue that an alternative to Maslow's proposition is that people may consciously reject the implied superiority of single-domain excellence in preference for an enhanced sum of overall satisfaction that might result from moderate achievement in two or more domains of activity. This notion that success or satisfaction from life can be assessed multifactorally finds support in the Terman study (see Terman and Oden, 1959). The researchers list the five most frequently mentioned definitions of life-success noted in response to the question they posed their sample: "From your point of view, what constitutes success in life." The self-generated answers fell into five categories, each noted by around 40% to 50% of the mid-life participants. (No other definition was mentioned by more than 15%). These five most common definitions of success were

- Realisation of goals, vocational satisfaction, a sense of achievement
- A happy marriage and home life, bringing up a family satisfactorily
- Adequate income for comfortable living (but this was mentioned by only 20% of women)
- Contributing to knowledge or welfare of mankind; helping others, leaving the world a better place
- Peace of mind, well adjusted personality, adaptability, emotional maturity.
Relevant to the above debate is Albert Einstein’s warning of how “The confusion of ends and means characterises our age” (see Calaprice, 1996: 42) i.e. it can be argued that if ‘maximising a sense of satisfaction from living’ is the goal, the above list would suggest there are several potential sources of a sense of success or life-satisfaction. I note that Gardner (1997) advocates a daily evaluation of one’s endeavours in relation to one’s ultimate goals, so that means and ends are not confused; similarly, Sternberg (1996) notes the danger of not knowing when to quit (either not persevering long enough or, equally damagingly, persevering too long); and Csikszentmihalyi et al advocate ‘a path with a heart’, whereby the goal is seen as worthy but the journey can be enjoyed as an end in itself (1997:244).

In summarising this brief sub-section, I believe there are strong arguments for questioning whether high-achievement in a single-domain is the only or even the best way to achieve very positive things in life for the individual and their communities. This said, there is no evidence that high-achievement need in itself inhibit an individual’s enjoyment of life.

2.2.3 An inventory of the major studies of high-achievement and eminence.

During my review of the literature, I have not encountered an easily accessible catalogue of the best-recognised studies of high achievement or eminence, so in Appendix C I have compiled an inventory of such, which lists the authors, their key works and their key findings. (Its length prohibits its inclusion in this chapter). The inventory comprises the following researchers in chronological order according to each author’s first publication of a major textbook in the field: Galton, Terman, Cox, Roe, G. and M. and V. Goertzel, McClelland, Maslow, Vaillant, Gardner, Simonton, Bloom, de Bono, Howe, Skynner, Csikszentmihalyi, Sternberg, Sulloway, Harrington and Boardman.

I note that three of the eighteen researchers (or researcher partnerships) listed above incorporate into their analysis of accomplishment a very strong notion of ‘mental health’ (Maslow, 1971; Vaillant 1977; and Skynner, 1993) which is

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1 It should be noted that Simonton’s (1994) book *Greatness: who makes history and why* reviews many but not all of the studies I list.
broadly regarded by these three researchers as ‘success at living’ in occupational and personal life. However, ‘mental health’ is never regarded by those studies (or by my own) to be synonymous with high-achievement, nor a necessary correlate of it.

I acknowledge that this highly eclectic inventory of studies implies that I subscribe to a model placing high-achievement, eminence and genius on a linear continuum. Similarly, my comparison in this study of UAs, MAs and HAs suggests a linear model of achievement. Though I appreciate that it is possible that different levels of achievement may reflect very different developmental paths, the empirical work of Simonton (1996), Gardner (1997), Howe (1990), and Csikszentmihalyi (1996) convincingly support a uni-dimensional model.

My intention in compiling such an inventory is to better illustrate the ways in which my own study attempts to make an original contribution to this body of knowledge. There is considerable overlap and agreement between these 18 key studies, and Simonton summaries his own meta-review of the literature in this field:

> because neither longitudinal nor retrospective methods are perfect, we should draw on both as much as possible. Happily the findings of each method corroborate rather than contradict each other, with only minor exceptions... A handful of variables stand out as the most critical and universal (1996:144-145).

With respect to this, I now list some of the key features that have been found to relate to high or exceptional achievement by the authors in my inventory. I use the list below to indicate that the four factors pertinent to my own thesis have not previously been the explicit foci of attentions or conclusions in this field, save for the very notable exceptions of the works of George E. Vaillant (1977; 1993), and Robin Skynner (see Skynner and Cleese, 1993). The theoretical proximity of my work to theirs will be considered in Section 4.2 where I review the specific literature concerning the proposed Relationship with Reality personality dimension.

The list below is not offered in order of importance, and all items have been identified by at least one major study or author. None of these features has
any evidence to support it being considered as either necessary or sufficient in itself for high-achievement; indeed there is a strong consensus that at least several of these features are found in the developmental history that precedes high-achievement (e.g. M., V., and G. Goertzel, 1978; Simonton, 1996; Csikszentmihalyi, Rathunde and Whalen, 1993). So as to integrate my own thesis with the works listed in my inventory, I suggest how some of the well-accepted correlates of high-achievement listed below could hypothetically be related to my own hypotheses. My suggestions are indicated by the comments italicised in brackets.

The following factors have been associated with high-achievement or eminence:

1. Intense enjoyment of a domain so that the ‘work versus joy’ dichotomy disappears (Roe, 1952; Maslow, 1971). (Careers Guidance could foster such an ideal match between individuals and their profession).

2. A driving motivation to work in a particular field (Roe, 1952; Howe, 1990). (The right Occupational Identity could appeal strongly to important internal motivations.)

3. Investing in a specific domain at least 10 hours per day, 6 days per week for 10 years (Bloom, 1985; Howe, 1990). (Such a major investment is made more likely by the dual motivation of intrinsic enjoyment and a highly inspiring Career Goal as suggested in 1 & 2 above.)

4. A ‘love of learning’ modelled by one or both parents (V. and M. Goertzel, 1962; Howe, 1990). (A Mentor could model this joy in learning)

5. An encouraging parent or teacher (V. and M. Goertzel, 1962; Bloom, 1985). (A Mentor could compensate for deficiencies or absences in either.)

6. A sense of Internal Locus of Control (Harrington and Boardman, 1997). (Learning to take control of the focus of one’s thoughts could provide a sense of control, e.g. focusing on planning for real-life rather than retreating into fantasies.)
7. The ability to spend considerable time alone in practice or study (Howe, 1990; Csikszentmihalyi et al., 1993). *(The intrinsic pleasure of a satisfying occupational role could help motivate this.)*

8. Emotional self-control (Gardner, 1997). *(This could be promoted by learning to focus one’s cognitive attention as one part of proactively developing one’s positive Relationship with Reality.)*

9. Birth-order: the ordinal position of the individual relative to siblings (Sulloway, 1996).

10. Early loss of one or both parents (Roe, 1952; M and V Goertzels, 1962).

11. A middle-class home (V. and M. Goertzel, 1962; Csikszentmihalyi et al., 1993).

12. Adversity in the growing-up years: either family financial hardship or emotional upset; or poor health; or a physical or social stigma (V. and M. Goertzel, 1962; Simonton, 1996).

13. The ‘Zeitgeist’ i.e. there is a readiness of the era and culture to recognise a specific achievement (Terman and Oden, 1959; Simonton 1984).

14. Being exposed to more than one domain or culture (Simonton, 1988).

15. Reflecting critically on everyday life in terms of longer-term aspirations (Gardner, 1997). *(This could be promoted by a heightened appreciation of one’s Relationship with Reality and the adaptiveness of pro-reality cognitions and behaviours.)*

16. Identifying and then playing to one’s strengths (Gardner, 1997). *(This could be fostered through Careers Guidance.)*

17. Proactively learning from set-backs and defeats and converting them into opportunities (Gardner, 1997). *(Mentors could foster this reframing of experience.)*
18. A reality-oriented approach to life (Vaillant, 1977; Skynner, 1993) *(This could be promoted by an increased awareness of and proactive development of our positive Relationship with Reality.)*


20. Mentorship by an eminent person, or belonging to an eminent institution (Simonton, 1984). *(Mentors could facilitate these on at least a minor level.)*

21. Exceptional productivity; a strong bias towards action and for practical applications (Simonton, 1984; Sternberg, 1996). *(A positive Relationship with Reality could promote this.)*

2.2.5 **How do the particular features of my thesis provide an original contribution in the field of high-achievement studies?**

From reviewing the literature, I consider that there are three distinct ways in which my thesis offers a modest but original contribution.

1. My study focuses on 'young adult high-achievement'. There has been relatively little work on youthful high-achievers as distinct from very high-IQ individuals (e.g. Terman and Oden, 1959), eminent people (e.g. V. and M. Goertzel, 1962), world leaders (e.g. Gardner, 1997), 'geniuses' (e.g. Simonton, 1988), or isolated exceptional abilities as might be demonstrated by 'idiot savants' (e.g. Howe, 1990). There are three very notable exceptions: Csikszentmihalyi et al.'s (1993) *Talented Teenagers*, Bloom's (1985) *Developing Talent in Young People*, and Vaillant's (1977) *Adaptation to Life* which studied a group of Harvard University Sophomores from around age 20 onwards.

2. My study focuses on the micro-processes of high-achievement as well as the macro-patterns. Many of the large-scale quantitative studies have established correlates like 'birth-order' and 'death of a parent' (e.g. Sulloway 1996; Simonton, 1984), but more rare were the one-to-one exploratory interviews (such as those of Roe, 1952; and Vaillant, 1977) revealing an individual's general strategies and attitudes to life through
the longitudinal analysis of life-histories. Rarer still were insights into the day to day mental strategies and experiences which could be referred to as the ‘micro-processes’ of a life rather than its ‘macro-patterns’. It appears that the only research team who undertook such studies of daily life was Csikszentmihalyi et al. (1993) who used the Experience Sampling Method which randomly ‘bleepered’ participants over the course of a week so as to prompt them to self-record their thoughts and activities at some precise moment. My own investigation of Relationship with Reality (which comprises at least half of the items on my questionnaires and interview schedule) is somewhat comparable to this, inquiring as I do about the average daily thinking-time spent on different categories of thought and behaviour.2,3

3. My study focuses on rarely studied issues. From my inventory of 18 researchers listed in Appendix C, the only two researchers whose foci closely overlap with my own are those of Vaillant (1977) and Skynner (1993). Robin Skynner’s treatise on Life and How to Survive It, is based largely upon his own clinical case-studies supported by his reference to research studies. Skynner regards a strong bond with reality as crucial to mental health and well-being in life, and this links very closely with my concept of Relationship with Reality.

However, it is Vaillant’s (1993) psychoanalytic study of the ego-defence styles of the three groups which comprise the Study of Adult Development that most closely pre-empts and overlaps with my own research. First, Vaillant identifies 18 types of ego-defences, and this list includes ‘fantasy’ and ‘anticipation’ which are two mental products that seem closely associated with my own focus on an individual’s Relationship with Reality. Secondly, Vaillant offers a revision of the 8-stage model of psycho-social development originally proposed by Erikson (1968). The stage which Vaillant calls ‘career consolidation’ bears closely upon my focus on Occupational Identity and the consequent role of Careers Guidance.

2 Anne Roe (1952) wrote a chapter on the ‘thinking styles’ of her 64 highly eminent research scientists, considering whether they deployed mental imagery or not to construct their hypothetical models - but it does not bear closely upon my own work.

3 Though I have noted above how Csikszentmihalyi et al (1993) in Talented Teenagers combine two key features of my own study (i.e. the study of young adult high-achievement via a study of the micro-processes of their daily lives), it is interesting that their key conclusions do not directly incorporate the key foci of my own thesis. Reasons for this are discussed in chapter 4.
Above and beyond the obvious fact that Vaillant’s corpus of research involves life-time longitudinal prospective studies, and mine is a small-scale cross-sectional retrospective study, there are two features of particular interest that distinguish mine from his:

- My study offers a 3-way comparative study of groups (HAs, MAs and UAs) that are in profile quite different from the three samples of the Study of Adult Development (comprised of Harvard-educated men, very high IQ women, and non-convicted boys from a socially and economically disadvantaged background).

- My study focuses on young adults who are developing in an era at least 50 years on from Vaillant’s samples.

### 2.2.6 Summary of the literature on High-Achievement

1. There are theoretical arguments in support of studying high-achievement and eminence.

2. In Appendix A, I present an inventory of the best-recognised studies of high-achievement and eminence.

3. There is a strong consensus among researchers on a number of developmental correlates with high-achievement and eminence; my own target-features can be hypothetically integrated with many of these correlates.

4. My thesis has the potential to make a modest but original contribution to the field, with the proviso that it overlaps most strongly with the work of Vaillant (1977; 1993) and Skynner (1993), and their work receives further attention in the reviews of the specific literature in Section 4.2.
2.3 Literature on normal adolescent development, adolescent psychiatry, forensic psychology, and criminology as it relates to my four hypotheses

2.3.1 Introduction

As mine is a comparative study that includes groups of individuals whose current achievements in certain specific domains I categorise as either moderate (normal) or under-achievement (delinquent), I will now present an overview of the general literature in areas relevant to those two groups to see how my own study relates to them. Rather than attempt to encompass the numerous variables and correlates that are written about in the extensive British and American literature, I considered it more appropriate to establish which of my own four themes have not been written about. (The references which the general literature does make to my target themes will be addressed in my reviews of the specific literature in later chapters.) In the following subsection, I identify some of the leading voices, texts, and studies so as to illustrate the most dominant characteristics of the contemporary literature.

2.3.2 Characteristics of the general texts on normal adolescent development

Even in the American texts which dominate the literature on adolescence in general, the target-themes of my thesis are by no means universally acknowledged as pertinent. For instance, any mention of mentorship is absent from the great majority of texts (e.g. Santrock, 1998; Schaffer, 1999; Seifert and Hoffnung, 1997; Conger and Galambus, 1997). It is particularly notable, too, that the above cited general texts on adolescence all cite criminological researchers, namely Farrington and Loeber (e.g. 1987), or psycho-social disorder specialists like Rutter (e.g. 1997), but they omit to cite even one high-achievement study. I believe this pattern illustrates the continuation of a strong researcher and practitioner bias towards studying mental ill-health and under-performance, rather than studying above average performance. This bias was recognised at least as far back as 1937 at the birth of the Grant Study of Adult Development (see Vaillant, 1977) when two of its three founding fathers, Grant and Bock, observed how “Very few have thought it pertinent to
make a systematic inquiry into the kinds of people who are well and do well” (Heath, 1945: 4).

2.3.3 References in the British literature to the particular issues focused upon by my thesis

Michael Rutter is arguably one of Britain’s foremost Psychiatrists in the study of young people (noted by Green, 1987; Vaillant, 1993). In Antisocial Behaviour in Young People, Rutter, Giller and Hagell (1998) write mainly about 10 to 19 year olds who commit criminal offences, but they also include discussions of age groups up to 25. The authors attempt to catalogue exhaustively the present state of knowledge: “We ask: who they are, what types of things they do, whether their criminal activities are accompanied by other problems...” (ibid: 01). Yet, in light of the authors’ intentions to be focusing predominantly on teenagers, it can be noted that their index of circa 500 key terms and phrases does not include any mention of the words (nor synonyms) which are most strongly associated with the foci of my own thesis, i.e. daydreams, fantasy, imagination; sense of identity; careers guidance, vocational or careers counselling; receiving mentorship. (Below, I cite further examples of similar omissions in key contemporary texts).

2.3.4 References in the British literature to seminal humanistic and psychoanalytic texts on psycho-social development

My own thesis draws strongly upon seminal texts in the psychoanalytic and humanistic literature on adolescent development (see my specific literature reviews in later chapters). This has not been the case in published British literature. Illustrative of this, Antisocial Behaviour in Young People (Rutter et al, 1998), for instance, acknowledges that “descriptive, ethnographic and naturalistic data have often been very helpful in throwing light on the nature of possible causal mechanisms... We have therefore used these when appropriate” (ibid: 23). They also write, “There are some cross-sectional self-report studies that are informative... Where the data appears sound, we have made use of them” (ibid: 13). The authors also claim that a key strength of their text is its “multidisciplinary approach - bringing together clinical, social,
and criminological perspectives” (ibid: 03), and in concluding, they note how “the development of a multidisciplinary, international community of researchers working on these studies has led to a sharing of measure and analyses, strengthening the conclusions that can be reached” (ibid: 383). Nonetheless, it is notable that their 75 pages of references do not include either the name of E.H. Erikson (e.g. 1980) who wrote extensively on identity development and intimacy in young adulthood, nor the name of Abraham Maslow (e.g. 1971) who wrote extensively on good mental health, motivation and values. Both Erikson and Maslow are well referenced in American texts and regarded as leading names in 20th century theories of human psycho-social development (e.g. Schaffer, 1999; Jaffe, 1997).

It could be argued that Erikson and Maslow’s evidence is unreliable because it is drawn from clinical judgement rather than experimental designs. Yet, Rutter himself declares that

far too much research in psycho-social risk has been content to stop at the point of identifying risk variables... what we know much less about is how risk mechanisms operate (1990, 221).

With this end in mind, perhaps such in-depth understanding could be provided by methods useful for exploratory and hypothesis-generating work, for example, methods such as case studies, clinical practice, and the qualitative review of biographies which so characterise the seminal humanistic and psychoanalytic studies.

Similarly, a unique contribution could have been made to Rutter et al’s (1998) text by reference to Vaillant’s (1993) psychoanalytic study of the Core City Sample which is highly pertinent to delinquency and psycho-social disorder among youth. The Core City Sample were 456 boys drawn from Boston inner-city schools and ‘blighted slum neighbourhoods’ who were interviewed at ages 14, 25, 32, and 47. This sample served as the non-delinquent control group for Sheldon and Eleanor Glueck’s (1950) classic study of convicted teenage delinquents who had been placed in Reform Schools. Vaillant took steps to ensure adequate inter-rater reliability before coders embarked on a blind-rated psychoanalysis of the interview transcripts, the clinical judgements, and the biographical facts, so that Vaillant’s conclusions would not depend upon participants’ failing memories nor upon Vaillant’s post-hoc
interpretations. Such rigour in the psychoanalytic study of the life-histories of this sample and of the other samples which comprise Vaillant's Study of Adult Development, is arguably sufficient to have warranted its inclusion in Rutter et al.'s overview of the field.

This apparent schism within the literature has been noted before: Vaillant (1993: 5) observes how 'Freudian humanists' are frequently reluctant to engage in empirical methods, and 'intransigent empiricists' are similarly unwilling to acknowledge the empirical evidence supporting psychodynamic theory of the unconscious mind. I conclude that the omissions in the mainstream British literature render my own thesis highly unusual in its incorporation of psychoanalytic and humanistic theory and studies.

2.3.5 References to developmental studies of high-achievement in the British literature on psycho-social disorder and delinquency

High-achievement studies are rarely, if ever, cited in the literature on delinquency and youth crime. Once again, Antisocial Behaviour in Young People is a good illustration of this. Rutter et al.'s (1998) pre-eminent text does not incorporate any mention of the 18 studies of high-achievers and mental health that I surveyed above, studies which might arguably offer fresh insights into 'overcoming adversity'. For example, in Paths to Success, Harrington and Boardman (1997) used four-hour long retrospective interviews to examine the lives of 60 very highly accomplished adults who had overcome the statistical odds of their 'high-risk' socio-economic backgrounds. Harrington and Boardman compared this sample with 40 very highly accomplished adults from unusually privileged backgrounds. Their aim was to establish what factors, if any, differentiated the developmental histories of these two different groups of high-achievers.

Another surprising omission from Rutter et al.'s (1998) overview of antisocial behaviour in young people, is Vaillant's comparison of the Core City Sample drawn from slum neighbourhoods (which I outlined above) with the comparatively highly privileged sample of the Grant Study men. This latter

4 I use 'blind-rated' to mean that the raters did not know anything about the life-outcomes of the subjects whose material they were rating, and so their analyses could not be influenced by such.
study comprised a 35 year prospective longitudinal life-history of 92 ex-Harvard College men who were a sub-set of the 268 men of the Grant Study of Adult Development who had originally been selected between 1939 and 1943 for their ‘good mental health’. Vaillant’s unprecedented comparison makes it pertinent to Rutter et al.’s work.

In conclusion, I argue that although it might prove useful to compare the findings of high-achievement studies with studies of offending and of psycho-social disorder, there is no evidence that this has taken place in any systematic way in British literature. This apparent scientific parochialism is not so prevalent among American researchers of high-achievement. For example, Vaillant (1995) cites the S. and E. Glueck (1950) study in Adaptation to Life and cites Rutter in Wisdom of the Ego. (1993). In Paths to Success, Harrington and Boardman (1997) cite the work of Rutter, Farrington and the Gluecks.

2.3.6 The widespread nature of omissions in key contemporary British texts

Having illustrated my claims with Rutter et al’s most recent book, I note that the same range of omissions occur in a book with even broader aims: Psychosocial Disorders in Young People: Time trends and their causes (edited by Rutter and Smith, 1995) which brings together a number of European specialists. The absence in this text of any mention of my four themes is particularly surprising considering that the book’s stated targets were

the psychological disorders... that tend to rise or peak in frequency during the teenage years; namely crime, suicide, suicidal behaviour, depression, eating disorders, and abuse of alcohol and psychoactive drugs... The study is therefore concerned both with the individual factors including the process of individual development and with social structures and conditions (ibid: 1).

In this text, ‘young people’ is taken to mean those aged 12 to 26. The omissions I discuss above are again evident, though perhaps because of the European nature of the work and its contributing authors, it should be noted that Maslow and Erikson and Freud are all mentioned once, and Vaillant (1983) is referenced, but only for his writings on alcoholism.
Such omissions of the key perspectives, authors, studies and issues pertinent to my own thesis are equally true of the latest edition of the *Oxford Handbook of Criminology* (Maguire, Morgan and Reiner, 1997) which brings together 32 of the most eminent British authors in the field of criminology. For instance, Farrington’s chapter on *Human Development and Criminal Careers* is a summary of prospective longitudinal studies which makes no reference to the prospective longitudinal Study of Adult Development (Vaillant, 1993) for whose potential relevance I have already argued.

I propose that the above examples are highly representative of British mainstream literature. Below, I offer a brief survey to illustrate this point, and unless otherwise stated, very similar omissions are evident in each of the following key, contemporary academic texts. I.e. unless otherwise stated, none of the high-achievement studies discussed above are cited, nor humanistic nor psychoanalytic approaches, nor anything more than a paragraph is given over to the four target-themes raised in the hypotheses of my thesis: fantasy, identity, careers guidance, mentorship.

I begin my brief survey with adolescent psychiatry in Britain and the USA:

*Child and Adolescent Psychiatry: Modern Approaches* (Rutter, Taylor and Taylor, 1998) claims on its cover to have “established itself throughout the world as the leading text book in the discipline”, yet it mentions none of the high-achievement studies nor humanistic or psychoanalytic authors, nor issues I have raised above as pertinent to my thesis. The same is true of the *Oxford Textbook of Psychiatry* (3rd edition of Gelder, Gath, Mayou and Cowen, 1996). Kaplan and Sadock’s (1998, 8th edition) *Synopsis of Psychiatry*, gives one third of a page to the issue of careers.

The Psychiatric Diagnostic Manual, ICD-10 (1992) does not mention the target issues of my thesis, but the DSM-IV lists some ‘Other Conditions That May Be A Focus Of Clinical Attention’, and under this heading writes three lines under the diagnosis of ‘Occupational Problem’: “Examples include job dissatisfaction and uncertainty about career choice” (1994: 685). There are also three lines under the diagnosis of ‘Identity Problem’, exemplified by “uncertainty about multiple issues relating to identity such as long-term goals, career choice, friendship...” (ibid). There is, then, at least some tentative recognition by the DSM-IV that identity and career choice can be a source of mental ill-health.

2.3.7 Summary of the review of the general literature in section 2.3

1. The target themes that are the focus of my thesis receive little more than a paragraph in general British texts on adolescent and young adult psycho-social development in any context whether normal, clinical or forensic.

2. Mainstream general texts on normal adolescent psycho-social development (which are predominantly American) may frequently cite criminologists and psychiatrists studying disorder, but the same texts rarely if ever cite researchers who have studied high-achievement.

3. The general British texts on psychology and psychiatry do not reference those psychoanalytic or humanistic authors whose corpus of work I will argue in later chapter is seminal in the field of adolescent and young adult psycho-social development, and which is very well recognised in the USA e.g. Erikson (1968), Maslow (1971).

4. The general British texts on psychology and psychiatry do not reference the eminent studies of high-achievement by authors such as Vaillant (1977), Gardner (1983), Howe (1990), Csikszentmihalyi et al. (1993) who are all very well recognised in the USA.
2.3.8 Conclusions from this review of the general literature in sections 2.2 and 2.3

Though I have attempted to illustrate above that the omission of references to potentially important themes, theories, studies and perspectives, are evident in existing literature, particularly British literature, I regard it as beyond the remit of my thesis to either suggest why or explore why such omissions might exist. However, at least two key questions may be raised at this point, which my unfolding thesis will endeavour to address:

1. Are there potential benefits to be reaped from an increased cross-fertilisation between high-achievement research and the research in general adolescence, adolescent psychiatry, forensic psychology and criminology?

2. Are there potential benefits to be reaped from further exploration of the hypotheses of this thesis?

2.4 Literature on resilience as it relates to my four hypotheses

2.4.1 Introduction

I view my four hypotheses as suggesting four psycho-social factors potentially important in how young people negotiate life. As a consequence, this fourth section of the General Literature Review addresses a body of relevant literature on the subject of resilience. (Please note that ‘ego-defence mechanisms’ and ‘coping strategies’ are discussed in the review of the specific literature in Section 4.2)

2.4.2 Research on resilience

Garmezy (1991: 466) defines resilience as “the maintenance of competent functioning despite an interfering emotionality”; and Zeidner and Endler
voice a consensus among researchers (e.g. Mikhail, 1985; Boekaert 1996; Hamburg, 1974; Delongis, Folkman and Lazarus, 1988) when they write:

it is commonly recognised that it is not stress per se that determines adaptive outcomes, but rather how we cope with ongoing challenges and stressors, that is critical in affecting our psychological and physical health (1996: 101).

Much of the literature on resilience derives from longitudinal surveys of delinquency in western cultures, and is characterised by a strong consensus on a number of key variables that promote resilience (e.g. Farrington, 1995; Loeber and Stouthamer-Loeber 1986 and 1987; Robins and Rutter, 1990). Nonetheless, as Rutter (1990) notes, the precise processes by which such factors have effect are too rarely addressed, and I argue that it is even rarer that researchers venture how exactly the characteristic factors of resilience can be fostered. This may be on account of the quantitative design of much of the research. By its very nature, such research cannot offer us the qualitative insights and detail that might inform us as to the building-blocks of everyday life-experiences. In respect of this, I propose that my own hypotheses might suggest some part of the processes by which the well-recognised features of resilience might be achieved. To illustrate this possibility, I now list some protective factors distilled from the studies I have referenced above. The comments in italics and within brackets after each of these predictive correlates, suggest how my own hypotheses might play a role.

Haggerty, Sherrod, Garmezy and Rutter (1994) list the factors that they found most commonly promote resilience:

1. Problem solving abilities (more likely to be enhanced by an increased awareness and practising of Pro-Reality thoughts and behaviour rather than Anti-Reality thoughts and behaviour).

2. Attractiveness to peers and adults (could be enhanced by a prosocial and contributive Occupational Identity).

3. Manifest competence and perceived efficacy (more likely to be achieved if the individual is sufficiently motivated to invest in the acquisition of a

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skilled task - a possibility enhanced by adequate Careers Guidance promoting a satisfying and inspiring Occupational Identity).

4. Identification with competent role models (achievable through holistic one-to-one mentorship).

5. Planfulness and aspiration (This could be enhanced by a focus on future reality rather than worry, regret, reminiscence or fantasy).

6. An internal locus of control. (Having power over the very focus and nature of one’s own thoughts through an awareness of one’s Relationship with Reality could be a good starting place for this internal locus of control.)

As a second example of a study of resilience, The United States Carnegie Council in Adolescent Development (1995) produced a report titled Great Transitions: Preparing Adolescents for a New Century, which lists what they consider to be the essential requirements for healthy adolescent development. (Once again, I integrate my own hypotheses in italics.) The report states that if young people are to grow up as healthy, constructive adults, they must:

1. Find a valued place in a constructive group. (A sense of occupational identity could provide this, i.e. feeling oneself to be part of a recognised profession.)

2. Feel a sense of worth and personhood. (An occupational identity could substantially contribute to this.)

3. Achieve a reliable basis for making informed choices. (A mentor could enhance this process.)

4. Know how to use the support systems available to them. (A mentor could encourage proactive learning about such systems.)

5. Express constructive curiosity and exploratory behaviour. (An enhanced Pro-Reality orientation of thoughts and behaviour could contribute to this.)
6. Believe in a promising future with real opportunities. *(An enhanced pro-reality approach to life combined with good careers guidance could promote this.)*

A further theme that warrants special attention in my discussion of resilience, is that of ‘social bonds’ because it is potentially closely associated with all four of my hypotheses. Arguably the best illustration of the ‘social bonds’ theme is the work of David Hawkins and Richard Catalano (1992) who have designed *The Communities that Care* programme which is based upon the assumption that weak bonding to society is the major cause of delinquency and drug abuse. The programme anticipates that young people with a strong bond to society will be best able to resist temptations to commit offences. The concept of a ‘bond to society’ includes attachment and commitment to conventional social groups such as families and schools, and the absorption of norms, values and beliefs that favour pro-social behaviour. The researchers suggest that social bonds develop especially well if young people are given opportunities, skills and rewards for their pro-social behaviour. The US Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention has provided funds to foster implementation of this programme in all 50 American states. Also seminal in this field is the work of Sampson and Laub (1993) who reanalysed the S. and E. Glueck (1950) data and showed that meaningful employment was a source of strong community ties. My own thesis is very strongly rooted in the above concept of ‘social bonding’, which I will advocate in the appropriate chapters can be fostered via pro-reality orientation, careers guidance, occupational identity, and receiving mentorship.

In concluding this section, I feel that my hypotheses can offer plausible contributions to the existing knowledge on resilience in the face of risk-factors for delinquency and psycho-social disorder, particularly as regards the intermediary processes and the proactive fostering of resilience. The theories and studies of Ross and Fabiano (1985), Eysenck (1977), West and Farrington (1977), and Hirschi and Gottfredson (1990) will be reviewed in the literature relating specifically to Relationship with Reality (see Section 4.2), as their theories and studies seem to bear more closely upon that particular hypothesis than on my hypotheses in general.
2.5 Overall conclusions from this review of the general literature

I draw two main conclusions from the General Literature Review:

1. My thesis brings together a combination of elements in terms of its target themes, its sample groups, its theoretical perspectives and its literature base, that is rare in the American literature and even rarer in the British literature.

2. It may be argued that my hypotheses are consistent with some of the theory and findings of prior work, and may offer some theoretical developments of that work.

A penalty for trying to take such an holistic view of people’s lives is that extensive bodies of research are potentially relevant to one’s specific thesis. In the face of such an ‘ocean’ of literature, I have necessarily been highly selective, but I hope that I have succeeded in demonstrating that my particular type of research is not commonplace in the mainstream literature.
Chapter 3

My Research Methods
Contents of Chapter 3

3.1 The objectives of this thesis and its three stages of research
3.2 Operationalising my terms: theoretical and ethical considerations
3.3 The long-interviews
3.4 The long questionnaires
3.5 Overall discussion of my research methodology
3.6 A note regarding data analysis
3.1 The objectives of this thesis and its three stages of research

From the outset, the goal of this thesis was hypothesis-exploring and hypothesis-developing (and very specifically not hypothesis-testing). These broad intentions meant that the field research and theory grew organically in response to findings, but in retrospect and for the purposes of clarity of explanation, the process can be divided into three stages. (Please see the representation of my field research in Figure 3A). In overview, stages 1, 2 and 3 achieved the following:

Stage 1
- Long semi-structured interviews of a mean of 2 hours' duration with:
  - 50 participants in the HA group
  - 18 participants in the UA group

- Long semi-structured interviews of a mean of 1 hour's duration with each of 10 senior professionals who worked with either HAs or UAs or both, and who could be regarded as 'well-informed commentators'.

Stages 2
- a long questionnaire (requiring between 60 minutes and 75 minutes to complete) was administered among:
  - 18 UA participants
  - 33 MA participants
  - 32 HA participants
  - 14 Royal Marine Commandos

Stage 3
- a long questionnaire (requiring between 60 minutes and 75 minutes to complete) was administered among:
  - 50 UA participants
  - 42 MA participants
  - 50 HA participants
Figure 3A:  My field research: Stages 1, 2, and 3.

Stage 1
The Long-Interviews

50 HAs

10 Senior Professionals

18 UAs

14 Pilot Questionnaires

Stage 2
The 1st Questionnaire

32 HAs

33 MAs

18 UAs

14 Royal Marine Commandos

Stage 3
The 2nd Questionnaire

50 HAs

42 MAs

50 UAs

These 50 Participants completed the SIPI and EPQ-R

These 50 Participants completed the SIPI and EPQ-R
The Short Imaginal Processes Inventory (Huba et al, 1980) and the EPQ-R (Eysenck and Eysenck, 1990) were administered among a sub-set of the above comprising:

- 50 UA participants
- 50 HA participants

This fieldwork was conducted between October 1995 and December 1998. These three stages are discussed in detail below.2

### 3.2: Operationalising the terms ‘UA’, ‘MA’ and ‘HA’:
theoretical and ethical considerations

In the introduction to this thesis, I outlined my definitions of the three levels of achievement that defined my HA, MA and UA groups, and in the General Literature Review (Chapter 2) I suggested that studying high-achievement could theoretically benefit wider society as well as individuals. I will not repeat my arguments here, but there are some additional points that can usefully be made as a prelude to this chapter:

1. It could be argued that I am imposing my evaluation or judgement upon the level and type of accomplishment in people’s lives. I did indeed initially have to impose such a judgement by choosing which institutions and which individuals I approached, but in every instance I invited my participants (in their questionnaire or in conversation) to evaluate their own lives, and in effect to challenge my assessment of their present circumstances and past accomplishments. Furthermore, in each arena of endeavour (for instance military, academic or artistic), I invited both junior and senior members to suggest whether the criteria I had employed to assess individuals were appropriate to their micro-culture.

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1 Having two groups of 50 HAs and 50 UAs complete the SIPI and the EPQ-R was a revision required by Professors S. Gower and D.P. Farrington in their role as examiners of the first submission of this PhD thesis in May 1998.

2 Regrettably, limitations of time and financial resources meant that an MA group was not used in all of the research stages. This was very largely a self-financed doctorate relying on bank-borrowing limits which could not be exceeded.
2. For at least three reasons, I regarded the elite institutions that I approached (such as The Royal Military Academy at Sandhurst; The Royal College of Art) as centres of high-achievement from which to draw HA individuals:

- Entrance requirements are highly selective because of the number and quality of applicants that the institution attracts.

- Their selection processes aspire to be meritocratic, i.e. entry is earned in open competition rather than through hereditary privilege or through money, for example.

- The standards consistently achieved by the group are universally regarded as highly prestigious by members or the wider society who are competent to judge (such as future employers and competing institutions).

3. I acknowledge that there may be alternative groups that could be considered prestigious or to have social cachet (e.g. a ‘Hell’s Angels’ chapter), but that do not accrue social rewards in any obvious or well-publicised way. Yet, to include such anomalies would only be to complicate this work, and would not serve to support or discredit the essence of my thesis, which is restricted by logistical necessity to addressing itself to the mainstream of society and culture.

4. High-achievers may have committed criminal offences, but if they have not been successfully prosecuted, then they are still eligible for allocation to the HA group by my criteria. Similarly, I could have included in my research a group of ‘elite criminals’. Alas, the ‘Catch-22’ is that it only makes sense to define the most successful criminals as those who have never been caught or, better still, whose crimes are wholly undetected, which in turn makes eligible participants very hard to locate. It might also be argued that a criminal subculture may esteem a person who has served a 10 year sentence for a bank robbery, but I argue that this is not an achievement in the sense that I use it in this thesis, because the dominant part of society severely penalises criminal accomplishments.

5. Not at issue here are my personal views on the morality and/or usefulness of an MBA, or an English Doctorate, or practising corporate law.
The dominant part of wider society esteems these accomplishments as positive and praiseworthy and will reward them with enhanced salary and/or social status.

6. My criteria for high-achievement does not require that educational and professional success is necessarily synonymous with life-satisfaction.

7. My definition of professional achievement is not equated with money: in my HA group no one is rejected simply because they are not earning a high salary e.g. the Royal Marines and the Oxbridge Undergraduates are both on modest incomes.
Chapter 3: Research Methods

3.3 : The Long Interviews

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3.3.2 The sampling strategy

3.3.3 The participants in the long-interviews:
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   - Caveat regarding this HA interview sample
   - The UA group
   - Caveat regarding this UA interview sample
   - Long-interviews with senior professionals

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   - Seeking generic correlates of high-achievement
   - No distinction between advantaged and disadvantaged HAs.

3.3.5 A note on the personal characteristics of the interview participants:
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   - The possibility that IQ was a confounding factor

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3.3.9 Desiderata as regards the long-interviews

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3.3.1 The object of interviewing

The interviews were primarily intended to investigate the notion of Relationship with Reality and to discover what part, if any, such a relationship might have played in the participants' life-outcomes. These interviews only very tentatively investigated the concepts of Occupational Identity, Careers Guidance, and being Mentored, because these were concepts that had emerged, unanticipated, from my Cambridge M.Phil research on Relationship with Reality. Hence, the questions I posed in the long interviews were open-ended and eclectic as I was determined to be open to whatever participants personally regarded as the most important ingredients in their past lives that might help explain their educational and professional achievements and their personal relationships. This stage of the research was qualitative, and Bryman considers qualitative research to be distinguished by "its express commitment to viewing events... etc. from the perspective of the people who are being studied" (1988:61).

3.3.2 The sampling strategy

Ideally, my sample should have been a random one taken from a general population, because sampling in this way is considered to increase the external validity of research findings and thus the general applicability of one's results (Bernard, 1995). However, the terms of goodwill and minimum interference under which access was negotiated to various institutions did not allow for this. Though all of the agencies I approached were extremely accommodating, individuals' lives within those agencies followed complex agendas or protocols, and to request that participants be plucked from their day at the request of a random-number matrix would have been impossible. In the event, because I was not confident of achieving sufficient numbers of participants with a random sample at the outset of the study, I resorted to a non-probability sample of self-selecting participants gathered through opportunity and snowball sampling among theoretically relevant samples. Bernard (1995:95-96) writes that "Haphazard or Convenience sampling is useful for exploratory research, to get a feel for 'what's going on out there'", though he is quick to warn that we must not forget that it has very low external validity, and that no generalisations to wider populations can be derived from it.
3.3.3 The participants in the long-interviews.

During the 40 months of this Ph.D. thesis, a total of 68 young adults aged 18 to 30 were interviewed individually for between 90 minutes and 5 hours. (The 5 hour interviews were with imprisoned young women who were, at first, uncomfortable with the interview process, and it took some time for my colleague and I to win confidences.)

The total of 68 interview participants comprised 50 HAs and 18 UAs. There were almost three times as many HAs interviewed as UAs, because there exists comparatively little research literature on HAs as I define them in this study (compared to the wealth of literature on imprisoned young offenders), and so HAs were of more theoretical interest to me. A further 10 senior professionals who worked with the above 68 interviewees, were also interviewed for between 45 minutes and 1 hour. (For logistical restrictions concerning time and money, rather than for theoretical reasons, MAs were not interviewed).

As regards the absolute number of interviews that I achieved, I had set out to attain a number of HAs that might allow me to observe any striking commonalties within the group. Arranging access to HAs and interpreting their two-hour interviews was a time-expensive pursuit, and though in the course of a three year doctorate, 68 might seem a modest number, the sum of months spent reading previous literature and designing the research instruments, and the sum of months spent writing-up, considerably reduces the months available for interviews and long-questionnaire administration. Previous studies of eminent individuals have gathered not incomparable sample sizes or interview lengths to my own. For instance, De Bono (1986) interviewed 50 eminent individuals for two hours; Csikszentmihalyi (1996) interviewed 91 for two hours; Harrington and Boardman (1997) interviewed 100 for four hours.

The HA group

I interviewed 50 people whom I designated to the HA group. (I had a quota of 50 HAs that I wanted to meet, and I used a mixture of convenience sampling and snowballing). They ranged in age from 19 to 30 (mean age 25). 30 participants were men and 18 were women. They comprised the following:
• 28 men and women who had recently completed or were completing full-time Masters and Ph.D. level courses at Cambridge University. It can be noted that although many of this group were technically full-time students, many of these so-called ‘students’ had already enjoyed several years in successful careers. For instance, there was a Stock Market analyst, an NHS manager, a Civil Service senior manager, several lawyers, a record making polar explorer, and an Olympic athlete. Some had very recently qualified as medical doctors or obtained executive positions with world-renowned management consultancies or investment banks. The age range of these participants was 21 to 30.

• 10 male boxers of the Cambridge University Boxing Team who fought in the 100th anniversary ‘Blues’ match against Oxford. They were all full-time students of the university. These 10 boxers ranged from first year undergraduates to final year Ph.D. and MBA students. Before becoming students, their previous careers included having been a leading corporate Barrister, an RAF jet pilot instructor, and a US Infantry platoon commander turned international banker. Their ages ranged from 19 to 30.3

• 4 Royal Air Force officers-in-training comprising two men and two women: 1 pilot; 1 navigator, and 2 ground-crew, aged 21 to 24.

• 6 officers-in-training at the Royal Military Academy at Sandhurst comprised of three men and three women: five of these six were university graduates with 2/1 degrees or higher, their ages ranged from 21 to 23.

• 2 full-time male masters-level students of the Royal College of Art in Kensington, age 23 and 28.

Nationalities of these 50 individuals were varied and included Australian, Canadian, North American, British, Anguilan, Belgium, Russian, Indian, German and Danish. There was only one non-white individual among them.

3 These individuals appeared a very suitable convenience sample since I was making a psychological study of them for a 60 minute educational video-documentary called ‘Boxing Clever’ that I would be showing in young offender prisons.
Caveat regarding this HA interview sample

As I explain above, the HAs were a non-random sample, and it is very possible that my findings will be skewed by the biases that are noted below:

1. I wanted a heterogeneous sample of HAs in terms of the arenas in which they had achieved, so as to look for generic commonalities. However, all of my interview participants had achieved graduate or postgraduate educational level, whereas many highly accomplished young people do not progress to tertiary education.

2. There are considerably more men than women in my sample, but neither cell contains sufficient numbers to allow findings to produce statistically reliable comments about gender-differences.

3. 13 of the HAs were presently, or had been, in professional military service, whereas there were only two fine or applied artists.

4. The postgraduates and the boxers were all proactively approached, rather than being self-promoting volunteers. No post-graduates declined, and one boxer declined. I am not aware of the refusal rate for the other three sub-groups of HAs as they were invited or chosen directly by their institutions.

The UA group

I wanted to compare two groups that were as diametrically opposed in terms of their recognised achievements, as was methodologically possible to access, so that any differences might be most evident. In his own work, my thesis supervisor adopted a comparable strategy. He explains: "Both groups were studied in the time-honoured strategy of unearthing the roots of a complex system by researching its contrasting forms. In behavioural science, when we hope to understand interpersonal relationships, we learn more about aggression when we also study passivity... When contrasting forms are compared, each may be understood better by what it is not; distinctions may illuminate what is shared" (Green, 1987: 5).
Hence, all those individuals in the UA group were imprisoned young offenders, i.e. serving a sentence for a criminal offence. I advocate that the term ‘young offender’ is an ugly label because it labels the individual rather than the act they have been sanctioned for. I prefer to regard them as having ‘under-achieved’ because in society’s eyes they did not achieve a minimum standard of behaviour to allow their freedom. The UA group comprised:

- 13 men serving sentences at HMYOI Feltham (aged 18 to 21, serving sentences ranging from 18 months to 7 years, for crimes that ranged from drug-dealing to armed bank robbery.)

- 4 women serving sentences at HMP Bullwood Hall (aged 18 to 28, serving sentences ranging from 18 months to 7 years, for crimes that ranged from drugs-dealing to armed bank robbery.)

- 1 man in his late 20s serving the last few years of a very long sentence at HMP Blantyre House for multiple cases of armed robbery.

In addition, 10 men serving sentences at HMP Blantyre House comprised a committee/focus group with whom I discussed at length the hypotheses of this doctorate. I do not explicitly include this focus group in the findings, as the nature of this meeting was so different from the one-to-one interviews. It nonetheless provided an extremely useful background.

**Caveat regarding this UA sample**

1. It should be noted that Maguire (1997) reminds us that for a great majority of offences recorded by the police, nothing is officially known about those responsible, so we have to be careful about drawing conclusions from known offenders and then generalising to all offenders.

2. Theoretically, it would have been more useful to compare HAs with young people who were under-achieving but in a non-criminal way. Thus, I could have compared ‘socially-rewarded’ with ‘socially un-rewarded’ young people without the potentially complicating variable of ‘criminal conviction’. For instance, I could have taken a sample of long-term unemployed people who were not students and who did not self-
report any objectively recognised academic or extracurricular achievements of note. However, I was particularly interested to explore whether my concept of Relationship with Reality might correlate with imprisonment among young people, and this interest motivated the choice of the UA group.

**Long-interviews with senior professionals who work with young people**

In total, 10 senior professional who were working with young adults in various settings were interviewed. (The interview schedule can be found in Appendix F). This was in an attempt to ‘triangulate’ the information that was gathered directly from the young people themselves (Denzin, 1970). These professionals were the people directly responsible for the young adults I interviewed, so they were in effect self-selecting. These participants were drawn from the senior staff of:

- The Royal College of Art in Kensington
- The Royal Air Force Officer Training Academy at Cranfield
- The Royal Military Academy at Sandhurst.
- Trinity College, Cambridge
- The Cambridge University Boxing Club
- Her Majesty’s Young Offender Institution and Remand Centre at Feltham (for male juveniles and young offenders)
- HMP Bullwood Hall (for women)
- HMP Blantyre House (for men)
3.3.4 Further discussion of the sampling strategy for the HA and UA interviews

Seeking generic correlates of high-achievement

I was interested to learn whether ‘success’ and ‘failure’ had underlying factors common to many lifepaths no matter their particular arena, whether it be sporting, academic, business or artistic, as McClelland (1984) suggests is the case. Such a broad trawl seemed to fit with the exploratory nature of the study. Hence I sought to be heterogeneous in my gathering of participants. On a similar note, I was interested to know whether successes within the same individual, in different arenas of endeavour (such as their academic life, professional life and musical accomplishment) have underlying commonalities.

No distinction in sampling between advantaged and disadvantaged HAs

At first it was my intention to include only those HAs who had ‘overcome adversity in their growing up years’. This ambition was inspired by the principle suggested by Robins and Rutter in their introduction to Straight and Devious Pathways in which they write that

The natural histories of children who turn out to be normal adults despite the serious behavioural problems that generally predict difficulty are of great interest because they may reveal environmental interventions or concurrent personality traits and skills that seem to counterbalance the bad prognosis associated with this behaviour. If such benevolent environments can be intentionally created for youngsters who would not encounter them naturally, and if protective traits and skills can be taught or cultivated, they could constitute the basis for interventions particularly likely to succeed (1990:3).

However, it seemed wasteful to discard the experience of those people I encountered in the course of research who had achieved impressively, yet had come from notably advantaged backgrounds. I realised that it would still be extremely valuable to know how their life accounts compared and
contrasted to the disadvantaged HAs. For this reason, I made no attempt to discriminate between advantaged and disadvantaged HAs because I did not feel my sampling method was strong enough to make such a distinction. In the light of the above, it is particularly interesting that there was a noticeably high incidence among my HA interview participants of one or more common adversities (such as an acrimonious parental divorce, a mentally-ill parent, or having been severely bullied) and these are detailed further on. I did not broadcast my interest in 'backgrounds of adversity', and preferred instead to identify and gauge the 'childhood adversity' of each participant post hoc. My rationale was as follows:

- people could, for a variety of understandable reasons, falsely present themselves as appropriate for inclusion as 'achievers in the face of adversity'.

- genuine candidates who had overcome a deeply adverse background might shy away from this labelling of themselves or their backgrounds, perhaps fearful of disclosure despite my guarantees of anonymity.

- those who had experienced an up-bringing that was adverse in an unusual way, might discount the worth of their own testimony and not volunteer themselves.

In the event, the first HAs I interviewed then referred me to their friends. This meant that subsequent HAs had not volunteered themselves, but had been volunteered by friends, which possibly helped mitigate the tendency for a certain type of bold, self-promoting personality to dominate my sample.

### 3.3.5 A note on the personal characteristics of the interview participants

#### The Age of Participants

I imposed a lower age limit upon the interview participants because there are in the UK legal difficulties with interviewing young people in full-time education under the age of 18 without the informed and written permission of their parents. This presents considerable administrative problems. I
imposed a notional upper-age limit because I feared that if participants had completed their A-levels or degree too long before our interview, they might have forgotten the detailed life-philosophies and strategies which helped them achieve, and it was the very details of action and thought that were of most interest to me.

**Participants' gender, ethnic group and socio-economic status**

I calculated that to control rigidly for such variables would not be an efficient use of my research resources, nor of the goodwill of those organisations that were affording me privileged access.

**The possibility that IQ was a confounding factor**

It could be argued that IQ is the intervening factor that determines the level of young adults' accomplishments in life, compared with their peer group, and thus it would be intelligence that best distinguished between my three groups. However, it was certainly not within the ambit of my financial and time resources to control for IQ among my participants. This was because the Ravens Standard Progressive Matrices is now not a timed test and is estimated to take between 25 and 50 minutes to complete. Nonetheless, Csikszentmihalyi (1996: 197) wrote "What I try to do occasionally is to disprove certain widespread assumptions. The advantage of disproof over proof in science is that whereas a single case can disprove a generalisation, even all the cases in the world are not enough for a conclusive positive proof." It was with this principle in mind that I conducted the following small-scale research into the IQ variable.

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4 The Raven's Progressive Matrices is widely regarded as the gold-standard IQ test that is most widely used in British prisons, and is very well-correlated with more elaborate tests such as the WAIS. The Ravens is used to assess inmates when they first come into prison. I was instructed in how to administer it by Andrew Bates, a Senior Forensic Psychologist with 10 years experience.

5 In a personal communication, Professor John Raven confirmed that his test should not be timed - although for many years it was administered as a strictly timed test.
First, a particularly accomplished sample of 7 people from the HA interview group completed the Raven’s test, *untimed*. The results were as follows, and 60 points is the maximum possible score:\(^6\)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Test Score</th>
<th>Time taken</th>
<th>Compared to Birth Cohort</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>59 points</td>
<td>40 minutes</td>
<td>above the 95 percentile</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>59</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>58</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>above the 90 percentile</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>57</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>above the 75 percentile</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>56</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>56</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>53</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>above the 50 percentile</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It can be seen that there is a considerable range of IQ test scores and ‘time taken’ among this extremely select group of individuals aged 24 to 30 years who all had outstanding academic records and extracurricular and professional achievements.

Secondly, 9 Oxbridge undergraduates and 4 imprisoned young offenders completed a *timed* Raven’s test. I.e. they were given exactly 20 minutes (in which they were individually supervised) to complete the identical Raven’s test as above. (60 points is the maximum possible score.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Oxbridge Undergraduates</th>
<th>Imprisoned Young Offenders</th>
<th>Compared to Birth Cohort</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>60 points</td>
<td>59 points</td>
<td>above the 98 percentile</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>59</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>57</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>55</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>above the 90 percentile</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>53</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>above the 75 percentile</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>53</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>52</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>52</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>49</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>above the 50 percentile</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>below the 50 percentile</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\(^6\)(Account was taken of the age of the participant in calculating the correspondence of test points-scored to percentile intelligence relative to the national averages for smoothed British norms for the self-administered test complete at leisure (Raven, Court and Raven 1996: 62).
It can be seen from the above that two imprisoned young offenders scored as highly or higher than several Oxbridge undergraduates (and that two young offenders scored the lowest). On the strength of the above results, it is not convincing to argue that outstanding measurable IQ (as measured by the Raven’s) is a *sine qua non* of outstanding accomplishments in educational and professional pursuits, because my HA participants had achieved the latter without necessarily achieving the former. Conversely, several young men were serving a long prison sentence despite scoring the same Raven’s IQ results as their Oxbridge College counterparts who had achieved excellent A-level results and Oxbridge entrance-paper performances. Indeed, one of the UAs scored 59 of a possible 60 points on his test, placing him in the top 2 percentile of his age cohort.\(^7\)

There is ample prior literature on the issue of IQ and achievement to corroborate the theme of my findings. In *IQ in Question: The Truth about Intelligence*, Howe (1997) observes that correlations between IQ test scores and the educational, vocational and other social outcomes they might be expected to predict, apparently account for no more than 20% of the variance between people. Howe writes: “That means that at least 80 per cent, and perhaps much more, of the contributing influences lie outside whatever is assessed by giving someone an intelligence test” (1997:95). Howe also notes that “when Terman compared the 150 most successful men in his study with the 150 least successful, he found that there was no difference between them in their average childhood IQs. Yet the differences between the two groups in real life outcomes were very substantial” (1997:102). Howe makes the further point that high IQ test scores of the Terman children were very highly correlated with factors such as well-educated parents and high income homes which may equally have contributed to future success. The implication is that IQ scores might not be a major *cause* of success, but rather more a reflection of the generally ‘privileged’ environment of one’s upbringing. Similarly, Berry (1981) has shown that Nobel prize winners have tended to be brought up in prosperous urban regions, where music, science, and the arts are readily available.

Gardner speculates “Possibly genetic factors set some kind of upper bound on the extent to which an intelligence may be realised or modified in the course

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\(^7\) It would be particularly interesting to research among those HAs in particular who had a notably low IQ, but this would have required me to distribute large numbers of IQ tests.
of human life. As a practical matter, however, it is likely to be the case that this biological limit is rarely if ever reached” (1984: 109). In support of this ‘nurture’ argument, Gardner calculates the astonishing cumulative effects of experience: “Suppose, conservatively, that a future creator or leader has one experience a week from which she learns an important lesson: a few hundred experiences will have accumulated within a few years” (1997: 49). Howe (1990) also notes this issue by remarking upon how even identical twins brought up in the same family will experience the world in substantially different ways, due if nothing else to the chance circumstances of their environment as they move through daily life.

I conclude that in terms of how this nature-nurture debate bears on my own research work, the case for the importance and potential of nurture seems strong enough (exact percentages aside) for it to make sense to take the view that professional-level mastery in any discipline is very likely achievable for any individual if there is adequate motivation and exposure to enriching experience. It is far more likely that it is limits on the availability and quality of that motivation and experience (not forgetting the impact of pure luck) that will determine progress, rather than the inhibition of ‘innate limits’. Innate limits to achievement may exist, but in all practical terms these are, for the great majority of individuals, superable.

3.3.6 Ethical concerns: anonymity, confidentiality, and sensitivity

At all times, this research was conducted with respect to The Code of Conduct, Ethical Principles and Guidelines published by the British Psychological Society (1997), the BPS being the professional body to which I feel most closely aligned. The ethical concerns relating to confidentiality, anonymity and ‘participant well-being’ have been paramount in this work, and I felt very strongly my ‘researcher’s duty of care’ towards my participants.

Confidentiality and anonymity

I was determined to promise and achieve a high level of confidentiality and anonymity for my participants as regards this thesis and any subsequent
publications that derive from it. For the vast majority of my participants, there were no audiotapes, nor were there transcripts in anyone's handwriting but my own. Throughout this thesis write-up, all biographical details are deliberately more circumspect than in my primary data, and where appropriate, I have also concealed the identity of institutions from which individuals were drawn.

**Interviewer sensitivity to the participants**

When one seeks to explore something as personal as the crucial themes and events of someone's inner life and worldly achievements, I felt that seemingly unimportant aspects of the interview situation have the potential to promote a fruitful research relationship. For instance, I took care in unplugging the phone and making 'interruption-prevention' arrangements, designing the layout of furniture in a room, choosing non-judgmental and readily comprehensible vocabulary and terminology, and taking an unthreatening body posture. I tried to help my participants feel comfortable and respected enough to tell their lifestories. With each interview, the participant was free to leave at any time. This option is particularly important, though more difficult to achieve in a custodial environment (see Taylor, 1985) where the participant often feels more susceptible to informal sanctions if he or she is seen to be 'awkward'. In all of this, I operated in accordance with instruction 3.5 of the BPS guidelines (1997: 8).

### 3.3.7 The interviewers and the interview schedule

**The interviewers**

I personally conducted all but two interviews. I am a white male, and at the time of interviewing I was aged between 33 and 35. I described myself to the participants as "a psychological researcher interested in the development of people's lives". This style of face to face qualitative research is one to which I feel particularly suited by temperament and by my varied portfolio of previous work-experience: as a 'child care officer' for clinically disturbed teenagers, as a university officer for overseas language students, as a supervisor for Cambridge undergraduates, as a prison's creative-writing tutor,
and a teacher of child development and psychopathology. My colleague, Sarah Fitzharding, personally conducted two of the four ‘all-day interviews’ in Bullwood Hall women’s prison. Sarah was aged 24 at the time, a white female studying on the Ph.D. programme at the Cambridge University Institute of Criminology. She already had considerable experience of interviewing on sensitive issues such as anger management among women prisoners, anti-gay violence, and the experiences of young people who grew up lesbian, gay or bisexual. (The gender of the researcher may have been a research confound, but at this exploratory stage it seemed an acceptable risk).

**Interviewer bias**

As regards objectivity, Bernard writes “We can... become aware of our experience, our opinions, our values. We can hold our filed observation up to a cold light and ask whether we’ve seen what we wanted to see, or what is really out there... to achieve objective – that is, accurate knowledge by transcending our biases” (1995: 152). Similarly, Csikszentmihalyi claims of his sample of eminent individuals, “I am confident that I have not distorted the meaning of any of the respondents or the consensus of the group as a whole” (1996:16), and claims to have approached the accounts with open scepticism. I must disagree with both statements: I regard the most dangerous biases to truth and accuracy to be the ones of which we are not aware. By way of analogy, take the example of the fast jet-pilot suffering anoxia: he feels confident and elated until the very moment he blacks out and fatally crashes his aircraft (Wolfe, 1980). Nothing in my life has provided me with such enduring fascination and satisfaction, or has thrilled me so often to my stomach, as the revelations of the lifepaths and the recurrent patterns I think I have glimpsed during this research. It is for this reason, and for the personal life-history reasons explained in my autobiographical section in the Appendix H, that I may have been in grave danger of projecting my experience and expectations onto the lives of my participants. I tried to mitigate this mainly by earnestly inviting a critique by senior clinicians whose own professional experience might support or refute the possibilities that my thesis proposes, and through gauging my results in relation to relevant academic and practitioner literature. That said, intuitive judgements are not to be dismissed or relegated as inadmissible, but they are not sufficient evidence. Using a
moderator or, better still, blind-rating of interviews would have been a preferable method.

Piloting my interview schedule

In fulfilment of my Cambridge M.Phil. in 1995, I had tentatively explored some of the issues regarding Relationship with Reality among ten Grenadier Guardsmen and nine imprisoned young offenders, and my findings had strongly indicated that young men aged 18 to 24 of a modest educational background were able and willing to discuss such personal topics one-to-one with me in detail and for at least two hours. This experience informed my design for the doctoral research. Although my initial prototypes of the interview schedule for this Ph.D. thesis were self-evidently much too long, a 20-item schedule proved a suitable tool for a two hour interview. (Please turn to the Appendix D for this interview schedule which was known to my participants as the Coping With Life questionnaire.) Though a basic set of questions was adhered to, ad hoc 'probes' were used to investigate avenues of interest further, as suggested in Grounds and Dowson (1995). This may have compromised subsequent questions, but I felt that the potential gain of insight would outweigh the loss of experimental rigour. This practice of 'semi-structured' interviewing is considered by May to "allow people to answer more in their own terms than the standardised interview permits, but still provide a greater structure for comparability over the focused interview" (1993:93).

3.3.8 The interview procedure and data recording

The interview procedure

My ambition in this empirical research was to be demonstrably systematic and rigorous in my gathering of data in the field. My intention was to ask each and every participant identical questions in an identical manner, i.e. verbatim and standardised so that all responses could be compared, like with like. It was intended that all conversations would be audio-recorded and selectively

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8 There are good precedents for a semi-structured interview of this length e.g. Vaillant (1977); West (1992).
transcribed post-hoc. My Supervisor had argued convincingly for the need for such measures, to minimise the grounds upon which my results could be dismissed as spurious evidence.

In the event, although I persisted with the above ambitions with a handful of participants, I was persuaded by circumstances in my field-research to abandon this comprehensive and rigid approach in favour of a considerably shorter research instrument and a more flexible procedure. It soon became apparent in every case that the participant was not a passive partner. Information was invariably volunteered out of sequence with my paper questionnaire, and to capitalise upon this without jeopardising the moment of openness or energy of the narrator, it felt more appropriate to ‘ride with them’ on their wave of lucidity. Such a sense of partnership in exploration, or ‘collaboration’ (Reinharz, 1983) became the goal of the interviews, and this meant that certain questions had to be completed out of order or missed out altogether.

The negative effect was that the interviews were less comparable because they were conducted in a semi-uniform manner. On the positive side, I was concerned not to regard the people I interviewed as ‘mere informants’, a concern voiced by Gelsthorpe in her (1990) prison research, and I suspect that the participants felt that I was listening attentively to them and their explanation for their lives, rather than leading them doggedly through my own agenda of questions, and this helped foster an earnestness and depth of disclosure on their part. Overall, I feel that despite considerable gaps and shortcomings in the data, my method served its original purpose, which was to illuminate some sensitive arenas of people’s lives. I should also add that I deliberately shared disclosures from my own life to encourage an atmosphere of mutual trust and biographical intimacy, a practice advocated by Oakley (1981) and Finch (1983), but I also took care to cast my own mini-tragedies in a lightly humorous or fond light so as not to darken the atmosphere for the participant.

Recording the data

Bernard (1995: 223) advises “Don’t rely on your memory in interviewing; use a tape recorder in all cases except where informants specifically ask you not to.” But having tape-recorded 4 women prisoners of Bullwood Hall (and all of
the 19 participants in my M.Phil. research), I have to disagree for the following reasons:

1. There was a danger that the vast majority of my participants would feel inhibited by the ‘irrefutable evidence’ of their opinion provided by an audio-tape. I decided that the exploratory intentions of my work required me to foster a climate for statements that might be extremely personal, insupportable, politically incorrect or just downright ‘dangerous’ to their speaker. By these means, I hoped that new ground might be broken. It seems implausible to think that some participants would not be nervous to some degree that a tape-recording could provide undeniable evidence that might somehow be used against them. Moser and Kalton (1971) warn of the risk of reducing response rates and accuracy of self-reporting when tape-recording is used, particularly when dealing with sensitive issues. I felt that both UAs and HAs were two groups in particular who might feel that they had a lot to lose if an indiscreet opinion reached unsympathetic ears.

2. Tape-recording leaves the researcher with hours of material that then has to be transcribed. Bernard (1995) estimates that an hour of tape usually takes six or eight hours to transcribe. When a researcher is working alone, when resources are limited, and when the research objectives do not require this exacting level of data collection, it simply is not a cost-effective option (Kvale, 1996). I was, after all, attempting to take something analogous to an aerial photograph to discover vivid and convincing patterns. Consequently, I was not attempting to gather detailed information to produce, as it were, a detailed Ordinance Survey map of the area. To these ends, noting down the gist of what was being said, and only occasionally taking an exact quote, appeared adequate. (In hindsight, however, I regret not having taken far more detailed written notes, as I indicate in my Desiderata section below).

Discussion of the interview procedure

It is arguable that asking individuals to distil and explain the most important ingredients of their lives in two hours is an overly ambitious task. As a solution to this potential problem, almost all of the participants were given a
copy of the questions a week or so before the interview. The interview then seemed sufficient time to illuminate in outline most, if not all, of the key issues in each person’s life, and so fulfil the ambitions of this stage of the research programme.9 As a point of comparison, the Structured Clinical Interview for DSM-111-R Personality Disorder (Spitzer et al., 1987) has 120 items and involves a 60-90 minute interview between clinician and subject.

Perhaps one of the key strengths of long-interview data is that it can offer a level of insight into taboo areas that less sensitive data collection methods, such as short interviews or wholly structured questionnaires, cannot (Lee 1993). Alison Liebling, one of England’s leading prison researchers, recounted at the 1997 British Criminology Conference10 how she and her co-researcher, Grant Muir, ran into problematic circumstances that interfered with their data-gathering procedure when they were coming to the end of assessing the Incentives and Earned Privileges Scheme that was being trialled in several English prisons. This had involved over two hundred structured questionnaires and Liebling explained how, in the last two weeks of fieldwork, tensions on a Maximum Security Wing for life-sentence prisoners meant that the tightly structured interviews were no longer acceptable to the inmates. Unstructured conversations (or at best semi-structured conversations) ensued, which revealed a wealth of information. Liebling told the conference audience that “We probably learnt more about prisons in the two weeks when our research methodology was messed up, than in the whole two years before.”

3.3.9 Desiderata as regards the long-interviews

I would have wished for several features of my interview procedure to have been different, or at least better explored:

1. Though participants were intended to answer all of the questions on the semi-structured interview schedule, the lack of rigorous implementation of this intention during my fieldwork meant that several questions were missing from each participant’s interview.

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9 One possible drawback of this technique is that some individuals might anticipate the interview by creating a plausible and consistent account of their lives, rather than answering more spontaneously.

10 Held at the Queen’s University, Belfast, on July 16th 1997.
2. As has been explained above, I took highly selective notes rather than tape-recordings or very detailed notes. In hindsight, I consider it may have been better to have taken detailed notes so that clearer frequency counts could be made of particular factors, and so that if new theories and models were developed, they could be assessed against more complete interview transcripts. My selective note-taking limited my findings to what I thought to be relevant or interesting at the beginning of my research.

3. Blind rating of the qualitative data would have provided a more compelling level of evidence.

4. It would have been informative to have noted socio-economic status so that I could have retrospectively compared the HAs with the MAs who later completed the long-questionnaires, and hence determine whether there was a statistically significant difference in terms of their socio-economic status.

5. I would like to have invited all of the participants to contact me with further information that came to mind, either by e-mail, phone or letter. Similarly, some but not all participants were called in the months after their interview and asked to comment on hunches and theories. I would liked this to have been a more systematic practice.

6. Long-interviews with 40 or so MAs might have provided a valuable comparison with the HA and UA interviews.

7. I would have valued a female co-researcher with whom to collaborate throughout the process so as to moderate any interviewer 'gender effects'. Gelsthorpe (1990) discussed the impact that such personal characteristics may have upon the interviewer-participant dynamic, and thus the data gathered.

8. I regret that I did not provide phone-numbers of helpful organisations for participants to contact if they were disturbed in any way by what was intended to be a very searching interview touching on issues they had rarely, if ever, discussed before.
3.4 The Long Questionnaires

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3.4.1 The 1st Questionnaire

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- Under-achievement group (UAs)
- Some methodological and sampling aims and problems

3.4.3 The 2nd Questionnaire

- The purposes of the 2nd questionnaire
- The 2nd questionnaire and the participants who completed it
- Further notes on sampling

3.4.4 The validity of the above self-report research methodologies

- Potential threats to the validity of my questionnaire data
- The potential strengths of the questionnaire methodology
- Instrument validity
- Construct validity
3.4.1 The 1st questionnaire

An introduction to its rationale and deployment

This questionnaire was devised so as to make a more systematic appraisal of the possibility of a Relationship with Reality personality dimension than had been allowed by the interviews; and there was a first tentative step in which a few items asked about Occupational Identity, Careers Guidance and being Mentored, but it was not until the 2nd Questionnaire that these were asked about at some length.

The questionnaire research was also designed to provide a three-way comparison between groups which my hypotheses predicted should differ very significantly on these key items. It was important to have a ‘middle’ group (the MAs), because if there was some form of linear relationship between the three groups in response to any of my variables, it could be better indicated by three groups than two. Moreover, although it would not be surprising if UAs were very different from HAs on a range of items, it is arguably more interesting if MAs are different from HAs on the target factors because MAs and HAs are both university samples.

Choosing to use the questionnaire methodology

The problem I faced out the outset of this thesis was how to investigate whether an invisible function such as a ‘type of thinking’ makes any difference to real-life behaviour, let alone major life-outcomes. I considered two possible solutions:

1. Make the various thinking-types more ‘visible’ by having the subjects speak out loud their every single thought (and tape-record this stream of consciousness), or use bleepers to interrupt the individual so that they can record their thoughts at random intervals (as used by Csikszentmihalyi et al 1997, for example); or ask participants to keep regular ‘thought diaries’.

2. Make the function and effect of various thought-types more visible by attempting to alter them and then measuring the effect, if any, when all other variables are held equal (i.e. the classic experimental design).
In spite of the above alternatives, the questionnaire method offers the possibility of such a cost-effective means of exploring a topic that I felt that at this exploratory stage, questionnaires would be appropriate, and that the methods I have briefly described above could perhaps be deployed in future research.

**Devising items to form an ‘Inventory of Thought’ section**

Based on the findings of the long-interviews, and also introspection, I devised several dozen items to form part of a self-completion questionnaire which I called an ‘Inventory of Thought’ which explored themes to do with fantasy, daydreaming and the other types of thinking relating to my hypotheses. I had compelling reasons for devising my own inventory of phenomena in this particular arena in preference to using the Singer-Antrobus IPI (Imaginal Processes Inventory, 1966 and 1970, 1972) and the Short IPI (Huba et al., 1982), and these reasons are detailed in full during my review of the specific literature concerning the Relationship with Reality personality dimension (section 4.2.2.).

**Pilot work for the 1st Questionnaire**

My prototype ‘Inventory of Thought’ was an anonymous self-completion questionnaire which took about 45 minutes to complete. This pilot version was administered among a non-random snowball and convenience sample of 14 HAs and 12 UAs (who were all a subset of the very same individuals with whom I had conducted my long-interviews). I wanted to determine whether individuals were interested enough in the subject matter to reply; whether they found the questions comprehensible and meaningful to them; and whether they were able and prepared to disclose detailed information anonymously. The responses (analysed simply in terms of frequency counts and by thematically coding qualitative data1) were encouraging: Participants completed the questionnaires in full with few if any omissions, and favourable comments came back upon them to reinforce the impression that my range of topics might be amenable to systematic research.

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1There is good precedent for this basic level of analysis in highly exploratory questionnaires e.g. West, 1985.
The Inventory of Thought was followed by the ‘1st Questionnaire’ which comprised a new prototype of the Inventory of Thought and further distinct sections to explore my other topics of interest: Identity, Careers Guidance, and Mentorship. I regret that the design of this questionnaire meant that items could not easily be compared with each other, which was a problem much remedied in my ‘2nd Questionnaire’ with the use of a Likert-scale (Likert, 1932). The 2nd questionnaire also benefited from the omission of some questions that had shown themselves unsuccessful in the 1st.

I made no attempt to ‘norm’ the 1st and 2nd questionnaires because I was not interested in how my three groups differed from the general population, I was interested in how they differed from each other.

In hindsight, both the 1st and 2nd Questionnaires were overlong and repetitive, reflecting my over-eagerness to solicit as much information as possible about such little-researched topics. I was determined to build a substantial picture of the phenomena under study. Moreover, the 1st Questionnaire raised more possibilities than it answered, and my increasing knowledge of relevant literature only contributed to my sense of urgency to test new ideas each of which promised to provide a decisive insight into my target topics. In hindsight, greater patience on my part might have procured a clearer picture albeit of fewer phenomena. This said, I felt that although as short a questionnaire as possible is desirable to make economic use of resources, a longer questionnaire was required as a preliminary stage. I noted that the prototype of the SIPI had circa 350 items and took university students over an hour to complete, so there is good precedent for this level of investigation prior to producing a shorter and more user-friendly scale.

It is arguable that the hypotheses of my questionnaires were too transparent to the participants, and this influenced the responses. I could perhaps have been more covert, but in being so I would have sacrificed the participants’ collaboration in trying to understand and bring to light invisible phenomena that were already too little discussed in the general population.
3.4.2 Respondents to the 1st questionnaire

A group of 97 young men and women filled in a 60-minute 100 item self-completion questionnaire called *Your Life and You*. These participants comprised two groups of HAs, one of MAs and one of UAs.

**High-achievement group (HAs)**

This group comprised 32 young men and women aged 18 to 22 (mean age = 20). Twenty-four were men and women undergraduates at Oxford University Colleges, and 8 were from another university.

As regards the Oxford College HAs, it is not only attaining good A-level grades which qualifies them as accomplished by my definition, but also winning a place at Oxford University where the competition is commonly 3 to 1 among young people equally well qualified in terms of A-levels. Thus school record, extra-curricular activities and interview performance all contribute. The academic success of my particular sample was, in 60% of cases, accompanied by other types of high-achievement, often musical or sporting, that would, in themselves, have put these participants in the HA group by my criteria.

**Caveats to this non-random sample**

All of the Oxford HA women were all the members of an undergraduate women’s singing society who perform at College social events. There is no evidence that this should influence the findings as regards my target topics, because many of these young women partake in a wide range of other activities. However, it could be said that I may have an unfairly high representation of personalities who are ‘extroverts’ and ‘socially oriented’, and even ‘performance oriented’. This should not so readily apply to the HA men, all but 4 of whom were a snowball sample contacted via the HA ‘singing women’ above. Inventories were handed out and returned by post (with SAE) and £5 was paid to each participant.
Royal Marine Commandos (RMCs)

My second group of HAs comprised 14 men aged 18 to 26 (mean age = 21)

These Royal Marine Commandos are included in my survey as an example of non-academic High-Achievers. The ‘Corps’ comes under the auspices of the Royal Navy and is widely regarded by the British and overseas Armed Forces as an elite or crack regiment. A ‘commando’ is a small force of men operating covertly. The high-prestige of the Corps makes admission requirements highly competitive.

Royal Marine Commandos were expected to be a particularly interesting group because they not only represented a different field of accomplishment than the HAs from Oxford University, but enlisted (i.e. non-Officer) Marines were very likely to come from socio-economic backgrounds broadly comparable to UAs, many of whom were very physically oriented and from non-academic and unprivileged economic backgrounds. It should also be noted that both UAs and RMCs operate in a very largely male environment.

Questionnaires were self-completed on December 11th 1997 by 14 fully trained Commandos serving on the Training Staff of the Commando Training Centre at Lympstone in Devon. I gave a short briefing and debriefing to the assembled men, and was present throughout to answer questions, though none were forthcoming. No fee was paid to the men.

The Marines were not asked to cite their academic qualifications which would have been circa GCSE level which is standard for a boy leaving school aged 16. However, 7 of the 14 men had very notable sporting achievements that would have placed them in the HA group whether or not they were RMCs.

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2 In the British Armed Forces, there are barely 2,000 Royal Marine Commandos (all male), not to be confused with the US Marine Corps who are over 120,000 men and women strong.
Moderate-achievement group (MAs)

This group comprised 16 women and 17 men aged 18 to 22 (mean age = 20)

This MA group consisted of individuals who had not yet achieved well above average results in comparison to their age cohort in the educational, professional or extracurricular arenas of life. The university from which I drew participants for this group requires more commonly three 'C' grades or less at A-level for undergraduate entry in every subject, and so was a promising institutional starting-place for finding people who were not yet excelling academically.

(By way of comparison, it can be noted that the Oxford Colleges from which my HAs were drawn most commonly require three 'A' grades at A-level or their equivalent for undergraduate entrance. A-level results provide a nationally recognised and accredited merit-based level of achievement. They are marked without the identity of the student or their institution being known to the examiner. The shortcomings of using A-level grades as a benchmarks of achievement is that they centre on academic qualities rather than professional, extracurricular or interpersonal skills, which is why I was eager to accept a wide range of alternative accomplishments as evidence of high-achievement e.g. artistic, leadership, athletic).

Questionnaires were completed by MAs over the course of an afternoon in November 1998 in a lecture room, and £8 cash was paid as an incentive and gratuity to each participant. Participants had responded to notices placed that same day around campus, i.e. they were self-selecting, but were required to provide proof of age and studentship.

Of the original sample of MAs that I gathered by the above means, I subsequently classified four of the men and four of the women as HAs on account of their outstanding academic or extra-curricular accomplishments self-reported in their inventories (although I did not attempt to verify their claims). Examples of key indicators of non-academic accomplishment that my study regarded as sufficient for placing an individual in the HA group were County-level adult standard in a majority sport or musical instrument (e.g.

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3 Payment is not rare in such research: see, for example, The Industrial Society 2020 Vision Programme 1997.
county level rugby, cricket or football or a place in a full orchestra) or National-team membership in a minority sport such as a martial art. Being Head Boy or Head Girl of one’s school would be equally sufficient to allocate an individual to the HA group.

Discussion of the term ‘moderate-achievement’

This thesis is specifically investigating the importance of a positive sense of identity in a young person’s life course, and it would be a bitter irony if the research itself led to an individual negatively labelling him or herself as ‘failure’ or ‘inadequate’ or indeed burdening him or her with the laurels of success. With hindsight, I would be more comfortable if I had classified individuals with terms imbued with less value-judgement. For instance, I could have referred to ‘University Students’ rather than MAs, and ‘Oxbridge University Students’ rather than HAs, although there is a danger that such terminology would have masked or blurred the objective distinctions which I argue exist between these two groups. My reference to ‘Moderate Achievement’ is not intended as demeaning of those individuals or of the establishments in which they work. It is simply a term that indicates my personal assessment by my criteria of their level of recognised achievement in certain arenas of life, relative to another discrete group of individuals.

I can appreciate that obtaining even one ‘E’ grade at A level may, for a particular individual and under certain circumstances, represent an impressive achievement. Unfortunately, my research methodology was not sensitive enough to identify such instances. I also acknowledge that allocating these individuals to the MA group does not rule out the possibility that high-achievement is ‘just around the corner in their lives’, but at the time of the research, their strategies and motivations and experience in life had not borne fruits which they themselves could describe as representing ‘a universally recognised standard of excellence’. 4

4 I asked them this in the questionnaire, please see Appendix E, on the penultimate page of the questionnaire.
Under-achievement group (UAs)

(All of whom were imprisoned young offenders)

This group comprised 3 women and 15 men aged 18 to 24 (mean age = 19). They were all serving custodial sentences of between 1 and four years for serious crimes ranging from violence to drugs-dealing.

This was perhaps the most unsatisfactory sample of my four groups, given its small size and the particular difficulties for both the researcher and participants operating within a high-security prison environment, especially when the researcher is not part of the key-carrying staff of the prison. Although completion was supervised, this was in a group situation which on reflection is not as effective as individual supervision. Nonetheless, the majority of the questionnaires were completed in full and on time, and I have little reason to think that they do not provide at least a first indication of some of the issues relevant to this thesis. Participants were thanked for their time by being given a King-size Mars Bar which in the prison regime was a rare and valued treat, and prison rules prevented any other form of gift.

Some methodological and sampling aims and problems.

1. I did not set out to have equal numbers in the four group (HA, RMC, MA, UA), because at the time I embarked upon this first questionnaire, I only intended it to be a rudimentary exploration of how well my questionnaire methods might be suited to their aims. It was necessary to pay one of the groups of HAs (n=32) and also the group of MAs (n=33) to answer the questionnaire that often took over an hour, and my research budget at that stage did not allow for greater numbers. As for the UAs (n=18) and the other HA group which comprised Royal Marine Commandos, or RMCs (n=14), I was wholly reliant on the goodwill of the high-security institutions that were granting me access to work within them, and it took several months to negotiate the modest access I did have; to go back to double my numbers in each group as I would have like to have done, would have taken another six months to achieve.5

5 I only found funding to allow for my Stage 3 research (i.e. administration of the 2nd Questionnaire and its statistical analysis) nine months later.
2. As was the case with my long-interviews, I was not confident that I would be able to procure sufficient numbers of participants through a method of random probability sampling. Once again, I resorted to snowball and opportunity sampling. Nonetheless, no participants had foreknowledge of my hypotheses, and I have no evidence that my participants were 'unrepresentative' (in a non-statistical sense) of the groups from which they were drawn in a way that could seriously undermine my findings. I was able to achieve an approximate match among the groups for age, (85% of participants were age 18 to 22) but I did not feel motivated to control for gender or socio-economic status or ethnicity as my work was still highly exploratory. My reasoning was that both the MA and HA groups were attending provincial English universities, and so I felt able to presume some broad cultural and environmental similarities in their present and formative environments. Whereas, to seek out MA and HA individuals from a socio-economic background similar to that of the UAs, would have been methodologically difficult and not necessarily appropriate at this early stage of concept-building.

3. A questionnaire method is appropriate for highly literate groups such as my HA and MA who are more accustomed to distilling their ideas into neat and tidy tick-a-box responses for concentrated periods of up to an hour. With hindsight, I fear it was far less suitable for UAs even when assisted one to one.

4. I attempted to arrange distribution of the inventory among convicted youngsters who were on probation and so not subject to the strictures of the prison environment which I anticipated could be a powerful variable influencing their responses. However, my attempts were in vain, on account of the work-load and low morale among the Probation Services. I approached four County Heads of Probation, all of whom declined my request to distribute among their clients the inventory and its stamped addressed envelope. I also wanted to have more women young offenders, but arranging access to women's prisons proved impossible for me to achieve within the time available.
3.4.3 The 2nd Questionnaire

The purposes of the 2nd Questionnaire

The objects of administering this 2nd Questionnaire (contained in Appendix E) were five-fold:

- To deploy an answer-format that allowed for factor analysis

- To provide sufficient numbers to allow for statistical tests

- To explore the concepts of Occupational Identity, Careers Guidance and Mentorship that had apparently emerged from my previous work.

- To control for possible gender effects

- To compare the Short Imaginal Processes Inventory and the Eysenck Personality Questionnaire-Revised against the results from the 2nd questionnaire, to see to what extent they might be measuring over-lapping concepts.6

The 2nd Questionnaire and the participants who completed it

My four hypotheses were further explored with the mostly quantitative questions from a 75-minute and 100 item self-completion questionnaire called Insider Information (that was a direct evolutionary descendent of the 1st Questionnaire). The new question structure was based on a 0 to 6 Likert-scale format to better enable factor-analysis, and this questionnaire was distributed among a further 140 young men, comprising:

- 50 UA individuals aged 17 to 21. These were all Imprisoned Young Offenders serving sentences of at least one year, who were individually assisted with filling-in the questionnaire. This group also completed the

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6 The EPQ-R and SIPI were stipulated as revisions by the first two Examiners of the first version of this thesis. The questionnairing of 50 HAs and 50 UAs was also a stipulation, but I added the 42 MA participants because I felt this theoretically 'middle' achievement group promised to help me make more sense of the findings, as explained in 3.4.1.
Short Imaginal Processes Inventory (Huba et al 1980) and also the 106 item EPQ-R. (Eysenck and Eysenck, 1990).

- 42 MA individuals aged 18 to 21 who had grades sufficient to earn them a place at a university typically requiring on average 2 'C' grades for entry to their courses. These individuals did not self-report any extra-curricular high-achievements that by my criteria might elevate them to my HA group.

- 50 HA individuals aged 18 to 21 from Oxford and Cambridge Colleges which require at least 3 'A' grades for entry to their courses. This group also completed the Short Imaginal Processes Inventory (ibid.) and also the 106 item EPQ-R. (ibid)

Further notes on sampling

1. During analysis, 6 MA and 2 HA questionnaires were discarded because there were strong indications that completion was rushed and insufficiently considered.

2. All three groups were non-random samples gathered by snowball and convenience methods. The HAs had been procured by my standing in a College gateway and soliciting passing students who had to demonstrate their eligibility with their ID cards. The MA students were found in the lunch time cafeteria of a provincial university; the UAs were boys serving prison sentences on the inmate wings of a young offender institution. I have no reason to believe that any significant number of these participants were seriously unrepresentative of the larger body of young people in the institutions from which they were drawn, nor that they had any prior knowledge of my hypotheses.

3. HAs and MAs were paid circa £8 for completing the questionnaires, and UAs were given a chocolate bar as described above.

4. I did not consider it would be useful to either party to tell my MA participants that they would be allotted to a so called 'moderate-achievement' group. I reasoned that their names and that of their
university are not disclosed in my study, and I simply explained to my participants that they were contributing to an understanding of young people's lives so as to help design intervention programmes to help other young people growing up (such as, for instance, my Trail-Blazers project at Feltham Young Offenders Institution). I felt there was no compelling ethical reason to detail my precise hypotheses either to my participants or those heads of institutions who permitted access. I did not believe that individuals were put at serious or likely risk by my interviews, nor that they were being misled as to the ultimate intention of my work.

3.4.4 The validity of the above self-report research methodologies

"Validity is never demonstrated, only made more likely"

(Bernard, 1995:42)

In this section, I use validity to refer to the trustworthiness and accuracy of my instruments, my criteria, my data and my constructs.

Potential threats to the validity of my questionnaire data

For at least the following reasons, the validity of my data may be suspect:

1. Participants may have deliberately held back on especially private but pertinent information that they felt unwilling to disclose. As Freud wrote: "The adult... is ashamed of his phantasies and hides them from other people. He cherishes his phantasies as his most intimate possessions ... he believes he is the only person who invents such phantasies and has no idea that creations of this kind are widespread among other people" (cited in Person, 1997: 8).

2. Participants may have selectively recalled, or may have been confused as to the real issues in their lives. Furthermore, even if I assume that

7 Please note that the Findings sections of my thesis will offer further evidence and theory concerning validity.
individuals were describing the events of their life with some accuracy, their explanation of those events is a more subjective matter. Their evidence was garnered solely from personal accounts of unobservable cognitive processes which are by their very nature nebulous and difficult to measure, and might easily be mistaken or misjudged even by an earnest participant.

3. Participants may have been attempting to deceive or ‘image-manage’.

4. It is hard to judge in what mood and what degree of thoughtfulness a participant completed a questionnaire, whereas a one-to-one interview very often encourages focus of attention and a judgement can be made on such issues as commitment to the topic under investigation.

5. With questionnaire items, there is scope for multiple interpretations of the same item.

6. Unless questionnaires are completed in a supervised situation, the researcher cannot be sure that the intended participant has actually filled it in himself or herself, rather than perhaps having a friend take over the job. This possibility is particularly problematic when dealing with young participants who are being paid.

With greater resources, I could have attempted to corroborate the self-report data by cross-referencing with the participants’ close friends, supervisors, or institutional records. Denzin (1970) advocates this form of ‘triangulation’, i.e. using different methods and different groups of participants to better view the problem. However, by generally accepted psychometric criteria of validity, self-reports are regarded as valid (see Huizinga and Elliott, 1986), although retrospective self-reports covering long periods of ten years or more are thought to be less accurate (Yarrow et al, 1970). More recently, Rutter et al. state that “Self-report studies have a significant role to play in building a picture of the nature of adolescent offending.” They elaborate: “despite being open to a range of biases such as variations in memory and honesty, self-report methods were generally reliable and valid”. They state further that “the results from a range of studies generally concur, particularly in terms of the frequency of delinquent acts and of the differences between delinquents and non-delinquents” (1998: 41-42).
Chapter 3: Methodology

There is also some specific support for the likely validity of retrospective self-report of private experiences. After 20 years of extensive research in the field of daydreams, Singer writes “It has seemed increasingly clear that people will answer rather reliably and, within limits, veridically, questions about their frequency or types of daydreaming” (1975: 42). It is pertinent, too, that in 1980, Hurlburt (cited in Singer and Bonnano, 1990) reported significant correlations between the retrospective questionnaire scales that measured ‘frequency of daydreaming’ and the accumulated daily self-reports of daydreaming that were based on 2 days of random interruptions produced by an electronic pager.

The potential strengths of the questionnaire methodology

I felt that self-administered questionnaires might have advantages which could supplement and complement the exploratory long-interviews that were at the heart of my hypothesis-generation and exploration. I regarded my two self-report, self-completion questionnaires as particularly useful because:

1. They were an economic use of my research time and budget in procuring convincing numbers of participant responses.

2. Less-desirable traits were more likely to be self-reported under the unthreatening conditions of an anonymous questionnaire.

3. Questionnaires were likely to reduce ‘researcher-bias’.

4. Questionnaires seemed more suitable for batteries of questions.

5. By including some open-ended questions which invited participants to generate their own examples or ideas, I hoped to assess their level of engagement with a theme or line of questioning, and even to procure concepts that the research had not anticipated.

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8 See also Bernard (1995) and Dillmann (1978).
Instrument validity

1. The language used in the research schedules and the self-report inventories, the definitions of my terms and the neologisms I used had been hammered out and dry-run during my MPhil research, and seemed particularly accessible and acceptable to my participants in later research.

2. All of the groups were given the same self-report instruments and so shortcomings in the instruments themselves were unlikely to cause relative differences between the groups.

Construct validity

So as to relate my own constructs to previously established ones that might bear relevance to my hypotheses, in the final stage of my research I deployed the revised EPQ and the SIPI, and asked several questions regarding Locus of Control and Self-Esteem which seemed likely to be relevant to my own concepts.

3.5 overall discussion of my research methodology

3.5.1 Two potentially valuable methodologies that I chose not to use

I considered using ESM (The Experiencing Sampling Method) which requires participants to carry bleepers which sound at random intervals, at which point the carrier is required to answer some simple questions, typically relating to their state of mind. ESM is an elaborate and relatively expensive method, but is certainly a means by which we could access information about focus of attention with less likelihood of memory distortion, though it does not eliminate post-hoc rationalisation or reservations about disclosing extremely sensitive material and committing it to record. It is notable, for
instance, that daydreams and fantasies are not even mentioned in Csikszentmihalyi et al’s (1997) extensive and intensive use of ESM among their *Talented Teenagers*.

Reading autobiographies of eminent young adults also promises to be a very useful and cost-efficient technique of investigation for a research psychologist, and was a method deployed most notably by V. and M. and G. Goertzel (1962; 1978) by Gardner (1996) and by Howe (1990). However, having read one such biography, that of General Sir Peter de la Billiere (1995), *Looking for Trouble*, I decided that the ten or more extremely absorbing hours it can take to read such a book may only return a handful of valuable lines because my own specialist areas of interest are likely to be mentioned so rarely.

### 3.5.2 Limitations to the conclusions possible from the methodology deployed in this thesis

No part of the research programme undertaken as part of this thesis was hypothesis-testing. One need only reflect upon the nature of the data gathered to appreciate its inherent weaknesses as potential evidence for hypotheses:

- a small, non-random sample;

- Cross-sectional retrospective self-report interview data untriangulated by peers or parents or official records;

- largely unsupervised self-completion questionnaires.

Even if the data are taken to represent the valid reporting of real phenomena, it is generally agreed in science that it is very difficult to distinguish with any confidence whether a feature is a symptom or a cause, or the product of, or catalyst for a range of interactive or sequential effects (Farrington, 1997; Rutter and Smith, 1995). Cross-sectional studies such as the one that I have conducted can at best demonstrate correlations between levels of one factor and levels of another. At worst, even though my own thesis may offer significant co-variations in the results, these may simply be a product of systematic distortions in the data-gathering process rather than illustrative of
actual phenomena. What is eventually needed to test my more developed hypotheses is a sufficiently large-scale prospective, longitudinal experimental design with random-sampled groups.

3.5.3 Seven desiderata which would have considerably improved my empirical research design

With the benefit of hindsight, I now consider that certain measures would have promised more credible data, and would have been logistically feasible had I not felt such a sense of urgency to embark upon the research:

1. At the outset of the research, I was insufficiently aware of some very relevant studies and theories, largely because the absence in the British literature concerning my target features and groups led me to presume, naively, that American literature would be as sparse. I was so impatient to embark upon my own fieldwork that I did not allot enough time to learn from other people’s methodologies.

2. Monitoring the socio-economic background of at least the MA and HA groups might have made for interesting post-hoc comparisons, even if controlling for this factor was not theoretically justified bearing in mind the exploratory nature of the work.

3. The ideal way of administering the questionnaires would have been to supervise their completion individually, to provide for some explanation and encouragement from the interviewer. This was only achieved with the imprisoned young offenders on the 2nd questionnaire.

4. In terms of reliability, neither of the long-questionnaires was re-tested on the same participant, so I do not know the reliability of participants’ responses over time. I need not have tested all of the times for reliability, a few representative questions would have been sufficient.

5. Although I attempted to measure Locus of Control and Self-Esteem with my own self-devised items (on account of their hypothetical relevance to my target-issues), it would have been better to have used short,
standardised questionnaires designed for the purpose (e.g. Rotter 1966; Rosenberg 1979, respectively).

6. I would like to have had a full sample of 50 non-academic HAs, such as Royal Marine Commandos.

7. I would like to have conducted a greater number of long-interviews with imprisoned young offenders (UAs) since they responded better to this method of inquiry than to questionnaires.

A note regarding my data analysis

'Methods of data analysis' are discussed in section 4.3, where it immediately precedes my first 'Results Section', and where I hope it will be most useful for my reader.
Chapter 4

‘Relationship with Reality’
A Personality Dimension Proposed
Contents of Chapter 4

4.1 The proposal of a psycho-social model of a personality dimension that I call 'Relationship with Reality'

4.2 Overview of the specialist literature relevant to the proposed 'Relationship with Reality' personality dimension

4.3 Overview of my methods of data analysis

4.4 Findings and discussion as regards the proposed 'Relationship with Reality' personality dimension

4.5 The proposed relationship between the four psycho-social factors explored in this thesis
4.1 The proposal of a psycho-social model of a personality dimension that I call ‘Relationship with Reality’

Contents of Section 4.1

4.1.1 Introduction

4.1.2 Overview of my model of the Relationship with Reality personality dimension

4.1.3 Category 1: Anti-Reality traits

- Reality-Disengaging cognitions
- Reality-Disengaging behaviours
- Notes on Anti-Reality traits
- How Anti-Reality traits might result in negative individual effects
- Important caveat to this theory
- The possible addictive nature of Anti-Reality traits

4.1.4 Anti-Reality traits may meet the criteria for the diagnosis of a personality disorder

- Comparisons with the ‘avoidant personality’
- Comparisons with schizoid (and schizotypal) and passive-aggressive personalities
- Conclusion on the comparison with well-recognised personality disorders

4.1.5 Category 2: Pro-Reality traits

- Reality-Investing cognitions
- Reality-Investing behaviours
- Reality-Investing motivators
- Caveat to the above

4.1.6 Category 3: Ineffective Engagements with Reality

- Short-term Reality-Improvement cognitions
- Short-term Reality-Improvement behaviours

4.1.7 Localised deficits in an individual’s Relationship with Reality

4.1.8 The model of Relationship with Reality in graphical form

4.1.9 Four levels on which Relationship with Reality might relate to an individual’s well-being
4.1.1 Introduction

My hypothesis 1a proposes that there is an inter-related group of cognitive and behavioural traits which can be conceived of as forming a distinctive personality dimension that I term Relationship with Reality. In this chapter, I detail this hypothetical model and suggest how such a concept might help illuminate the inner-life dynamics not only of those adolescents and young adults who lead lives over-shadowed by chronic under-achievement, chemical-addiction, delinquency and serious crime, but also those who apparently lead highly successful and satisfying personal, educational and professional lives.

I present my model as a purely hypothetical proposition which I went on to investigate with my long-interviews and questionnaires. The model was derived from my first-hand observations and informal interviews conducted during the years in which I worked as a tutor for young people. The model is introduced at this stage in the thesis so as to facilitate my attempt to locate it within the specific literature most relevant to its major tenets presented in Section 4.2.1

4.1.2 Overview of my model of the Relationship with Reality personality dimension.

This psycho-social model proposes a personality dimension comprised of a range of consciously and wilfully generated ‘thinking-types and observable behaviours’ which can be usefully discriminated by their content, intention and eventual outcome so as to determine an individual’s Relationship with Reality i.e. whether the individual is reality-oriented and perhaps even reality-investing, or whether he or she is attempting to distort or escape his or her experience of reality.

1Building on my Cambridge M.Phil. thesis, (Baylis, 1995) I presented a first prototype paper proposing this personality dimension at the Annual BPS Legal and Criminological Psychology Conference in York, September 1996. Thenafter, I am grateful for the critiques of this prototype by Professors Michael Argyle, Hans Eysenck, David Farrington, Jerome L. Singer, Donald J. West, and Mr. Graham Towl, and am particularly thankful for a most painstaking review by Professor Ron Blackburn. I went on to present a more developed version of the paper at the British Criminology Conference at Queen’s University, Belfast, in July 1997.
My classification of thought identifies eight main types (which will be discussed and illustrated throughout this chapter):2

1. Pure Fantasy
2. Wishful Daydreaming about the future
3. Day-to-day Problem Solving
4. Imaginative Rehearsal
5. Step-by-step Planning
6. Worrying about the future
7. Reminiscing
8. Regretting the past

Though this list is of my own invention, there are good precedents for classifying ‘thinking’ in different ways: for instance, de Bono (1970) has written about ‘lateral thinking’ as distinct from critical and analytic thinking; and Sternberg (1996) has proposed distinctions between practical, analytic, and creative thinking. I will discuss in Section 4.4 how, in any consideration or classification of ‘thought-types’, there are several characteristics that may be highly relevant in assessing it, such as the duration and intensity of a thought, and I acknowledge that one weakness of my present model is the importance it apparently attributes to the ‘quantity’ of a thought-type.

In my Relationship with Reality model, I also propose that a wide range of behaviours can be usefully classified as ‘Pro- or Anti-Reality’ according to their content, the intention with which they are used, and their eventual real-

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2 I use the terms ‘thinking-type’ and ‘thought-type’ synonymously.
3 These fantasies are consciously generated mental images and narratives that are not delusional or hallucinatory. I.e. the individual is fully aware of their unreality.
4 A possible short-coming in my model is that my list of thinking-types notably does not include ‘listening and conversation and debate’, though these perhaps could theoretically be subsumed under ‘day-to-day problem solving’ as one tries to interpret and respond to another person’s voice and ideas. Similarly, wandering and unfocused thinking is unaccounted for.
life outcome. I go on to argue that there can also be ‘Ineffective Engagements with Reality’ which is a category of thought characterised by such things as unrealistic planning, worrying, regret, and also behaviours that bring only short-term improvements but longer-term deficits. I also suggest that individuals can suffer deficits (in their Relationship with Reality) that are localised in particular arenas of their lives. Furthermore, I advocate that there can be severe manifestations of the Anti-Reality personality syndrome, which would meet the criteria for it being defined as a personality disorder distinct from other presently recognised disorders. However, the model regards an individual’s Relationship with Reality as amenable to education, rather than psychiatric intervention, except in the most extreme cases.

A graphical model will be suggested, which combines a rudimentary assessment of an individual’s cognitive and behavioural traits so as to calculate his or her position on a single linear dimension (see figure 4C in sub-section 4.2.8).

My hypothetical model divides thinking-types and behaviours into three main categories according to their Relationship with Reality. Table 4A illustrates the thinking types and behaviours which most characterise these three categories listed below:

### Category 1: Anti-Reality Personality Traits
- Reality-Disengaging Cognitions
- Reality-Disengaging Behaviours

### Category 2: Pro-Reality Personality Traits
- Reality-Investing Cognitions
- Reality-Investing Behaviours

### Category 3: Ineffective Engagements with Reality
- Short-Term Reality-Improvement Cognitions
- Short-Term Reality-Improvement Behaviours
Table 4A: This table collates characteristic thinking-types and behaviours into three main categories according to their Relationship with Reality.

**Anti-Reality Traits**
(intended to distort, diminish, or escape one’s experience of reality.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reality-Disengaging Cognitions</th>
<th>Reality-Disengaging Behaviours</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pure Fantasies that are never attempted</td>
<td>Listening to Music</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wishful Daydreams that never happen</td>
<td>Consuming fiction (e.g. tv, novels)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Abusing reality-disengaging substances</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Pro-Reality Traits**
(intended to improve longer-term reality)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reality-Investing Cognitions</th>
<th>Reality-Investing Behaviours</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Day-to-day Problem Solving</td>
<td>Confronting and negotiating problems</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Step-by-Step Planning</td>
<td>Educational regimes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Imaginative Rehearsal</td>
<td>Health regimes (nutrition and exercise)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wishful daydreams eventually achieved</td>
<td>(+ Reality-Investment Motivators: music, stimulants, and fiction)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pure Fantasies eventually attempted</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Ineffective Engagements with Reality**
(cognitions and behaviours which engage with reality but in a way that is likely to compromise or jeopardise longer-term reality.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Short-Term Reality-Improvement Cognitions</th>
<th>Short-Term Reality-Improvement Behaviours</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Long-Term plans that are not attempted</td>
<td>Mood-enhancing substance abuse</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Worry</td>
<td>Comfort-eating, anorexia, bulimia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regret</td>
<td>Excessive masturbation or promiscuity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shame</td>
<td>Steroid abuse</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reminiscing</td>
<td>Impulsive gambling, crime, violence</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
4.1.3 Category 1: Anti-Reality Traits

I hypothesise that there are two main types of personality traits, and these are ‘cognitions’ and ‘behaviour’. From this premise, I argue that Anti-Reality traits can comprise both, and I describe them in detail below:

**Reality-Disengaging Cognitions**

These are the most distinctive trait of the Anti-Reality Personality and comprise cognitive activities bound by a common purpose: withdrawal from or distortion of reality. I propose that the two key features of this very commonly maladaptive trait are:

1. **Wishful Daydreaming**
   Wishful Daydreaming is looking forward to something that one fully intends to try to make happen at some stage. It is characterised by only thinking how good it will feel when the goal is achieved, without consideration for the ‘step-by-step planning’ that will be needed to make the daydream a reality. An example of Wishful Daydreaming might be thinking how good it will feel to drive the particular type of car one intends to have one day, but without troubling to plan how one will afford it. (Sleep-dreams are excluded from my model as I would argue they are not so obviously under conscious control as daydreams.)

2. **Pure Fantasy**
   Pure Fantasy are those stories one creates about something that one does not expect nor intend will ever happen, and which one has no plans to actualise. The thought simply provides pleasure in itself. An example of a Pure Fantasy might be fantasising about dating a film star or being a famous astronaut.

**Reality-Disengaging Behaviours**

These are the second category of Anti-Reality traits. These behaviours can be considered to have the specific intention of stimulating fantasy and/or

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5 I use ‘hopeful’ and ‘wishful’ daydreaming synonymously.
blocking-out reality, i.e. promoting Reality-Disengaging Cognitions. These behavioural activities might characteristically include:

1. **The consumption of specifically reality-disengaging psychoactive substances** such as marijuana, heroin and LSD.

2. **The consumption of fiction products** (these could also be described as ‘fantasy derivatives’) such as novels, pornography, fiction-films, videos, television, and fantasy games (board or computer).

3. **The use of music** (particularly when the individual takes increased measures to isolate himself or herself from the environment, by using headphones for instance).

**Notes on Anti-Reality traits**

1. All of the above Reality-Disengaging Behaviours have the power to prompt, facilitate, fuel and enhance fantasies, perhaps even sculpt the details of their themes.

2. Attempting suicide could perhaps be considered as the most extreme form of anti-reality behaviour.

3. A special note on fiction: I do not wish to imply that there is a clear divide between fiction and non-fiction products, or that one is in some way ‘healthier’ than the other. Jane Austen’s *Emma* (1816) or the Thomas Harris (1988) thriller *Silence of the Lambs* are commonly referred to as fiction, but may arguably be far more instructive about real-world human relationships than a less accomplished so-called non-fiction book that peddles un-enlightening psychology. However, such a debate need not muddy the essential thrust of my larger theory which is concerned only with:
   a) the *intention* with which the user consumes the product (i.e. whether to provide insights into reality, or an escape from reality).
   b) the *eventual effect* of those products on that consumer’s relationship with reality, i.e. whether the fiction enhances the reality or impoverishes it. Storr made this same assertion about the nature of fiction:
when a great writer like Tolstoy uses his imagination to tell a story... we rightly suppose that his phantasies are connecting with external reality and illuminating that reality for us. On the other hand, we recognise that the phantasies of lesser writers... have little to do with the real world and may, indeed, be no more than an attempt to escape from it (1988: 67-68).

How Anti-Reality traits might result in negative individual effects

More specific characteristics of Anti-Reality traits, and their possible maladaptive affects on the individual, are as follows:

1. The individual’s ability to negotiate reality could be atrophied by the amount of time being spent in the comparatively resistance-free and compliant thinking environment of fantasy. Similarly, the amount of time spent away from more constructive, Pro-Reality behaviours might diminish the individual’s real-life efficiency and achievements. A possible result of the above, is that while the individual’s real-life stagnates, his or her fantasy existence evolves. This leads to a vicious spiral, because as the fantasy world becomes more extreme, idealistic, and unattainable, by contrast, real-life becomes less and less adequate, and so feelings of poor self-esteem and dissatisfaction are heightened. The individual feels handcuffed to reality, and trapped inside a body and personality which he or she perceives as inadequate. The individual attempts to ease this emotional pain by ever more extreme fantasies, and so the cycle perpetuates itself.

2. The individual’s real-life may be left ‘rudderless’ and unmotivated, because the essential desires that would otherwise orientate and inspire real-life activities are being partially met in fantasy worlds. The likely result is that real-life can drift in inappropriate and unsatisfying directions.

3. If an attempt is made to play-out extreme fantasy scenarios, this may elicit strong social and legal censure (as in the case of violence or sexual deviance).

In a personal correspondence (1996), Michael Argyle wondered whether ‘artistic pursuits’ would be classed as ‘Anti-Reality’. They would not. I would argue that ‘art’ attempts to inform us about and illuminate our reality.
Important caveat to this theory

My thesis does not suggest that Anti-Reality traits explain every instance of the behaviours or cognitions I describe, only that the Relationship with Reality theory offers another possible interpretation of certain phenomena.

The possible addictive nature of Anti-Reality traits

When Anti-Reality traits are compared with alcohol-dependency or other drug abuse, there appear to be key features in common (see American Psychiatric Association, 1994): psycho-social stress is the likely precipitant; many traits are socially acceptable though maladaptive; dependency and tolerance can develop; there is considerable deterioration in social, physical and economic functioning; the behavioural and/or cognitive syndrome can grow to dominate the individual’s life. Thus, this model proposes that it can be helpful to conceive of fantasy, and its related derivatives in fiction, as having the potential of an addictive drug, one capable of behaving like a poison if sufficiently toxic themes and quantities of fantasy or fiction are pursued by a vulnerable individual.

4.1.4 Anti-Reality traits may meet the criteria for the diagnosis of a personality disorder

(The letters ‘PD’ are used below to stand for personality disorder.)

Mild or temporary traits of an Anti-Reality nature, and the manifestation of several traits of the syndrome, seem to be common to many people’s range of life-coping strategies. Theories of personality disorders commonly accept that it is only the degree and frequency of traits that distinguish the normal from the maladaptive (e.g. Dowson and Grounds, 1995; Haggerty et al., 1990).

According to the DSM-IV (American Psychiatric Association, 1994), for any psychological phenomenon to be described as a personality disorder, it must fulfil several key criteria, which I précis here as:
Chapter 4: 'Relationship with Reality'
4.1 Proposed model

- The disorder's effect on cognition, impulse control and interpersonal functioning must bring about serious subjective distress or impairment in one or more areas of the individual's life (e.g. occupational or social life).

- Cognitive and behavioural life-coping strategies must deviate markedly from the expectations of the individual's culture.

- This maladaptive pattern of motivated behaviour in perceiving, relating to and thinking about the environment and oneself must constitute the dominant feature of the clinical condition, be pervasive across a broad range of social situations, and endure for at least a year and more often several years.

- The condition must be manifest at least by early adulthood, and be traceable back to adolescence or early childhood.

Though I recognise that Anti-Reality may at times be a neurotic state, i.e. one that is transient and in response to a specific life-event (for instance, being held hostage in severe conditions), I hypothesise that Anti-Reality can be a full personality disorder: emerging in adolescence, highly debilitating, pervasive in all aspects of a person's life albeit in varying degrees of severity, and enduring for well over a year and more commonly many years well into adulthood.

Putting the above claim in the context of the entire gamut of personality disorders, it is widely agreed that the frequency is about "10% for significantly maladaptive personality disorder in adult samples of the (general) population" (Dowson and Grounds, 1995: 156). However, in their preface to that text, the authors note the lack of acknowledgement paid by the psychological professions to personality disorders: "The long-term patterns of problem-behaviour that form personality disorders are part of the major classification of disease, but they have a generally unrecognised importance in clinical practice. These disorders are the origins of many medical consultations and social ills, perhaps associated with self-harm, suicide, neglect of children, criminality, alcohol and drug abuse, HIV transmission and 'accidents'."
Comparisons with the ‘Avoidant Personality’

It could be argued that the so-called Anti-Reality PD is no more than a mild form of Avoidant Personality, i.e. a sub-set of an already diagnosed disorder. I acknowledge some partial similarities between the Anti-Reality PD and Avoidant PD, also known as Anxious PD (American Psychiatric Association, 1994), and the similarities I identify are the likelihood of:

- very low self-esteem, self-contempt and acute feelings of inadequacy
- inhibition in forming close interpersonal relations because of feelings of inadequacy and suspecting that people look down on one or disapprove
- self-consciousness
- anxiety and depression related to all three of the above

Nonetheless, I propose that there exist four crucial distinctions which suggest that Avoidant and Anti-Reality PDs can usefully be regarded as two separate disorders. These distinctions are as follows:

1. There is no actual or desired social withdrawal in Anti-Reality PD, yet it is social withdrawal that most characterises the Avoidant personality. The Anti-Reality individual may have well-developed social acquaintances, and appear comfortable and urbane in social situations. However, this person’s smile is merely ‘the mask of normality.’

2. The Anti-Reality personality is best characterised by an extensive use of fantasy and daydreaming, though the maladaptive extent in terms of their frequency, duration, themes and intensity is hidden from even their closest friends, family and clinicians. This flight into fantasy is not simply an orientation or a preference, but it is akin to an addiction, and the relief and euphoria it provides may indeed be physiologically based, as well as psychological. In contrast, the literature on Avoidant Personality (see DSM-IV; Dowson and Grounds 1996) does not mention the cognitive faculties of fantasy and daydreaming as key features.

3. The DSM-IV definitions of Avoidant personality do not incorporate in their construct the host of behavioural activities that so often characterise the Anti-Reality individual.

7 A term I gratefully derive from Cleckley’s (1941) clinical study of psychopathy, ‘The Mask of Sanity’.

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4. Another important distinction is worth noting: though both the Avoidant personality and the Anti-Reality personality feel painfully inadequate, the Anti-Reality personality may very well feel inadequate in comparison to their own invented and very impressive fantasy persona (as opposed to any real-life person), and their response to this sense of inadequacy is not only social withdrawal, it is further escape into fantasy and fiction.

In summary of the above section, I argue that the clinical definition of Avoidant personality simply overlaps with some of the defining characteristics of the Anti-Reality personality, and I discuss the implications of this further in this section.

**Comparisons with Schizoid (and Schizotypal) and Passive-Aggressive personalities**

The Schizoid (and schizotypal) PD also involves a preoccupation with an internal world of cognitive processes which may include fantasy, but there are no other comparable symptoms, and fantasy is never described as the key feature of those disorders. Moreover, DSM-IV proposes that the essential features of schizoid PD are a pervasive pattern of indifference to social relationships and a restricted range of emotional experience and expression. In consideration of this issue, Singer concluded that, "social withdrawal is not necessarily the same thing as the development of an elaborate fantasy life" (1976: 182). I strongly agree with Singer's criteria for distinction, and my own model can readily conceive of a high-fantasist personality (i.e. Anti-Reality) who is also highly-extrovert.

There are also some similarities between the Anti-Reality and Passive-Aggressive PD, which is characterised by its "pattern of passive resistance to external demands... resulting in poor performance both socially and occupationally" (Dowson and Grounds, 1995: 101). Here, however, the difference is that the Anti-Reality individual reacts against an unwanted real-life situation in which they feel helpless, *by fleeing into fantasy*, (often a regularly visited and highly familiar fantasy), while apparently acquiescing to real-life demands, albeit with lack-lustre and reduced efficiency. There is *not* the protesting against life with angry stubbornness or deliberate sabotage that characterises Passive-Aggressive personalities.
Conclusions regarding the comparisons with well-recognised personality disorders

I note that Dowson and Grounds suggest that there is no ‘gold standard’ for PD criteria and:

although most individuals with PD fulfil criteria for more than one PD, many such individuals show predominant features (i.e. those judged to cause the most problems) that relate to just one PD diagnosis (1995: 44). 8

In respect of their statement, I suggest that although there might be some overlap with a number of other disorders, Anti-Reality syndrome can certainly constitute the over-riding feature of a person’s maladaptive syndrome. 9 Chapter 4.4 proposes reasons for this phenomenon being ignored hitherto, and suggests how this theory is distinct from but interwoven with better recognised theories of delinquency, personality and achievement. However, before I embark upon such, I will outline and illustrate the Pro-Reality personality.

8My own work also suggests that histrionic or narcissistic traits may often co-occur with Anti-Reality traits.
9Please note that my concept bears no relation to the so-called Reality-Oriented Training which is presently used with people suffering Senile Dementia (DSM IV, American Psychiatric Association, 1994).
4.1.5 Category 2 : Pro-Reality Traits

If you can dream but not make dreams your master
(Rudyard Kipling, 1946)

At the opposite end of the proposed personality dimension from the Anti-Reality personality is the Pro-Reality personality, who deploys a strategy of behaviours and cognitions with the goal of Reality-Improvement through Reality-Investment. ¹⁰

Reality-Investing Cognitions

These include:

1. General Day to Day Problem-Solving:
   This is simply negotiating the physical, psychological and social demands of everyday life in a way that does not compromise or jeopardise longer-term reality. (For example, resorting to violence to get one’s way in a dispute may offer short-term benefits but very likely harbours longer-term costs; whereas ‘empathetic negotiation’ may offer both short- and long-term benefits.)

2. Imaginative Rehearsal:
   The potency of imagination has long been recognised in Sports Psychology where numerous studies suggest how many of the world’s top athletes deploy focused visualisation and mental rehearsal as a real-life skills-improver (e.g. Suinn, 1976).

3. Step-by-Step Planning that eventually achieves the goal:
   I.e. a goal is targeted, the theoretical route to it is detailed and then put successfully into action, all resulting in the attainment of that goal.

¹⁰Dowson and Grounds (1995) advocate the study of well-adjusted personalities to shed light on maladjusted ones.
4. Wishful Daydreaming that is eventually achieved in real life:
Wishful Daydreaming can be considered adaptive when it is deployed as a
self-motivation to action, and when the daydreams are successfully
pursued through Step-by-Step Planning.

5. Pure Fantasy eventually achieved in real life:
Pure Fantasy tends to be used sparingly, if at all, by the majority of Pro-
Reality individuals, but it can provide an ideal arena in which to generate
and nurture tentative, highly experimental ideas that can then be
selectively elevated from Fantasy to the level of a goal that becomes the
focus of Wishful Daydreams and, subsequently, of successful Longer-Term
Planning. The real-life possibilities of fantasy are suggested by the Nobel
Prize-winning physicist, Max Planck, who asserted in his autobiography
that the pioneer scientist “must have a vivid intuitive imagination, for
new ideas are not generated by deduction, but by an artistically creative
imagination” (1949: 109). Storr, too, acknowledges the tangible and
productive possibilities of fantasy:

In the field of science, there are two kinds of phantasy. The first reaches out
to the external world and, by maintaining a connection with that world...
becomes a fruitful hypothesis. The second, making no such connection with
the external world, is ultimately dismissed as a delusion (1988: 67-68).

Reality-Investing Behaviours

These are the second type of Pro-Reality traits. They are characterised by self-
control and self-discipline, and an ethos of self-preservation and life-
improvement indicated by confronting and negotiating problems, taking part
in education, exercise regimes, and nutritional care. The Pro-Reality lifestyle
might include prosocial and well-developed relationships, although by no
means necessarily. I consider the common factor to all of the above
behaviours to be a good sense of ‘future consequences of present action’.

Reality-Investment Motivators

This is a sub-category of behaviours specifically intended to inspire Reality-
Investment. In this sub-category, it is notable that 1 and 2 below are also to be
found in the list of Anti-Reality behaviours, but the crucial difference is the pro-reality intention behind their use. Some characteristic behaviours in this sub-category are:

1. **Consumption of fiction products** such as books, films, videos and TV.

2. **Consumption of music.** (Consider how the intention of using music in an aerobics class is different from the intention of using music to support an internal fantasy narrative.)

3. **Consumption of cognitive stimulants** such as caffeine.

**Caveat to the above.**

Professor Ron Blackburn (personal correspondence, 1997) noted that this theory, and my research to support it, seemed in danger of over-prizing professional or educational high-accomplishment and seemed to equate it directly with Pro-Reality personalities, as if the former were the only object of the latter. I must stress that this is not by any means necessarily nor exclusively the case. My research methodology used stereotypical high-achieving individuals in education and professional worlds for simplicity's sake, and I fully acknowledge that there are other ways to engage positively and productively with reality - such as achieving good physical health, or a mutually satisfying and positive personal relationship.
4.1.6 Category 3: Ineffective Engagements with Reality

This is the third and final distinctive domain of the Relationship with Reality personality dimension. This is the theoretical middle-ground between Anti- and Pro-Reality activities, and is comprised of Short-Term Reality-Improvement Behaviours and Cognitions, whose key defining factor is that they compromise or jeopardise the well-being of the individual in the longer-term.

Short-Term Reality Improvement Cognitions

These might be characterised by the following types of thinking, which make the individual feel better at the time, but do harm in the longer-term:

1. **Longer-Term Planning that fails to achieve its goal:**
   It can be hard to decide when to conclude that a longer-term plan has failed, because some plans are on a ‘slow fuse’, or the individual has deployed ‘strategic postponement’. However, I would define this category as when the individual has stopped any further attempts to implement the plan, and harbours no firm intentions of revitalising it.

2. **Wishful Daydreams that are attempted but fail:**
   This type of thinking, like 1 above, demonstrates a willingness of spirit to engage with reality, but this spirit is manifest in the pursuit of unrealistic, unachievable goals and/or insufficient route-plans towards them. Such thinking is, at its best, a serious misjudgement of reality and, at worst, simply a form of self-deceit.

3. **Worry (a state of ineffective anxiety about future possibilities):**
   My model suggests that if worry is not monitored and actively curtailed by the thinker, it can exclude more useful and adaptive thinking strategies such as problem-solving and planning. Worry can demoralise an individual and so make positive, proactive endeavours less likely. Whereas a certain amount of anxiety for the future, and remorse at lost opportunities or mistakes in the past, can be highly motivating, too much of these highly active ingredients quickly becomes debilitating.
4. Regret and Shame

'Regret' may be for things done or not done; and 'shame' could be regarded as a type of regret. My theory acknowledges that regret and shame in appropriate doses may be highly motivating and educative, but they also have the potential to assume a malign frequency or intensity.

5. Reminiscing:11

An individual reminiscing about real events in his or her past life, can be a wholly benign pursuit and one of life's very great pleasures; but if, for instance, one is recalling a long-past love-affair to the serious detriment of one's on-going and future interpersonal relationships, then reminiscing can be rightly termed by my criteria a 'short-term reality improvement cognition'.

The potentially inhibiting effect of all four of the above potentially 'ineffective thinking styles' on the individual's achievements cannot be over-emphasised. Real-life is certainly being thought about, but to little good effect as regards my Pro-Reality criteria. I should reiterate that I do not suggest that all instances of reminiscing or worry or regret are 'ineffective', only that such thoughts have the potential of being so.

Short-Term Reality-Improvement Behaviours

These are the second type of Ineffective Engagement with Reality (i.e. behaviours which bring about or promise temporary or perceived improvements which only serve to compromise or jeopardise longer-term reality). They are characterised by three types of behaviour:

1. The quick-fix that makes reality feel better in the short term:
   a) the abuse of mood-enhancing substances (such as alcohol, Ecstasy or Speed.)
   b) other addictive behaviours including comfort-eating, excessive masturbation, and promiscuous sexual relations.

11 In my 1st and 2nd questionnaires, I use the term 'pleasurable remembering' rather than 'reminiscing' in an attempt to make the terminology of my research readily understandable across all my research groups.
2. Behaviours that create the *temporary illusion* of reality being better than it is, for example exaggerating or lying to others.

3. Activities that promise to deliver very rapid improvements in reality. For example:
   a) the abuse of body-building steroids
   b) anorexia and bulimia
c) *impulsive* gambling
d) *impulsive* crime
e) *impulsive* violence

### 4.1.7 Localised deficits in an individual’s Relationship with Reality.

My model proposes that a common phenomenon associated with the Anti-Reality syndrome is an individual displaying Pro-Reality traits in some arenas of life (e.g. academic and working life), but Anti-Reality traits or Ineffective Engagement traits in other arenas (e.g. sexual and romantic life). Such a phenomenon would not classify as a personality disorder, but would be what this model would term a ‘localised deficit’. I suggest that an individual could achieve very highly in some arenas of their life, yet still demonstrate strong anti-reality traits in other life arenas.

### 4.1.8 The model of Relationship With Reality in graphical form

In Figure 4.B, I attempt to conceptualise the Relationship with Reality personality dimension by using two axes upon which an individual’s behaviour and cognitions may be plotted.

**The vertical axis represents behaviour:**
The lower half of this axis indicates Reality-Disengaging Behaviour.
The upper half of the axis indicates Reality-Investing Behaviour.

**The horizontal axis represents cognitions:**
The left half of this axis indicates Reality-Disengaging Cognitions. The right half of the axis indicates Reality-Investing Cognitions.
Figure 4B: A model of the two axes that comprise an individual's Relationship with Reality (Baylis, 1996).
An explanation of the quadrants A, B, C and D:

Although our Relationship with Reality is no guarantee of 'life-outcome', and a 'positive' Relationship with Reality is not necessarily synonymous with an exclusively 'reality-oriented' approach to life, my theory suggests the following correlations: that all those in quadrants B and D are more likely to be 'under-achieving' relative to their own physical and cognitive capacities; and this will be particularly true of those in quadrant C. On the other hand, individuals located in quadrant A would be more likely to be accomplished. I detail these hypothetical relationships below:

Quadrant A: Reality-Investing cognitions and behaviour. This combination will maximally promote the likelihood of accomplishment.

Quadrant B: Reality-Investing cognitions but Reality-Disengaging behaviour. This individual is not putting into practice his or her ideas and plans, and therefore is more likely to under-achieve.

Quadrant C: Reality-Disengaging cognitions and behaviour. This individual is not engaging with reality on either level, on account of which the quality of his or her reality is more likely to atrophy.

Quadrant D: Reality-Disengaging cognitions but Reality-Investing behaviour. This individual is acting without thinking and so reduces his or her likelihood of success.

By adding the notional scores of the individual on the above two axes, we can locate her/him on this single, linear personality dimension (fig: 4C):

The Anti-Reality ___________________________ The Pro-Reality Personality Personality

Fig. 4C: The Relationship with Reality Personality Dimension

As a caveat to the above, Section 4.4 suggests how those who care for and educate young people might benefit from an awareness of the possibility of an Anti-Reality personality syndrome and its related maladaptive variations,
although I argue that it is most helpfully viewed as an educational deficit rather than a psychological disorder (except in extreme cases).

4.1.9 Four levels on which Relationship with Reality might relate to an individual’s well-being

It would not, perhaps, be surprising if it were shown that less accomplished young people (or imprisoned ones) tend to worry a lot or regret a lot or try to escape the demands of a difficult reality. However, it would be particularly interesting if evidence were to suggest that these activities contributed to maintaining a level of distress or a negative real-life situation. It would be even more interesting if a shift in one’s Relationship with Reality could ameliorate or exacerbate a given situation. With the above possibilities in mind, I hypothesise that Relationship with Reality might relate to an individual’s life on any one or more of the following four levels:

- Level 1: as an indicator of psycho-social well-being (i.e. a symptom)
- Level 2: as a perpetuating influence on well-being
- Level 3: as an exacerbating or improving influence of well-being
- Level 4: as a causal influence of well-being

My empirical evidence as regards the proposals I make in the above chapter, will be presented in Section 4.4.
4.2 Overview of the specific literature relevant to the proposed ‘Relationship with Reality’ personality dimension

Contents of Section 4.2

4.2.1 Introduction

4.2.2 Existing definitions of fantasy and daydreaming

- Two categorisations of daydreaming for the general population.
- My critique of the Short Imaginal Processes Inventory
- Further motivations for designing and administering my own inventory of thought

4.2.3 Speculations as to the specific functions of daydreams and fantasies

- Psycho-social and physical motives for fantasy and daydreams
- Fantasy as an ego-defence mechanism
- Fantasy as part of a model of coping strategies
- Discussion of other possible purposes of fantasy

4.2.4 Possible determinates of levels of fantasy-proneness

4.2.5 The manifestations of fantasy and daydreaming:

- Among the general population
- In the clinical setting
- In the forensic setting

4.2.6 The integration of Relationship with Reality personality dimension and its ‘Anti-Reality personality traits’ among major forensic models.

4.2.7 Summary of the specialist literature on the significance of fantasy and daydreaming

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4.2.1 Introduction

In chapter two, I reviewed the mainstream general literature in psychology and psychiatry (normal, abnormal and forensic) and found few references to fantasy and daydreaming. In section 4.1, I proposed a detailed model of an individual's Relationship with Reality. In this following Section, I review the rare pockets of literature that do address phenomena related to the proposed dimension.

As I proposed in chapter 1, my theory of a person's Relationship with Reality incorporates categories of thinking such as worry about the future and regrets about the past, reminiscing, day to day problem solving, step-by-step long-term planning, and imaginative rehearsal, as well as a range of behavioural traits. Nonetheless, in respect of the restriction on the length of this thesis, it would be impossible to review adequately the literature concerning these other cognitive activities while still doing justice to fantasy and daydreaming. Furthermore, I argue that the advantages of present and future reality-oriented thinking (e.g. problem solving and planning and imaginative rehearsal) are already well appreciated by some very major researchers in psychology and psychiatry, and these cognitive activities are increasingly regarded as indicators of mental good health (see Vaillant, 1977; Jahoda, 1981; Ross and Fabiano, 1985; Skynner and Cleese, 1993; Clausen, 1993; Csikszentmihalyi, 1996; Sternberg, 1997; Gardner, 1997). By contrast it will be argued below that daydreaming and fantasy are still very much neglected by the social sciences, and as it is daydreaming and fantasy that are the central concepts implicated in my theory, my review will focus upon them alone.

4.2.2 Existing definitions of fantasy and daydreaming

By far the most substantial reference point for fantasy and daydreaming as a feature of mental activity, and for their potential role in the lives of the general population, is the work pioneered by Singer who defined daydreaming as:

any cognitive activity representing a shift of attention away from an ongoing task. Loose associations, well-developed fantasies, plans for the future, memories of the past, worries, wishes and fears are examples of daydreaming (1966:37).
Klinger is another major researcher in this field. He writes,

"I view daydreams broadly in my own studies: they include reactions to what is happening outside or inside us - fantasies about ordinary everyday things as well as extravagant flights of fancy; daydreams that are spontaneous as well as those we plan" (1987:72).

Klinger regarded daydreams and night-dreams as lying on a continuum of human consciousness. Such definitions are highly inclusive, and, as will be seen, it has been of crucial importance to my own empirical work that my definitions are much more specific and that I felt it necessary to create a taxonomy of thought. In this respect, my own definition of fantasy is closer to that of de Bono (1992) who defined fantasy as something that you do not realistically expect to happen.

Categorisations of daydreaming for the general population

The first of only two notable attempts to classify daydreams was made by Singer and Antrobus (1966). A series of factor-analytic studies of results from the Singer-Antrobus (1966) Imaginal Processes Inventory indicated three major factors that characterise ongoing thought:

a) a Positive-Vivid daydreaming style;

b) a Guilty-Dysphoric daydreaming style;

c) a Mindwandering-Distractible pattern that is generally characterised by fleeting thoughts and an inability to focus on extended fantasy.

For my own fieldwork, I devised several dozen items to form part of a self-completion questionnaire to investigate specifically the possibility of a Relationship with Reality personality dimension. Already in existence was the Singer-Antrobus IPI (Imaginal Processes Inventory, 1966 and 1970, 1972) and Short IPI (Huba, Singer, Aneshensel and Antrobus, 1982), a scale that had been psychometrically analysed and successfully administered with many thousands of subjects, and shown to be valid and reliable by well accepted
standards. However, I had several compelling reasons for devising my own inventory of thoughts, but in explaining these it will help first to explain what the SIPI consisted of.

The SIPI consisted of 45 items, which were one-line questions requiring one of five boxes to be ticked to indicate a range of responses between 'Very true of me' and 'Definitely untrue of me' (i.e. a Likert-type scale). It requires approximately 10 minutes to complete. The inventory is intended for adolescents and adults. On the front cover of the 'Short Imaginal Processes Inventory' the following is printed, complete with bolding and quote marks as shown:

"We are asking your co-operation in responding to a questionnaire about your inner experiences, your images, dreams, and daydreams. There is no "official" definition for words like "daydream". Interpret these words in terms of their common meaning as they might apply to you. Be careful to distinguish between thinking about something you are doing at that moment and daydreaming about something else. Thinking about a task while working on it is not daydreaming, although having thoughts about the task at other times, such as while getting ready for sleep or on a long bus ride, could be daydreaming."

If one compares the above SIPI definition of daydreaming with my own model's tripartite classification immediately below, it may be seen that my definitions attempt to be more discriminating in terms of the real-life outcomes that such thoughts precede:

1. **Pure Fantasy** is something one does not think will actually happen, but one imagines it purely for pleasure.

2. **Wishful Daydreaming** is when one is fairly hopeful something will really happen, and one is simply imagining how good it will feel if it does.

3. **Step-by-Step Planning** is when one takes the trouble to work out all the details necessary to give something a good chance of actually happening.

My following critique of the SIPI is built upon the above definitional differences.
Chapter 4: 'Relationship with Reality'
4.2 Specific literature review

My critique of the Short Imaginal Processes Inventory

1. The crux of my argument is that the SIPI does not differentiate as I do between wishful daydreams and pure fantasy, nor between wishful daydreams pursued and those not, nor between wishful daydreams actually realised and those not. It is my contention that the SIPI was not investigating the eventual 'real-life outcome' of an individual's conscious attention, whereas it was 'real-life outcome' related to fantasy and daydreaming that I suspected was pertinent in many people's lives. For instance, the so called Positive-Constructive Daydreams described by Singer and Antrobus (1966) were not required to be 'positive and constructive' in terms of people's real-life outcomes. Indeed, there is no concerted attempt in the SIPI inventory to distinguish between what I call 'reality-improving outcomes' of daydreams, and 'unfulfilled daydreams'. Only three questions out of the 45 SIPI questions touched upon the nature of any 'future outcome in real life':
   No.28: My daydreams offer me useful clues to tricky situations I face.
   No.19: Daydreaming never solves any problems.
   No.38 Daydreams do not have any practical significance for me.

In support of the importance that I attribute to my distinctions between types of thought, Singer himself (personal communication, October 31, 1996) wrote:

   I am more inclined to the proposition that it is not the sheer amount of fantasy that is critical, but the degree to which fantasy involves practical steps towards accomplishment.

2. Singer (1966) regarded daydreaming as a shift of focus away from the task at hand, but I argue that an individual could shift his or her focus so as to be problem-solving on another task while doing something manual, repetitive and undemanding, like mowing a lawn or walking the dog.

3. The SIPI makes no attempt to incorporate daydreaming and fantasy into a larger syndrome of thoughts and behaviour.

4. There was no invitation on the SIPI for the participant to add personal comments which might challenge or develop the constructs. Thus, the
questionnaire becomes a self-fulfilling prophecy - only hearing what it wants to hear.

5. The Singer-Antrobus 1966 IPI, and subsequently the SIPI, have been by far the most dominant instrument of research, and this perhaps has limited the possibility of identifying new phenomena or dimensions in this arena of study.

This critique aside, Huba et al. express some of the same ultimate aims as I do:

Eventually, it is hoped that... we can ascertain how strong the lines are between the dimension of private experience... and the public personality or overt behavioural trends of the individual (1981:205).

Further motivations for designing and administering my own Inventory of Thought

In addition to the above precedent set by the seminal work of Singer and colleagues, Wilson (1988) argued that ‘sex fantasy’ was the key guide to an individual’s sexual preferences, and constructed a very direct 40-item Sex Fantasy Questionnaire, arguing that:

while it is recognised that sex fantasies are idiosyncratic, such a procedure permits the construction of norms for comparison between various groups (1988: 46).

This rationale encouraged my own inventory construction. I also noted Csikszentmihalyi et al’s statement in Talented Teenagers that,

when trying to understand how one person differs from another, perhaps the most important factor is to know how the two are spending their time (1997:85).

In respect of this, I felt that to learn how people spend their thinking time was a particularly valuable pursuit. Finally, I sensed that I had identified an issue for exploration that had been marginalised in previous work, and I felt that it
would be prudent to test as many of the premises and assumptions about fantasy and daydreaming as I was able, by gathering some primary data.

Besides the Singer-Antrobus (1966) model outlined above, the only other well-recognised classification of fantasy (as distinct from the broader umbrella term of ‘daydreaming’) has been proposed by Columbia University’s Clinical Psychiatry Professor, Ethel Person (1997), who published a popular psychology book called The Force of Fantasy. Person’s taxonomy is as follows:

A) Fantasies classified by Nature

i) Fleeting or flash fantasies - are just momentary images of which there can be a constant stream in everyday life, and which we rarely if ever deliberately generate. They are a response to things going on around us.

ii) Repeating fantasies - are ones we deliberately invoke and so reflect much more our personalities. They often begin in early adolescence and can continue in some form far into adulthood.

iii) Generative fantasies - belong somewhere in between Fleeting and Repeating fantasies. Generative fantasies are deliberately invoked and reflect present life themes and preoccupation’s, but focus on what we hope for our future.

B) Fantasies classified by Immediate Emotional Effect

i) Negative fantasies which focus on disturbing scenes

ii) Pleasurable fantasies

C) Fantasies classified by Purpose

i) Substitutive: offering a retreat from reality (but affecting it indirectly).

ii) Preparatory: pressing for some form of actualization or enactment.
My critique of Person’s model is that although it is highly plausible in itself, it omits, like almost all of the work in this arena hitherto, to offer a classification by ‘real-life outcomes’ – that is to say, the typology neglects to identify correlations between a type of fantasy or daydream and the future outcomes in an individual’s life. Person’s model stops short by only addressing the possible purposes and immediate emotional effects of fantasy.

4.2.3 Speculations as to the specific functions of daydreams and fantasies

Psycho-social and physical motives for fantasy and daydreams

The functions of fantasy and daydreaming have been speculated upon and in the following section I present some of the key observations that have been made in this regard, in approximate chronological order. As will be seen, there seems a consensus that the major purposes of fantasy and daydreaming all appear to reflect the individual’s attempts to control their levels of psychological arousal.

Sigmund Freud appeared little interested in daytime fantasy, but in Creative Writers and Daydreaming, he wrote:

the growing child, when he stops playing, gives up nothing but the link with real objects; instead of playing, he now phantasises. He builds castles in the air and creates what are called daydreams (1959:156).

Freud advocated that fantasy would become less and less necessary as the maturing individual approached rational adaptation to the external world.

Alfred Adler (1927) in Understanding Human Nature, speculates with great insight upon fantasy, though not in any thorough or systematic way. He argues that striving for significant self-fulfilment and social recognition (expressed through rank and wealth) is essential for the psyche, and that if thwarted we resort to fantasy or a pretence of some kind to compensate. Indeed Adler regarded ‘compensation for inferiority feelings’ as a major driving force of the psyche. Adler also regarded fantasy as a method of foresight:
the fantasies of children and grown-ups, sometime called daydreams, are always concerned with the future. These castles in the air are the goal of their activity, built up in fictional form as models for real activity. Studies of childhood fantasies show clearly that the striving for power plays the predominant role. Children express their ambition in their day-dreams (1927: 57-59).

The psycho-social catalysts for fantasy and daydreaming suggested by Adler are reiterated by Singer when he makes the observation that:

the most striking results we have obtained in the analysis of questionnaire response have related to various subcultural groups in American society. The Negro and Jewish groups showed the highest daydream frequencies and the Anglo-Saxon subjects the lowest (1975:61-62).

Furthermore, he observed that "aspirant middle-class college students had more future-oriented daydreams as opposed to upper-class students who were present and past focused" (ibid.). It would seem that Singer's hypothesis from the above is that the more secure the status of the sub-group, the less daydreaming they engage in. Singer (1975) also wonders if 'daydreaming' may at times reflect our basic tissue needs that are currently unsatisfied, such as hunger, thirst or sex. Singer speculates that:

when man is denied stimulation from the outside, he either produces more inner stimulation or perforce attends more actively to the ever-present stream of his own imagery or fantasy (1975: 76).

It seems very possible that an individual may deploy fantasy and daydreaming as a mediating environment through which to regulate levels of cognitive arousal, as if a psychological shock-absorber. There have been case-studies illustrative of this: Strentz (1993) notes that long-term hostages held in conditions of sensory deprivation, use fantasy as a protective factor. In this vein, Singer suggests that "positive fantasies could actually yield a variety of constructive neurochemical and psychophysiological reactions that would operate against stress-related diseases" (1976:256), and he regards daydreaming as a better solution than reaching for a cigarette or alcohol to calm and soothe ourselves. Likewise, Person concludes that:
they [fantasies] are fuelled by both the fantasiser’s biological and emotional needs, as shaped by his or her personal history, and by circumstances. But the storylines of fantasy cast a wider net; they borrow their narrative content from the cultural surrounds (1997: 216).

In addition, there are two major models of how an individual negotiates life which closely relate to how the Relationship with Reality model perceives fantasy and daydreaming:

- Fantasy as an ego-defence mechanism
- Fantasy as a coping strategy

As will be seen, they both warrant detailed attention in this review, and I discuss them in turn.

**Fantasy as an ego-defence mechanism**

Fantasy is one of the 18 ego-defence mechanisms proposed by Vaillant (1977), which he defines as primarily unconscious, involuntary psychological mechanisms for dealing with stress (13 of which are listed in DSM III-R). Vaillant suggests that these defences distort inner and outer perceptions of reality, but that they are more often healthy than pathological, and they often mature over time and allow mental illness to evolve towards mental good health. He regards the adaptiveness of these 18 defensive styles as context-specific, and accepts there may be many exceptions to the rule, but he concludes that there is nonetheless a hierarchy of adaptiveness of certain styles of defence. Hence, they are arranged in a four-tier system: ‘mature’, ‘intermediate’ (also known as neurotic), ‘immature’, and ‘psychotic’.

With particular regard to fantasy, an ‘immature’ defence by the Vaillant taxonomy, Vaillant notes how:

> adults too can replace people with fantasy... not only does fantasy prevent any outward show of aggression; it also leads to an absence of pleasure (1995: 60).

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1 I illustrate this section by reference to Vaillant’s (1977; 1993) model of defence mechanisms, in respect of the unparalleled validation of his theories through his long-term prospective studies.
He further suggests that:

the plain brown wrapper of our imagination... serves to obliterate the overt expression of aggressive, dependent, and sexual impulses towards others. In the secret life of Walter Mitty, all vices are possible (1993: 47-48).

Indeed, it is particularly notable that Vaillant considers that “the immature defenses represent the building blocks of personality disorder” (ibid: 45).

With regard to Vaillant’s longitudinal, prospective study of ex-Harvard College men, he writes:

nine of the ninety-five men that I studied used fantasy often. None of them engaged in games with others, none had close friends and only four stayed in touch with their parents or siblings. More than any other adaptive style, fantasy correlated with bleak childhoods2 (1995: 168-170).

Yet we should note that all of Vaillant’s ex-Harvard men interviewed at age 47 had originally been chosen as 20 year olds because they were deemed most likely among their peers to lead healthy and successful lives. It is plausible then that if psycho-social frustration is one major source of fantasy as Freud (1959) and Adler (1927) suggest, then a less accomplished social group might contain a higher proportion of fantasy-users than even this 10% of the ex-Harvard sample.

Vaillant seems in no doubt that “Fantasy, however comforting, is a perilous defense” (1933:204), and he testifies to its severely debilitating potential. He illustrates this most notably in his case-study of Florence Nightingale who in her middle years became a nursing heroine. “As early as age 23, she recognised the extent to which the habit that she termed ‘dreaming’ had enslaved her” (ibid). Vaillant then quotes her biographer Cecil Woodham-Smith: “Sometimes she could not control herself and she gave way with the shameful ecstasy of the drug-taker” (ibid). Apparently, by the time she was 28 “dreaming became uncontrollable. She fell into trances in which hours were blotted out. She lost sense of time and place against her will” (ibid). Vaillant

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2This parallels the evidence from M. Goertzel and T. Goertzel in their study of the lives of 300 eminent people, in which they claim that “all those who traffic in fantasy (they are referring to writers and actors and producers of fiction) remember their homes as having tragic elements” (1978: 11).
goes on to suggest that it is only by a process of first ‘intellectualisation’ and then ‘sublimation’ that Florence Nightingale evolved from fantasist to real-life heroine, and I discuss Vaillant’s explanation for such an evolution in Section 4.4.

When comparing Vaillant’s psychoanalytic ego-defence mechanisms with my own concept of Relationship with Reality, four observations may be made:

1. My proposed Anti-Reality personality will be prone to avoid or distort reality, just as Vaillant describes the schizoid fantasist.

2. Though I am persuaded by Vaillant’s arguments that some resort to fantasy and daydreaming is ‘unconscious’, (which is a key defining feature of ego-defence mechanisms: the user does not recognise the defence as a defence), my own model conceives of fantasy and daydreaming just as often being deployed very deliberately as a conscious coping mechanism against reality.

3. My model is coherent with Vaillant’s view of fantasy and other defensive traits as being long-held and pervasive and largely context-inflexible, and that there is a correlation between defensive style and life-outcomes. My model is also coherent with Vaillant’s view that maturity of defences is a valid and reliable measure of mental health.

4. In contrast to fantasy, Vaillant’s model of ego-defences rates ‘anticipation’ as one of the mature and adaptive defences, which he describes as defences that channel feelings, are longer-term oriented, future-oriented and specific to the problem. The mental activities that my own thesis calls ‘planning’ or ‘problem solving’ or ‘imaginative rehearsal’ are strongly related to Vaillant’s ‘anticipation’ mechanism. Vaillant (1995) notes how anticipation (and suppression) was most associated with positive mental health, warm relationships, and successful careers. A good illustration of such is one of Vaillant’s most notable participants among his Grant Study men:

the quality of Byron’s future life was continually at the forefront of his mind. He read the lives of great men with interest, and twenty-five years later could point with pride to a fulfilled life plan (1995: 68).
Fantasy as part of a model of coping strategies

The second model of how individuals might use fantasy to help them negotiate life, conceives of fantasy as a coping strategy. The concept of coping as it is understood today was developed by psychologists in the 1960s and 70s (Parker and Endler, 1996) as an alternative conception to the model of ego-defences. By direct contrast to the ego-defences, coping strategies are conceived as conscious, voluntary mechanisms. Within the complex field of contemporary coping theory, perhaps the concept that bears most relevance to my own thesis, is a model synthesised by Holahan, Moos and Schaefer (1996). They divide coping into two types: cognitive and behavioural approaches to a problem, and cognitive and behavioural avoidance of a problem. This, I feel, is akin to my proposal of a 'pro-reality personality' and an 'anti-reality personality'. However, Holahan et al do not refer to fantasy or daydreaming, and nor do they attempt a detailed over-arching model that synthesises cognitive and behavioural traits. Yet, this is exactly what Richard Lazarus, a key voice in the coping strategies arena, calls for:

most important of all, we should examine which coping patterns succeed or fail in the short and long run - and in what ways...and how these strategies come together and are synthesised into an overarching coping style (1993": 272).

It is exactly this that I have tried to achieve with my Relationship with Reality model.

Discussion of other possible purposes of fantasy

Having paid special attention to the stress-negotiating possibilities of fantasy, we should bear in mind that it may have highly adaptive creative potential: Singer (1975) regards it as a means of trialling new and alternative solutions and exploring possible futures. After all, fantasies and daydreams offer a low-cost, low-risk perceptual environment in which to experience and even experiment with roles and feelings such as those of safety, control, power and achievement, all qualities that might plausibly be desired but deficient in many lives, particularly those of adolescents and young adults.
4.2.4 Possible determinates of levels of fantasy-proneness

The following sub-section proposes some explanations of the developmental origins of fantasy-proneness. Singer writes:

my own research and that of various colleagues and students suggests that even in three and four year olds we can discern the beginnings of strong individual differences in modes of using make-believe as a way of dealing with the world. By adolescence this predisposition to resort to fantasy as a resource is well established and may play an important later role in the lifestyle of the individual (1975:133).

Vaillant asserts that:

our adaptive mechanisms are given to us by our biological make-up, by internalisation of people whom we loved, and by sources as yet unidentified. Adaptive sources are quite unconscious and we can take no credit for them (1995:28).

If my proposed Anti-Reality personality syndrome is akin to other personality disorders, the consensus of the psychiatric opinion is that causes are probably multiple, interactive and variable, combining genetic and socio-cultural influences (Cromwell, Waters, Kring and Riso, 1993).

4.2.5 The possible effects of fantasy and daydreaming

In the general population

Fantasy and daydreaming as they occur among the general population are very widely regarded as benign and helpful. Singer and Singer (1977) studied children who were good at producing fantasies, and concluded that they have better concentration, are less aggressive, and take more pleasure in what they do than children who fantasise less. Singer and Pope continue on a positive note:

the daydreams of the adolescent are a basic part of his growth process. If he can effect some combination of actual achievement and a continuation of a
varied and increasingly elaborate but partially reality-oriented daydream life, he can move into adulthood armed with a significant skill and with an important adaptive potential (1978: 162).

Storr concludes that “Imagination is active in even the best adjusted and happiest human being” (1988:72). Similarly, Person suggests that “fantasy is a pre-requisite to a fulfilled life” (1997: 52).

In the clinical setting

Sigmund Freud wrote that:

happy people do not make phantasies, only unsatisfied ones do. The motive forces of phantasies are unsatisfied wishes, and every single phantasy is the fulfilment of a wish, a correction of an unsatisfying reality (1907: 177).

Adler also introduced a note of caution:

at a certain stage in their development, their [children’s] powers of fantasy may become a way of avoiding the realities of life. Fantasy may be misused as a rejection of reality and in such cases it becomes a kind of magic carpet for an individual who releases himself above the meanness of living by the power of imagination (1927: 49).

Anna Freud saw no middle ground between a benign, trivial daydreaming common to adults, and dangerous psychotic delusions. She writes that “it is certain that in adult life gratification through fantasy is no longer harmless” (1957: 81). Singer’s concern in terms of psychopathology is that fantasies may “lead us into expectations that are not likely to be fulfilled and little by little we feel inner despair or rage” (Singer, 1975:203) and Singer and Pope speak of ‘fantasy run rampant’ and of its ‘addictive qualities’ (1978: 90). However, it is Skynner (1986) (alongside Vaillant, 1977; 1993) who is most vehemently distrustful of fantasy:

respect for reality and the truth is everything, but is easily lost... denial causes all the problems because it leads us to avoid facing reality and live in fantasy instead (ibid:346).
Skynner is an equally strong advocate of reality-orientation. He concludes that reality and inclusiveness are the two strongest measures of mental health and he encapsulates this view in the following maxims:

[Psychologically healthy people are] very realistic and practical. They see the world more or less as it is rather than living in dreams and fantasies about themselves, and about other people (ibid.: 31).

Very healthy people are constantly interested in adjusting their maps to reality, in testing their ideas. Which is scientific. And that’s why they’re more in touch with life (ibid.: 239).

The more primary our reality is to us, the more accurate our mental maps are, and the healthier we are (ibid.: 241).

If we can stay in touch with reality - the truth will heal us (ibid.:333).

Although I agree with the essential tenet of Skynner’s argument, I would critique his treatise by noting that while he advocates the crucial importance of a reality orientation, he neglects to suggest either the nature and extent or the possibility of an anti-reality syndrome, nor how a reality orientation might be promoted. Finally, his work is based upon clinical experience rather than systematic scientific inquiry.

In search of more empirical evidence for a correlation between fantasy and mental health, Lynn and Rhue (1988) screened 6,000 college students for what they termed ‘fantasy proneness’, and noted apparent links with childhood abuse and also psychopathology. However, Singer and Bonanno (1990) make the point that their own work offers no evidence to suggest that excessive daydreaming and fantasy are connected to psychotic individuals and schizophrenia, which they regard as a common misattribution. Another daydreaming-research specialist, Klinger agrees:

current research indicates that... there is no evidence that any amount of daydreaming can make a person schizophrenic or bring on any other psychological disorder... In sum: frequent and fanciful daydreamers are clearly no worse off psychologically - and possibly better off - than those who daydream less (1987:67).
In summary of this clinical section, there appears to be no strong consensus of opinion on the correlation between fantasy-proneness and psychopathology.

In the forensic setting

Within sociology, there are many landmark studies of delinquent or deviant youth (see for example Cohen, 1955; Corrigan, 1979; Becker 1963; Matza, 1969). However, from a review of such literature, it becomes apparent that deviant fantasies and the fantasies of those labelled deviant, have only momentarily been the focus of empirical sociology. Even in Cohen and Taylor’s *Psychological Survival* in which they describe themselves as being engaged in a “longitudinal study of the psychological reactions of a small group of men to an extreme and immutable environment, imposed upon them as a punishment” (1972:58), the authors make barely a few lines’ reference to fantasy or imagination or use of fiction to evade reality.

In the world of forensic psychology, Holmes (1964) observed that many delinquent youngsters in their late teens fantasise a great deal and have feelings of omnipotence. He speculated that because delinquent youngsters have not experienced satisfying or emotionally secure environments, they utilise fantasy to increase their feelings of self-worth, deny unpleasant circumstances and avoid facing the reality of their environment and its demands and requirements; but there is no explicit suggestion that this fantasy-oriented thought exacerbates any problems, or can or should be curtailed.

The presence of aggressive and sadistic fantasies in serious sexual offenders was noted by Reinhardt (1957) and Revitch (1965) although its potential significance does not appear to have been appreciated. Arguably the seminal work in suggesting the potentially grave and crucial significance of the daydreaming and fantasy factor in criminology, and more particularly in sexual offending, is the paper by MacCulloch, Snowden, Wood, and Mills (1983) *Sadistic Fantasy, Sadistic Behaviour and Offending*, in which three forensic psychiatrists interviewed 16 teenagers convicted of serious sexual offences. They concluded that:
in only 3 cases were the crimes explicable in terms of external circumstances and personality traits. The offences of the remaining 13 cases became comprehensible only when the offender's internal circumstances were explored (italics added) (ibid.: 25).

In the light of this, the authors hypothesised that, faced with real-world failure, "it becomes easier and more pleasurable for the individual to live predominantly in his fantasy world." They went on to suggest that "it was clearly important to understand how fantasies develop, take shape and translate into behaviour." Unfortunately, MacCulloch et al. make no reference to the possibility of the significance of fantasies in other (non-sexual) offending behaviour. Sixteen years on, Andrew Bates, Senior Forensic Psychologist with 7 years professional experience dedicated to the study and treatment of sex offenders, and formerly director of the sex offender programme at Grendon Prison (England's only therapeutic-regime prison), told me in a personal communication (January, 1999) that he knows of no study that attempts to explore the fantasies of offenders who are not specifically sex offenders. Bates (1997: 4) writes that "deviant fantasy is deliberately created to combat feelings of negativity and develop a sense of power and control in the individual". Notably, Bates also reports that fantasising for 20 of a group of 23 violent sex offenders with whom he worked very extensively, began between the ages of 11 and 20, and indeed most of these began between 11 and 15 years of age. In the same forensic vein, Consultant Adolescent Forensic Psychiatrist, Sue Bailey (1995), wrote a paper called Sadistic and Violent Acts in the Young, in which deviant daydreaming is significantly correlated with extremely serious deviant behaviour, and thus she argues that this daydreaming could serve as a warning indicator if detected early enough. Bailey concludes that the thinking patterns and early fantasies of these youngsters had not been explored by their carers or clinicians, with later grave consequences.

4.2.6 The integration of the Relationship with Reality personality dimension and its Anti-Reality personality traits among major forensic models.

There are often partial overlaps of the cognitive and behavioural traits that characterise personality types, but in the absence of any former consideration of daydreaming and fantasy among established work, I suggest that a
sensitivity to a person’s ‘Relationship with Reality’ can make a distinctive and substantial contribution to the explanatory power of some mainstream theories about personality relating to crime and delinquency. For example:

Ross and Fabiano’s (1985) Social Cognitive Skills Training, and its more recent manifestation in the UK as the Reasoning and Rehabilitation Programme for use in prisons, concentrates on such things as self-control and impulsiveness; social perspective-taking and egocentricity; inter-personal problem solving (such as negotiation and assertiveness); and critical reasoning. It teaches skills through discussion, role-playing and modelling in groups of 8-10, with two tutors over 35 sessions of 2 hours each, and its authors believe that it could have far wider uses as teachers and parents are perfectly capable of delivering the programme. However, the theory and programme do not acknowledge or address pure fantasy, wishful daydreaming, worry or their like, and so make no mention of their negative or positive potential. It is my contention that the Ross and Fabiano (1985) typology of different types of thinking is just as much to do with an individual’s Relationship with Reality as my own typology. Our two typologies might hypothetically complement each other, and my own items might just as readily accessible to educational development.

West and Farrington (1977) documented the Anti-Social personality syndrome, but I advocate that this is a substantially different syndrome from the one I propose. For instance, an Anti-Social personality could very conceivably be either Anti- or Pro- Reality. This can be illustrated by conceiving of an Anti-Social/Pro-Reality personality such as a Mafioso who traffics in heroin and violence (i.e. displaying Anti-Social or even Sociopathic traits), and whose large-scale trade requires Imaginative Rehearsal and Longer-Term Planning (i.e. Pro-Reality traits). Compare this Anti-Social/Pro-Reality Mafioso character to an Anti-Social/Anti-Reality personality who could be typified by a heroin-addict living on the streets.

What my model can very usefully derive from Farrington’s work (see Farrington, 1997) is an appreciation that onset, persistence, escalation and desistance of a personality syndrome may be influenced by different factors at different times in a person’s life. This sense of the possible importance of a time dimension is particularly pertinent in illuminating the weaknesses of
my own cross-sectional study. Similarly Loeber (1987) used many other concepts to describe developmental processes in anti-social careers, concepts that promise to be useful in drawing a fuller picture of the Anti-Reality syndrome. For instance, Loeber uses symptom-descriptive terms such as acceleration and deceleration, diversification, switching, stabilization and de-escalation, retention (i.e. escalation to serious acts while still committing trivial acts) and innovation (i.e. escalation to serious acts while giving up trivial acts). It seems very possible that, on closer analysis, an individual’s Relationship with Reality may demonstrate very similar dynamics in his or her characteristic traits.

Liebling (1991) studied suicide and self-injury amongst young offenders in custody. Two groups, each containing 50 imprisoned young offenders aged 15 to 21, gave the following responses to her structured interview. Below I represent the responses of the control group comprised of ‘non-suicide risk’ young offenders. Please note their relevance to my proposed Relationship with Reality Syndrome:

**How often do you daydream?** - 7/50 said ‘All the time’ (i.e. 7 out of the 50).

**How often do you think about the past?** - 36/50 said ‘A lot’.

**How often do you think about the future?** - 19/50 said ‘Never’

**Do you plan time or live day by day?** - 43/50 ‘Day by Day’

**Do you miss people/unable to stop thinking about those people?** - 38/50

By comparison, the 50 boys in the ‘high risk of suicide’ group were significantly more likely to day-dream than the above control group: 80% said they spent a great deal of time day-dreaming; and over one third of this group never thought about the future. Liebling writes that “hopelessness, inactivity and boredom characterised the subject group. They were less able to occupy themselves constructively in their cells,” and she concludes that “young prisoner suicide is rarely a psychiatric problem: it is a problem of coping.” Liebling (1991) proposes four protecting agents as regards suicide risk, one of

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3 Dr. Liebling kindly gave her written permission to make such extensive use of her material.
which is *Hopes and plans for the future* - a factor particularly relevant to the concept of Pro-Reality thought and behaviour traits. I suggest that Liebling's (1991) study corroborates at least some of the foundations of my hypotheses.

(Please note that an integration of my work with that of Sampson and Laub (1993) and Hawkins (1996) has already been proposed in chapter 2; and an integration with Hirschi and Gottfredson's (1990) general theory of criminality will be proposed in Sub-Section 4.4.20.)

### 4.2.7 Summary of the specialist literature on the significance of fantasy and daydreaming

The charge has often been levelled that my hypotheses as regards fantasy and daydreaming and the proposal of a Anti-Reality personality syndrome, is an unwarranted pathologising and aggrandising of incidental and essentially benign phenomena. I argue that such a dismissal is unwarranted because there is so little satisfactory empirical research that has adequately explored the possibility of maladaptive traits or a wider syndrome among a representative sample of the general population. The work that does exist (e.g. Vaillant 1977; and Skynner and Cleese, 1993) suggests that outside the forensic and strictly clinical contexts, fantasy can be a potentially maladaptive force for some individuals some of the time. Vaillant's work in particular is supported by considerable empirical evidence.

However, I conclude from this chapter that the great majority of the authors cited above regard fantasy and daydreaming as very largely benign in the general population and consider the phenomena to have considerable educative and positive potential. This is consistent with there being an absence of anything more than a paragraph on the subject among the leading mainstream literature in psychology and psychiatry (in the normal, abnormal and forensic fields) which strongly indicates that daydreaming and fantasy are widely regarded by the caring and educational professions as being of little importance in young people's lives. In respect of this, Section 4.4 offers empirical findings to contest this implicit assumption and to raise additional perspectives and possibilities.

4.3 Overview of my methods of data analysis

Contents of Section 4.3

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   • Investigating gender differences between students
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4.3.9 What the participants thought about the 2nd Questionnaires in comparison to the EPQ-R and SIPI.
4.3.1 Introduction

This chapter contains an explanation of my approach to the description, analysis and interpretation of my findings in exploration of my four tentative hypotheses. I locate this section here so that it immediately precedes the first ‘findings section’ (4.4 that appertains to Relationship with Reality) in order that these important points may be foremost in the reader’s mind. This ‘Overview of my Methods of Data Analysis’ also applies to my findings for chapters 5.2 and 6.2 and 7.2.

4.3.2 My analysis of the long-interviews

Bernard writes that “Qualitative analysis - in fact, all analysis - is the search for patterns in data and for ideas that help explain the existence of those patterns” (1995: 360). I would add that the absence of patterns can be just as informative. In pursuit of patterns or their absence, I considered using a computer-based qualitative analysis package, but decided that my preferred method of analysis of the long-interviews at least, was as recommended by Bernard “Lay out your notes in piles on the floor, live with them, handle them and read them over and over again... This may not seem like a very scientific way of doing things, but I don’t know any way that’s better. No single researcher working alone for less than 2 years can produce more field notes than she or he can grasp” (ibid.: 200).

The long-interviews were highly exploratory and unstructured in nature and their major contribution to my research was to establish the sorts of themes and questions which should comprise the 1st and the 2nd questionnaires. For this reason, I do not copiously cite quotations from the long-interviews. My ambition in this research was to generate well-grounded theory (see Glaser and Strauss, 1967) based upon the issues and themes as they emerged, indicated by the key words and statements of the participants. In the final analysis, however, I acknowledge that my interpretation may, to some extent, have been imposed upon the data by my own subjectivity (see Stanley and Wise, 1983).

1 The Long-Interview Schedule can be found in Appendix D.
4.3.3 Assistance received in the statistical analysis of the 1st and 2nd questionnaires

To ensure an independent and proficient marshalling of the raw data contained within the questionnaires, I commissioned Tina Cook, a doctoral researcher at the Oxford University Experimental Psychology Department, to input my raw questionnaire data using SPSS, assisted by Psychology undergraduate Kirsti Lee. Thenafter, David Caan and Christine Minas, doctoral researchers in the University of Cambridge Faculty of Social and Political Sciences, discussed with me the various options for statistical analysis, and subsequently conducted the analyses that I elected to pursue. I was extremely grateful for this technical support which was a pre-requisite of my making an assessment of my quantitative data from the 237 long-questionnaires and almost another hundred short inventories (i.e. the EPQ-R and SIPI).²

4.3.4 The 2nd Questionnaire

Methods of statistical analysis
In my interpretation of results, I take only the more striking contrasts or similarities to be meaningful, for instance when a respondent awards a particular statement 4, 5 or 6 points from the Likert-scale illustrated below in the ‘Answer Guide’ that participants were working from:

Answer Guide
In most of the following questions you are asked to circle the number between 0 and 6 which best describes you. This is what the numbers mean:

6 = Extremely True of you (i.e. more than 90% true of you)
5 = Very True of you (i.e. more than 75% true of you)
4 = Quite True of you (i.e. more than 50% true of you)
3 = Half true of you (i.e. 50% true of you)
2 = Not particularly true of you (i.e. less than 50% true of you)
1 = Only a little true of you (i.e. less than 25% true of you)
0 = Very Untrue of you (i.e. less than 10% true of you)

²I can declare that the final decisions as to which statistical tests to pursue and for which sections of the data, and my interpretations of the subsequent descriptive and explanatory statistics, were my own work.
Where it seems appropriate, in analysing my data I collapse the 4, 5 and 6 Likert response cells to form a single and 'positive' response-cell to the item statement. Similarly, the 0, 1, 2, 3 response cells are collapsed to form a single 'negative' rating. There is a danger that people who gave either 3 or 4 might have been wavering either way, but I think the phrasing of the Likert scale and the fact that there was a midpoint for participants to 'sit on the fence' if they wanted to, leaves me confident that to acknowledge only 4, 5 and 6 scores is allowing for a margin of error and makes for a cautious interpretation of the data. At this exploratory stage, the loss of data caused by collapsing the cells from 7 to 2 cells seem justified in return for a simplified picture of the broader patterns of results.

Caveats to the analysis

1. There are limits to what one can assume about numerical data: a Likert-scale score of 4 or 5 or 6 from one person may not be the same as from another person in terms of its absolute value (i.e. 'a lot' or 'very' may mean 1 hour a day for one person, yet 4 hours for another).

2. The questionnaires were very largely attempting to measure the 'prevalence' of various phenomena within the groups, and the Likert-scale ratings should not be mistaken for indicating other features of the phenomena, such as how worried participants are, or why.

3. In consideration of the validity of the data overall, there is little evidence to suggest that the self-report questionnaire data was falsified or poorly-considered, although test/retest reliability of the reports was not directly measured.

Further notes on the analysis

1. The Categorical and Rank Data has been described using basic frequency counts to reveal what appear to be the most relevant patterns. I used the Pearson Chi-Square test to determine whether some of the low absolute scores for a given item are statistically significant or not; and I used Analysis of Variance (Anova) to examine the relationship between the means of the groups. I conducted an exploratory factor analysis to examine
the relationship between items. However, on many items, I felt it sufficient simply to indicate the absolute number of ratings of 4, 5, 6 that an item received across all groups combined.

2. As regards questions 18a to 49b on the 2nd questionnaire, I was not sufficiently convinced that the layout and presentation of the questions allowed for a useful appraisal of whether the phenomena differed between past and present i.e. between the ‘a’ and the ‘b’ item-scores. (2nd Questionnaire is in Appendix E) Furthermore, these ‘b’ items invited participants to comment on the ‘two years before coming to university (or prison)’ and in hindsight this was too broad a period for the individual to assess against their present day practice. It might have been better to have them evaluate just last year or even the last 6 months before that watershed period in their lives. For these accumulated reasons, I have not pursued an analysis of variance between the ‘a’ and ‘b’ scores, which appeared to differ only modestly.

4.3.5 Desiderata

1. If I had collaborated with a statistical analyst in the construction of my 1st questionnaire, I could quite easily have deployed a Likert-scale so as to make for a more effective analysis of my features-in-focus.

2. I did not anticipate the sheer unwieldy volume of data I would receive from the number of interviews and questionnaires completed. In hindsight, it might have been more illuminating to have put more of my resources into improving the indicators of validity and reliability with fewer participants, and less resources into the sheer number and range of items.

3. I was too greedy for information from my participants, and so my questionnaire sections were not always sufficiently focused in their intentions. Some items contained two ideas, or ill-defined concepts, which rendered the answers to them very ambiguous.
4.3.6 The presentation of findings

1. I have at all times given both the number of participants and the percentage they represent, so as to avoid any misunderstanding about how many participants responded to a particular item on a particular questionnaire, because there was considerable variation on this point because of the multi-staged nature of research.

2. Unless otherwise indicated, all of the results discussed in this thesis are significant at least to a $P < 0.05$ level. Percentages are rounded up.

3. The 1st Questionnaire is not included in the Appendix to this thesis, because it is a prototype of the 2nd which is included (in Appendix E) and which gives a good indication of the nature of the document. In my results sections all pertinent results are accompanied by the questions which generated them.

4.3.7 Coding of participant groups for both the 1st and 2nd questionnaires

There were two sources of quantitative data, and in the following analysis chapters I use a particular shorthand:

'1st Q' refers to the 1st Questionnaire which was filled in by:

HAs = High-Achievement group
RMCs = Royal Marine Commandos (i.e. non-academic HAs)
MAs = Moderate-Achievement group
UAs = Under-Achievement group (Imprisoned)

Total number of participants completing the 1st Questionnaire: N = 97

'2nd Q' refers to the 2nd Questionnaire which was filled in by:

HAs = High-Achievement group
There was no Royal Marine Commando group
MAs = Moderate-Achievement group
UAs = Under-Achievement group (Imprisoned)

Total participants completing the 2nd questionnaire N = 140
Chapter 4: 'Relationship with Reality'

4.3 Methods of analysis

There seem to be at least three noteworthy points regarding the above groups:

1. No participants for the 2nd Questionnaire had been used in the 1st Questionnaire or in the pilot work.

2. All participants on both 1st and 2nd questionnaires received a near-identical questionnaire whose rubric had been tailor-made to make the questions more relevant to them (either in prison, the Marine Corps, or University) while still allowing the answers to be comparable to the other groups.

3. As regards the 2nd Questionnaire, because the fieldwork took place over a 6 month period, certain new sections were devised and added to the 100 ‘core questions’ to test emerging theories. It will be clearly flagged in the results sections as and when there were an abnormal number of participants.

4.3.8 Specific notes regarding the 1st questionnaire

No factor analysis was possible on this questionnaire because the response-system deployed did not use a constant interval (Likert-scale) rating. This was a design-flaw remedied to a large extent in the 2nd questionnaire. There are two notable features of the 1st questionnaire which are not looked at in the 2nd questionnaire, and which I will address below as A and B:

A: Investigating gender differences between student respondents

An analysis of variance by gender revealed that there is a significant difference on only 12% of questions between the 35 women MA and HAs compared with the 30 men MA and HAs. (Please note that UAs and HA-RMCs were not included in this analysis, in order that the two groups to be compared would be as matched and comparable as possible i.e. both groups are university students). The findings could be described as largely gender-stereotypical: for instance three of the 14 items that showed a significant difference are accounted for by the young women self-reporting they do...
considerably more fantasising, daydreaming and planning about 'You loving someone and them loving you' (1st Q: 28a, b and c), and women fantasising more about their 'physical features' (1st Q: 100). This said, a recurrent finding is that more women than men report fantasy and daydreaming being important to them (1st Q: Q58), and yet the women report less frequent use of drugs such as marijuana, heroin or LSD (1st Q: 79a). This apparent inverse correlation between what might be called 'cognitive escape' and 'narcotic escape' was also detectable in the results of the 2nd Questionnaire, and is discussed in Sub-section 4.4.14.

B: Royal Marine Commandos compared with Oxbridge undergraduates

Responses from Royal Marines (who I considered to be a non-academic high-achievement group) are strongly correlated with self-report of the Oxbridge Undergraduates (who comprised all of the HAs). On the 1st questionnaire, there were only 13 questions out of 120 on which Royal Marines (n = 14) were significantly different (p < .05) from the HA group (Oxbridge undergraduates n = 32) and most of these differences were quite trivial and probably explainable by the fact that the Marines were on an all-male military training base (e.g. they self-reported having more sexual fantasies and pleasurable memories of the past). It would be very interesting to extend this research to know whether other groups who excel in such seemingly different fields of endeavour have certain commonalities as regards their Relationships with Reality. These results from the Royal Marines could also be considered as a tentative first indication of the invariability of the factors under focus in relation to socio-economic status, since very probably all of the RMCs would (by tradition) have been drawn from a considerably less privileged socio-economic background than the large majority of my Oxbridge Undergraduate participants.

When reporting my findings from what I will refer to as the RMC group, I have kept their results separate from the HAs so that the similarities between these two groups can make themselves wholly apparent.
4.3.9 What the participants thought about the 2nd questionnaire in comparison to the EPQ-R and SIPI.

I was interested to afford the participants an opportunity to give some indication of how they felt about the questionnaires, and by implication, to ascertain some further indication of what degree of earnestness and care they might have brought to the task. To this end, participants were invited to reply to three questions: WXY. (Unfortunately the frequency of reply to question Z which invited a qualitative written response, was too low to be of value).

W = How many of the questions felt interesting to you?

X = How many of the questions felt deserving of a thoughtful answer?

Y = How accurate an impression of those particular parts of your life do you think your answers give?

Participants were invited to give their answer as a percentage, and these are represented in the table below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2nd Q</th>
<th>HA</th>
<th>MA</th>
<th>UA</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>W</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>X</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Y</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It can be noted from table 4D above that the UAs were considerably less approving of the 2nd questionnaire than the other groups, despite the fact that they were assisted one-to-one throughout its completion. This reinforces my impression that long questionnaires are a relatively poor means of investigating imprisoned young offenders. I was encouraged by the moderately high scores attributed to X and Y by the HAs and MAs, but their scores may reflect an ‘interviewer effect’ as I met each one of the participants in person when I explained the ostensible purpose of the study to them (i.e. perhaps they were just being polite).
The table 4E below shows the mean scores of the three questionnaires as attributed by the HAs and UAs. (Financial restrictions on the research meant that the MAs were not invited to complete the SIPI and EPQ-R, and in respect of this the MA score for the 2nd Questionnaire has been omitted to make for a truer comparison between mean ratings for percentages awarded questions WXY):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>EPQ</th>
<th>SIPI</th>
<th>2nd Q</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>W</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>X</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Y</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>59</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4E

Chart 4F illustrates table 4E above. Bearing in mind the 2nd Questionnaire was at least four times longer than either the SIPI or the EPQ-R, it is noteworthy that it received very comparable levels of approval. The order in which the questionnaires were completed may have considerably confounded the responses, though the protocol did not require any particular order.
The following questions were asked at the end of each of the three questionnaires (i.e. 2nd Q, EPQ-R, and SIPI):

\[ W = \text{How many of the questions felt interesting to you?} \]
\[ X = \text{How many of the questions felt deserving of a thoughtful answer?} \]
\[ Y = \text{How accurate an impression of those particular parts of your life do you think your answers give?} \]

The mean percentages represented in the chart above combine the responses of 48 HAs and 50 UAs.
4.4 Findings and discussion as regards the proposed Relationship with Reality personality dimension

Contents of Section 4.4

4.4.1 Introduction
4.4.2 Questions of validity:
   • Key indicators of the validity and reliability of the findings
   • Caveats concerning validity
   • The validity of my definitions and distinctions as regards types of thinking
4.4.3 Fantasy as a recognised dimension of identity
4.4.4 My categorisation of thinking styles:
   • The originality of studying thinking types and Relationship with Reality
   • Important caveat
   • The prevalence of different types of thinking
   • The validity attributable to estimates of timings and rank-orderings
   • Further discussion of the validity of timings and rank-orderings
4.4.5 Qualitative findings from the long-interviews
   • Long-interviews with UAs regarding fantasy-use
   • Long-interviews with HAs regarding fantasy-use
   • HAs as regards Step-By-Step Planning, Imaginative Rehearsal and Longer-term Planning
   • Apparent exceptions to the low-fantasy rule among HAs
4.4.6 The phenomenon of 'localised anti-reality traits'
4.4.7 Self-report of how thinking types affect real-life
4.4.8 Behaviours used to escape real-life
4.4.9 Thoughts and behaviours used as investments in real life
4.4.10 Changes in thinking-type ratios over time
4.4.11 The potential motivations for fantasy and daydreams
4.4.12 Speculations on what might promote pro-reality traits
4.4.13 Evidence of a level of effects that might warrant classification as a personality disorder
4.4.14 Evidence for a Relationship with Reality Personality Dimension

[continued]
4.4.15 Comparing my 1st and 2nd Questionnaires to the SIPI and EPQ-R
- Results of UA and HA groups on the SIPI
- Seeking commonalities between the SIPI and Relationship with Reality
- Relationship between the EPQ-R and the HA and UA groups
- Seeking commonalities between the EPQ-R and Relationship with Reality

4.4.16 Summary and conclusions from findings as regards Relationship with Reality

4.4.17 Discussion: Possible explanations for why my findings have few precedents:
- Introduction
- Explanations for why the proposed Anti-Reality traits have not been acknowledged by wider society
- The possibility that the incidence of Anti-Reality traits has greatly escalated in recent years

4.4.18 Discussion: Monitoring our types of thought:
- Thought management: the self-regulation of the focus of our conscious attention
- Prior literature on self-directed thought-management and thinking types

4.4.19 Summary and conclusions of the discussion

4.4.20 Possibilities for future research:
- The remedial potential of thinking styles
- The criminal potential of the extreme pro-reality personality
4.4.1 Introduction

The following chapter is based upon the three pieces of fieldwork which have been detailed in the Methodology chapter 3:

- Long-Interview
- 1st Questionnaire
- 2nd Questionnaire

I divide this chapter into thematic sub-headings, and under these sub-headings I combine all of my findings from the three research methods listed above. Please note that when I refer to 4, 5 or 6 on my Likert-scale, it means that a respondent was indicating one of the following:

- 6 = Extremely True of you (i.e. more than 90% true of you)
- 5 = Very True of you (i.e. more than 75% true of you)
- 4 = Quite True of you (i.e. more than 50% true of you)

Thus 4, 5 and 6 indicated a quite confident level of response, which I felt was a minimum requirement for me to be able to attribute some importance to what were often quite nebulous or sensitive issues.

4.4.2 Questions of validity

Key indicators of the validity and reliability of the findings

For the following reasons, I am reassured as to the seriousness with which the 1st and 2nd questionnaires were self-completed by participants:

1. There were virtually no omissions of questions or pages by any of the HA, MA or RMCs. There were some among the UAs, but not a significant number.\(^1\) There was considerable overlap and repetition of themes among the questions and though an isolated individual may have gone

\(^1\)One indicator of the attentiveness with which the questionnaire was being filled in by the imprisoned inmates, is their response to the 2nd Q: 31A, in which UAs self-report using very little alcohol in their present imprisoned life, but then report much more alcohol use in the pre-prison period that the 2nd Q: 31B inquires about. Yet these same UAs are happy enough to admit in 2ndQ: 32 that they do a great deal of drug-abusing at present (indeed more than any other group).
undetected in a careless or hurried completion of the questionnaires, there is no evidence that this was widespread among any group.

2. There was no test of reliability of individual responses over time, but over the three stages of research, I was reassured to note that some consistent patterns emerged. Whether these reflect methodological bias rather than actual patterned phenomena is an issue to be discussed below.

Caveats concerning validity

My Imprisoned Young Offender (UA) results may be derived from a skewed sample of high-fantasiisers who were caught and convicted in the first place precisely because they were high fantasisers. I.e. it is possible that those of their peer group engaging in delinquent and criminal activities, but who do not use Anti-Reality Traits, do not get caught. Such a possibility is highly plausible and hard to disprove because disproof would require data from a group of non-convicted criminals.

Another danger is that any investigation that requires introspection may result in participants misleading themselves and the researcher, no matter whether deliberately or accidentally. It is possible that my Imprisoned Young Offenders:-

- were using fantasies and daydreams as an intriguing and attractive excuse for their predicament, prompted to do so by the researcher’s questions.

- are not good at introspection and thus are wildly over-estimating the occurrence of their fantasy and daydreams and worry. (Perhaps some feature of the prison experience leads them to over-estimate certain Cognitions).

Despite my efforts to reduce these possible confounds, it proved impossible for me to access ‘non-imprisoned but known offenders on probation’, or even ‘non-convicted offenders’.
The validity of my definitions and distinctions as regards types of thinking

I attempted to assess the validity of my definitions of Pure Fantasy, Wishful Daydreaming and Step by Step Planning, by presenting detailed definitions and examples of these thinking types and then asking the following:

1st Q: 1) From your own experience, do you agree that there is a difference between Pure Fantasy, Wishful Daydreaming and Planning?

There was a striking consensus: of the 47 respondents asked in the 1st Questionnaire, 43% agreed and 51% agreed strongly (i.e. a total 94%). An identical question was asked of the 140 participants of the 2nd Questionnaire, who gave it an evenly distributed mean across the 3 groups of 4.7 on my Likert-Scale, and 84% of participants gave it 4, 5 or 6.

1st Q: 2) Overall, do my descriptions give a fair picture of the difference between these three types of thinking?

(My ‘descriptions’ refer to the ones presented later in this chapter, and which I detailed in chapter 3). Of the 47 respondents who were asked this question, 51% said they were ‘good’ descriptions, and 47% said they were ‘very good’ (total 98%). The 140 participants on the 2nd Questionnaire gave the same question an evenly distributed mean across the 3 groups of 4.7 on my Likert-scale, and 87% gave it 4, 5 or 6.

Such apparently strong support for my brief but essential distinctions provides important evidence in support of my classification of cognitive activities in terms of their correlation to outcomes in real-life. Such definitional distinctions have not been made by Singer (1975) nor subsequent researchers in the field; and only Vaillant (1977; 1993) explicitly attributes real-life outcomes to the immature ego-defensive mechanism he calls ‘fantasy’, and can support his assertion with rigorously acquired and analysed longitudinal empirical evidence.
4.4.3 Fantasy as an acknowledged dimension of identity

In the 2nd Questionnaire's Section 6, I proposed a model of identity comprised of four chronological dimensions: Past, Present, Future, and Fantasy (detailed in chapter Section 5.2 of this thesis). The section then went on to describe the Fantasy dimension thus:

These are all those things I wanted to be, and often fantasised about being, but I knew I'd never be. (E.g. my conscious and deliberate fantasies about being a Secret Agent who is part of the Special Air Service, great looking, confident, much loved and loving..... How true is it that your own sense of who you are includes some sort of deliberate Fantasy Dimension?

44% of 59 respondents comprised of HAs and MAs gave this Fantasy dimension a 4, 5 or 6 on my Likert-scale. (Unfortunately, this question had only been devised in time for my last round of participants, which explains the limited number of possible respondents.) So we can see that although a fantasy identity is not self-reported as universal among these groups, it has a sizeable prevalence.

4.4.4 My categorisation of thinking-types

In my questionnaires, I proposed the following eight types of thought:

1. Pleasurable Remembering
2. Unhelpful Worrying about the future
4. Pure Fantasy
5. Day-to-day Problem Solving
6. Wishful Daydreaming about the future
7. Regretting the Past
8. Imaginative Rehearsal

Such detailed typological definitions are not intended to be vacuum-sealed and discrete, but a strong majority of individuals I interviewed nonetheless readily recognised and acknowledged them all, and appeared to have little difficulty in categorising their own thoughts once they turned their minds to the task. Similarly, in the 2nd Questionnaire, 68% of 140 respondents said
there was not a type of thinking missing from this list that they personally did a lot of. These distinctions between types of thinking are crucial to my general thesis, but have no mainstream precedent of which I am aware.

The originality of studying thinking types and relationship with reality

It is an indication of the little regard generally paid to the potential importance of fantasies and daydreams and the focus of consciousness, that throughout my M.Phil. and Doctoral research, not one of my 86 interview participants, who comprised both HAs and UAs, reported that they had ever discussed these subjects in any detail with friends or family or teachers. Nor had they ever been formally interviewed about them. This interview data was largely supported in the 1st and 2nd Questionnaires:

1st Q: 104) Have you ever before been asked about your daydreaming and fantasy in this sort of detail before?

88% of 97 participants said probably never or absolutely never.

2nd Q: 50) You have never before been asked about how much of the different types of thinking you do.

81% of 140 gave this 4, 5, or 6 on my Likert-scale.

An important caveat

My preliminary study of 'thinking-types' (such as fantasy, planning or regret) does not investigate certain potentially very important characteristics of thinking. Though my research investigated the 'quantity' (in terms of hours and minutes) and the 'Intention' (or motivation), and the possible 'effect' in life-outcomes, I acknowledge that a fuller list of potentially important characteristics might also comprise the following:

1. Frequency: how often does the individual practice this type of thinking?
2. Duration: how long does that thinking-type last for?

3. Purity: how undiluted and undistorted is it by other thought-types?

4. Intensity: how vivid is the 'imaginal rehearsal' or the fantasy? What level of engagement is there with the mental activity?

5. Perspective: is the thinker looking out onto her/his cognitively created scenario, or is she/he a viewer of it? Is it in slow-motion or real-time or speeded up?

What the above list of possible characteristics means in terms of my results section, is that it may *not* be important what 'absolute quantities' the participants attribute to one thinking-type or another. It may be the case that some other characteristic of the thinking-type may be more important, such as duration or purity or intensity, which were not asked about in my research hitherto, or that the *ratio* of one thinking type to another is a key factor.

**The Prevalence of different types of thinking**

My participants on the 1st and 2nd Questionnaires met the following note:

This next section asks how much of the different types of thinking you do in a day, from waking-up first thing to falling asleep last thing at night.

These questions all applied to the participants *present day* lives. An identical set of questions was asked in both the 1st and 2nd questionnaires and, as can be seen below, the pattern of results was strikingly uniform (see for example, charts 4G and 4H). Note that the self-reported accuracy ratings are discussed towards the end of this section.

**HOW MUCH PURE FANTASY?** (about things that you know will never happen) In a typical day, how much pure fantasy will you do in total in terms of minutes?
Results: The groups’ mean number of minutes spent fantasising in a typical day was:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1st Q</th>
<th>2nd Q</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>HAs</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RMC</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MAs</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UAs</td>
<td>176</td>
<td>137</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4G
The 1st Q Anova is highly significant: p < .001
The 2nd Q Anova is significant: p < .05

Observe in table 4G how the two-fold increase in fantasy among MAs compared with HAs. Also, note how UAs do three times as much as MAs and five times as much as HAs/RMCs.

HOW MUCH HOPEFUL DAYDREAMING? (about things you think will happen.) In a typical day, how much wishful daydreaming will you do in total in terms of hours & minutes?

Results: The groups’ mean number of minutes spent in hopeful daydreaming in a typical day was:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1st Q</th>
<th>2nd Q</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>HAs</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RMC</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MAs</td>
<td>110</td>
<td>94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UAs</td>
<td>154</td>
<td>176</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4H
The 1st Q Anova is highly significant: p < .001
The 2nd Q Anova is very significant: p < .01

Once again a pattern can be observed (in table 4H): HAs and RMCs do considerably less Hopeful Daydreaming than MAs; and UAs do by far the most.
Chart 4G: A comparison between groups on the number of minutes spent fantasising in a typical day.

Chart 4H: A comparison between groups on the number of minutes spent ‘Wishful Daydreaming’ in a typical day.
How much unhelpful worry & regret? (i.e. When you worry about things rather than coming up with any answers.) In a typical day, how much worrying and regretting will you do in total in terms of minutes?

Results: The groups' mean number of minutes spent in unhelpful worry and regret in a typical day was:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1st Q</th>
<th>2nd Q</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>HAs</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RMC</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MAs</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UAs</td>
<td>160</td>
<td>189</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.1
The 1st Q Anova is very significant: p < .01
The 2nd Q Anova is very significant: p < .01

As regards table 4.1, key themes for worry among UAs were ‘money; things you’re deeply ashamed of; feeling that you’ve missed the boat in life; and being a failure’.

Key themes for worry among HAs were ‘money, shame and serious injury’.

In my questionnaires, I was not trying to determine whether worry precedes under-achievement or vice-versa, only to explore the possibility that excessive worry might exacerbate the circumstances in which the worried individual finds himself, or delay remedial action. Pertinent to this tentative hypothesis is the work of Jon Cabat-Zinn (1990) among prisoners in the USA using a technique called ‘Mindfulness based stress-reduction’. At the core of that therapy is Attentional Control Training (ATC) which aims to help the prisoners to avoid ‘rumination’ which is defined as ‘regret in respect of the past, and foreboding of the future’.

How much pleasurable remembering? - i.e. memories about anything that you personally did in the past and still like to remember. One example of a Pleasurable Memory is remembering how much you enjoyed spending time with someone special to you. In a typical day, how much ‘pleasurable remembering’ will you do in total in terms of hours and minutes?
Chart 41: A comparison between groups on the number of minutes spent in 'Unhelpful Worry and Regret' in a typical day.

Chart 4J: Comparison between groups on the number of minutes spent in 'Pleasurable Remembering' in a typical day.
Results: The groups' mean number of minutes of pleasurable remembering in a typical day:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1st Q</th>
<th>2nd Q</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>HAs</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RMC</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MAs</td>
<td>105</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UAs</td>
<td>260</td>
<td>208</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4J
The 1st Q Anova is highly significant: p < .001
The 2nd Q Anova is very significant: p < .01

It can be observed in table 4J how consistent with my theory the results appear to be: the UAs reported spending more than 5 times as many minutes as the HAs do in pleasurable remembering, which my theory would argue is an 'escapist' activity in this context and in these quantities. There is also a familiar pattern repeating itself here: HA scores being lower than RMCs', being strikingly lower than MAs, and very strikingly lower than UAs.

STEP-BY-STEP PLANNING (Bear in mind that planning might also include deliberately practising or rehearsing activities in your imagination, like making an important phone-call or playing in a sports match, with the plan of performing it better in real-life.) In a typical day, how much planning will you do in total in terms of minutes?

Results: The groups' mean number of minutes spent step-by-step planning in a typical day was:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1st Q</th>
<th>2nd Q</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>HAs</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RMC</td>
<td>135</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MAs</td>
<td>122</td>
<td>106</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UAs</td>
<td>168</td>
<td>159</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4K
The 1st Q Anova is very significant: p < .01
The 2nd Q Anova is significant: p = .05
Chart 4K: A comparison between groups on the number of minutes spent 'Step-by-Step Planning' in a typical day.
The results of table 4K are at first sight paradoxical in the context of my theory, until we consider how the lives of Marines and inmates might leave a lot of time to consider what they will do when they 'get out'. i.e. However, the RMCs and UAs are not similar as regards any of the other types of thinking noted above, which brings in to question a purely 'environmental' explanation for these findings. A second issue is raised in respect of the evidence that 50% of UAs in general are likely to return to custody within 6 months (Home Office 1998), so that we might reasonably suspect that my particular UA participants' apparent devotion to planning may involve planning that is either unrealistic and unhelpful for the great majority, or even that it involves planning more crimes! Both possibilities seem ripe for further exploration.

The validity attributable to participants' estimates of timings and rank-orderings

Extreme caution must be exercised in interpreting this timing data for the following reasons. Participants were asked the following question:

2nd Q: 8) How true is it that you were able to achieve a reasonable level of accuracy with your answers on these 'Hours and Minutes' questions?

The self-reported accuracy (for the timings represented in the tables above and in charts 6.1a and b) was very modest, averaging only 3.4 on my 6 point Likert-scale (i.e. regarded as somewhere between '50% accurate' and 'more than 50% but less than 75% accurate'). Furthermore, though each group was asked to make the same self-evaluation of thought-types and was equally disadvantaged in doing so, it can be seen from the following percentages that there is a very significant difference (p < .005) between the mean accuracy ratings self-reported by each group; and the following figures indicate the percentage of each group who gave the question regarding accuracy (2nd Q: 8) 4, 5 or 6 on my Likert-scale:

HA = 35% (and a Likert-scale mean of 2.7)
MA = 58% (and a Likert-scale mean of 3.8)
UA = 69% (and a Likert-scale mean of 3.8)
It may be that it is these very considerable difference in self-report accuracy that explains the very considerable differences in the absolute timings self-reported, i.e. that the difference in timings self-reported for different types of thought do not reflect an interesting psychological phenomenon but rather they reflect simply a pattern in the quality of self-report.

On the subject of accuracy, it should also be noted (as the table 4L below illustrates) that there are very considerable differences between the ‘standard deviations from the mean’ between the three groups. However, these large differences are true across all groups, and are roughly in relative proportion to the mean number of minutes reported by the groups:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type</th>
<th>HA</th>
<th>MA</th>
<th>UA</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fantasy</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>102</td>
<td>219</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Daydreaming</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>138</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Planning</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>91</td>
<td>190</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Worries</td>
<td>147</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>275</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Memories</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>96</td>
<td>220</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In light of the above, it is reasonable that Singer (in a personal correspondence, October 31, 1996 regarding these results) wrote “You need to be careful in pointing out that while people may be roughly accurate in reporting the general frequency of certain types of daydreaming, they are unlikely to have a good way of estimating exact times (e.g. minutes).”

In respect of the apparent difficulty of attributing timings to the amount of one type of thinking or another, and in an attempt to triangulate my findings, my research also invited respondents to ‘rank-order’ their types of thinking. The self-reported accuracy rating for Rank Ordering across the 3 groups
(N=140) was an evenly spread mean of 4.3 on my Likert-scale, and the following figures indicate the percentage of each group who gave the question regarding ‘rank ordering accuracy’ (2nd Q: 11) 4, 5 or 6 on my Likert-scale:

- HA = 73%  (and a Likert-scale mean of 4.0)
- MA = 90%  (and a Likert-scale mean of 4.6)
- UA = 75%  (and a Likert-scale mean of 4.3)

This is altogether a much more convincing impression concerning the accuracy of the rank order data, and the following table 4M shows the percentage of participants in each group who nominated the type of thinking either 1st or 2nd out of a possible 8 places for the amount of it they considered themselves to do in a typical day ‘nowadays’ (Four types of thinking were of particular note):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>HA(48)</th>
<th>MA(42)</th>
<th>UA(50)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Problem Solving:</td>
<td>79%</td>
<td>62%</td>
<td>22%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regret</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>28%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rehearsal</td>
<td>48%</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pleasurable Remembering</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It can be seen in table 4M that very considerably more HAs than the MAs or UAs report Day-to-day Problem Solving as one of their top two thinking types, whereas we saw in the ‘minutes per day’ question above that Step-by-step Planning was favoured by MAs and UAs. It may be that MA and UA groups are prone not to focus their attentions on the task in hand, but prefer to use what they call ‘planning’ as a means of escaping their immediate problems and responsibilities. Note, too, how many more of the imprisoned group report Pleasurable Remembering and Regretting as one of their top two thinking types, rather than Imaginative Rehearsal, whereas this latter type of thinking is very popular among the HAs. Related to this latter findings
finding, the Canadian Olympic sports coach Orlick notes that "Imagery deployed by experts is almost always from the inside looking out, rather than being the 'eye of the audience'. Olympic Athletes may work through their routine [in their heads] five times a day, and gradually overcome the period where the story [that movie in their head] is muddled and unclear, or they can't help imagining miss-performances, all the way through until they can control that image enough to see a perfect performance every time" (1990: 116).

When it came to rank-ordering, it is notable that Fantasy and Worry were chosen only by about 10% of participants as their first or second most frequent style of thought, though for fantasy this figure rose to almost 20% when participants were asked to recount their prior two years. This is a low percentage in terms of the three group as a whole, but it is nonetheless a serious self-statement for anyone to consider that fantasy or worry is their first or second most prevalent type of thought. Table 4N below offers a different statistical perspective on the rank-ordering of thinking types:

Table 4N: The groups' mean rank-orderings attributed to thinking-types in a typical day, with a low figure indicating the type being done more often e.g. 1.7 indicates that it was considered the most prevalent thinking-type:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>HA</th>
<th>MA</th>
<th>UA</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Problem Solving</td>
<td>1.7</td>
<td>2.4</td>
<td>4.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Planning</td>
<td>4.7</td>
<td>4.2</td>
<td>4.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Daydreaming</td>
<td>3.4</td>
<td>4.4</td>
<td>4.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rehearsal</td>
<td>3.4</td>
<td>3.7</td>
<td>5.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reminiscing</td>
<td>4.9</td>
<td>4.3</td>
<td>2.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Worry</td>
<td>5.5</td>
<td>4.9</td>
<td>5.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regretting</td>
<td>6.2</td>
<td>6.1</td>
<td>4.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fantasy</td>
<td>6.0</td>
<td>5.7</td>
<td>5.6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Chart 4N: Percentage of HAs, MAs and UAs who ranked the 4 thinking-styles 'Problem-Solving', 'Imaginative Rehearsal', 'Regret' and 'Pleasurable Remembering' as their first or second most common type of thinking in a typical day.
Chart 4N: Percentage of HAs, MAAs and UAAs who ranked the 4 thinking-styles 'Problem-Solving', 'Imaginative Rehearsal', 'Regret' and 'Pleasurable Remembering' as their first or second most common type of thinking in a typical day.
With regard to the above table 4N, I observe the following most notable features:

1. HAs rank Problem Solving and also Daydreaming considerably higher than MA$s$ (Perhaps the HAs are using Daydreaming as a form of self-motivation). The HAs rank Worry about the future, and also Reminiscing, considerably lower than MA$s$. HAs and MA$s$ are very similar in their ranking of Rehearsal, Regret and Planning. In summary, the relative closeness in the two groups across these results might suggest that it is not simply the rank-ordering that research should be looking at, but some other characteristic(s) of the thinking-types which might help distinguish these two groups.

2. UAs rank Problem Solving and Imaginative Rehearsal much lower than do either the MA$s$ or HAs, and yet UAs rank Pleasurable Remembering and Regret much more highly. There is also some corroborative evidence re these rank-orderings if we examine the two years before imprisonment. In brief: self-reported mean rank-orderings indicated considerably lower ranking among UAs for Reminiscing and Regret in the two years before imprisonment. Conversely, Problem Solving was ranked much more highly, but was still very low compared to HAs and MA$s$, and the same was true of Imaginative Rehearsal. There is some implication here that ‘day to day problem solving’ (and the Imaginative Rehearsal that can support it) is not a major focus of UAs thinking-styles, and this trait may distinguish them from MA$s$ and HAs. However, I argue here, as I do elsewhere, that the UAs’ prison environment might or might not be a causal factor here but, either way, the phenomena beg the question ‘Are these unusual ratios of thinking-types exacerbating or maintaining the rehabilitative problems that young offenders face when they are released from custody?’ Future research may provide some answers.

In overall summary of the above timings and rank orderings attributed to various thinking-types by the groups, I argue that though they do not offer a very coherent set of results, neither are they entirely contradictory. For instance, both absolute timings and rank orderings seem to indicate that Pleasurable Remembering is a key thought-type for very many more UAs than MA$s$, and for many more MA$s$ than HAs. On the other hand, the very considerable timings allotted fantasy and daydream by UAs and even MA$s$ are
not at all reflected in the rank orderings. Further research is needed to clarify what is happening here.

**Further discussion of the validity attributable to the estimates of timings and rank-orderings**

In considering the validity of the above results, the following can be borne in mind.

1. The participants all answered their self-report questionnaires or interview questions individually and with no prior knowledge of what might be considered average or normal or acceptable by the researcher or society in terms of hours and minutes and general preferences. Yet, even so, the answers from members of the same group are highly consistent, and yet very significantly different from the comparison groups.

2. My own figures are supportive of the work of Anthony and Gibbins (1992) in their research with deaf 21-24 year olds. They referred to ‘high frequency daydreamers’ as those spending 14 or more hours a week in this activity, and ‘Low Frequency daydreamers’ as those spending less than 1.5 hours a week. Interestingly, they found ‘high frequency daydreamers’ were more depressed, had lower self-esteem and lower achievement levels and felt more lonely than their low frequency peers.

3. The possibility that measurable IQ is the underlying variable at work here was addressed in Chapter 2 of this thesis (The Research Methods) but it is pertinent that Singer notes that “Whenever intelligence tests have been employed, the degree of intelligence does not especially appear to influence the reported frequency of daydreaming or any special pattern of fantasy” (1975: 66).

In terms of how the thinking types might change as people grow older, it is noteworthy that very similar patterns were observed in the rank ordering for the two years before A-levels, or before arrest, compared with their present levels (though accuracy was rated lower for this past era, at a mean of 3.5 on the Likert-scale). This may have been a result of ‘acquiescence’ on the part of the respondents who perhaps found it more difficult to calculate their past
thinking styles and so simply gave the same answer as for the present day. On the other hand, UAs readily indicated the marked differences between their use of different types of thought during custody periods and pre-custody periods, which gives some indication as to how sensitively they were responding to the questions.

A final piece of evidence as regards the validity of these results is provided by the section in the 1st Questionnaire that followed the ‘place yourself on the line’ format illustrated below. This was yet another attempt on my part to allow the participants to represent their private cognitive activities by some means other than Hours and Minutes, Rank Ordering, or the Likert-scale.

1st Q: 91) Where would you normally put yourself on this line? 
(Just put a cross on it).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Spend time in your own private world and with daydreams, tv, novels, movies etc.</th>
<th>Prefer Half &amp; half</th>
<th>Always planning &amp; working &amp; involved in everyday life.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>X____1st_____x____2nd_____x____3rd_____x____4th_____X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Fantasy 50/50 Real-life

The answers to the above question underscore yet again the substantial role of the fantasy and escapist world for the majority of my participants: one-quarter of all 97 people placed themselves in the 4th quartile (the largely reality-oriented quartile), which means that three-quarters of the sample placed themselves in quartiles 3, 2 or 1. Notably, 25% of 32 HAs put themselves in the 2nd quartile, and 25% of RMCs, indicating a high percentage of fantasy-oriented behaviour as a daily norm even for HAs.

Nonetheless, as sections below will demonstrate, there is some discrepancy in the self-report of fantasy activity, since it was reported far less during face-to-face long-interviews with HAs (n=50) compared with the self-report via anonymous questionnaires with HAs (n=80). The two samples contained different individuals, but both contained numbers sufficient to make the self-report discrepancy unlikely to be a chance factor.

I conclude that the issue of validity as regards the above data, is very likely a complex subject, but not necessarily unmanageable, and that my results are
worthy of some attention as a preliminary to future research of a more controlled nature.

4.4.5 Qualitative findings from the long-interviews

Long-interviews With UAs regarding fantasy-use

Singer (personal communication: October 31, 1996) wrote “Most studies of impulsive or aggressive teenagers or youth that I’ve seen suggest they don’t daydream much but act quickly on their desires.” This observation is in stark contrast indeed to my own work cited above and to the qualitative work below. It is possible that previous studies have accessed non-convicted or non-imprisoned offenders, on the other hand perhaps they have not been sufficiently sensitive to issues upon which my own work focuses. The following quotes are particularly illustrative of themes common to the majority of the 18 interviewed UAs:

Yeah, I fantasised. I was brilliant at it! It got to the point where I’d come home from school and just fantasise for hours. [age 14] I was fantasising too much and I wasn’t actually doing it. When I got bored, I’d automatically switch and start thinking about this. I couldn’t keep it out. Real life couldn’t compete.

I preferred my daydream world, that was a better world.

[Did it ever become a problem?] Yeah, cos I’d have these visions, then I’d come across a barrier in real life. I’d focus on the achieving it (my goal) rather than the how to achieve it. I was daydreaming for 1 or 2 hours a day. I had an excellent imagination.

By contrast, two young offenders denied ever having had any interest in fantasy at all. There was no middle ground. However, the two who denied fantasy-use were both characterised by articulating their ardent need to ‘control’: to control either themselves, prison, computer systems or their lives. In contrast, their crimes demonstrated explosive bursts of uncontrolled violence. It is pertinent to draw a comparison between these two individuals’ attempts to control the external environment through violence and/or
money, while the other young offenders may have attempted to control their internal environment through fantasy and drugs.

Question: How does your imagination change in prison?

I do twice as much daydreaming in here as on the out. Daydreams get more intense.

It definitely does something to your head. I imagine [things] more often. You’ll fantasise out of all proportion.

My imagination has got more intense and bizarre. I do it pretty much most of the day. Because I’m doing a lot of it, it has to get a little bit stronger each time to keep the buzz up.

This environmentally-induced variation in the individual’s imagination was reminiscent of the sensory deprivation studies summarised by Singer “The studies demonstrated that when man is denied stimulation from the outside, he either produces more inner stimulation or perforce attends more actively to the ever-present stream of his own imagery or fantasy”(1975:76)

Question: So what is it you daydream about in here?

Imagination in here deals with two issues: women....and what you’ll do when you’re released [i.e. life-wise].

You promise yourself stuff. That’s where I’m gonna go and I’m not gonna stop until I’m there [i.e. lifestyle].

I’ve had angry and bitter imaginations.

While it may not be surprising that imprisoned youngsters testify to using more fantasy and daydreams, it is certainly surprising how this phenomenon has never received more than a line or so of comment in the mainstream forensic literature. This may be because these mental processes may be denied by the individual prisoner who feels it necessary to maintain ‘face’ so as to stem further aggression by other prisoners or the prison system.
Psychological study of the way hostages cope may contribute a perspective on the coping strategies of teenage prisoners. Strentz explains how “many former hostages speak of the happy ability to escape mentally from the trauma by engaging in fantasy” (1987:5). Strentz argues that withdrawing into the imagination enables the hostage to gain some sense of control, while also distracting himself from reality. This phenomenon of an ‘altered inner life’ brought about by some aspect or aspects of the prison environment or perhaps the prisoner’s reaction to it, has been observed by practitioners: Barnes2, for example, (June 1998, personal communication) observed “It’s ironic that what these boys need is to become more of a part in society and what prison is about is fantasy... and the boredom which leads to more fantasy.”

**Long-Interviews with HAs regarding fantasy-use**

Of the 50 HAs who partook in my long-interviews, three-quarters of them claimed that they deliberately stopped themselves from fantasising for more than a few moments per day. They explained that they strictly controlled it because they felt that on principle it was a waste of time, or worst still caused dissatisfaction with their real lives.

> I never ever Wishful Daydream, on principle. Daydreams have the potential of making you very unhappy with what you’ve got so I actively censor my thoughts.

> I’d see the fantasy side of things as a weakness.

For those who permitted themselves to indulge, it was only half an hour before sleep or a fleeting few seconds in the middle of the day, or for a few minutes in the week. They were aware of their cravings to do so, but resisted these. In a sense, many HA fantasy-users treated it like alcohol or junk food - something to be indulged in rarely. Others used it more instrumentally to help themselves ‘think outside the box’ of normal activity and so raise the possibility of new ideas that might then be implemented in reality. For example:

> Fantasy can provide some oxygen to let my ideas heat up.

---

2 Psychological Assistant, Feltham YOI, 12 years
To conclude this appraisal among the HAs, the following quotes are intended to help ground the findings concerning the participant’s thinking styles in the context of people’s wider lives:

At 18, Jim declined the opportunity to become a concert-level musician and went on to take an Oxbridge double-first, before joining one of the world’s top law firms. “Fantasising? - no I don’t do that.” On the other hand, Jim engaged in Wishful Daydreaming for up to an hour a day about the resolution of a particularly troubling emotional relationship.

Kate is a top American science graduate. “I hardly ever fantasise – a few minutes a week.” She deliberately fostered Pro-Reality daydreams, and inhibited the Anti-Reality fantasies.

Rick is an Oxbridge Ph.D. in science who has been headhunted for a leading Investment Bank. “I might do half an hour’s Pure Fantasy in a week. It’s been that way since I was 13 or so.”

Despite these quotes, I must reiterate that there was a discrepancy between the interview and questionnaire self-report data and this suggests that people are embarrassed to admit to fantasising, and this finding may suggest why it has been under-represented in clinical and educational literature and research.

The HA group as regards Step-By-Step Planning, Imaginative-Rehearsal and Longer-Term Planning.

Almost without exception the HAs were ardent planners and doers. They were not risk-takers. They invested themselves in educational courses and qualifications and job-interview preparation, all of which promised enhanced rewards in terms of self-esteem, occupational status, income and lifestyle.

My family will plan to within an inch of their lives. I'm the same: always scheming....possibilities and scenarios, but very much realistic ones. I've thought them all through and visualised myself doing it to see whether it’s a viable option. When I was 13, I predicted what I'd be doing in 10 years time. You strive to live your daydreams; i.e. to make your aspirations real.
I'll use imagination to project into the future to see what my life would be like if I did so-and-so, how it would feel. I'm testing out reality.

The importance of Imaginative Rehearsal to prepare for reality was illustrated by the national-level sportsman who said:

I do at least as much mental training as physical training.

I'm learning to live a lot more in the present, but I make a point of being sure that present pleasures and activities all complement the future, you know, my activities simultaneously serve two roles: present and future.

This requirement for activities to have a dual-purpose was very common among the HAs. The majority of HAs did not wholly sacrifice the present for some promise of future gratification, but were careful to make sure that the present was an adequately pleasurable and thus sustainable activity in itself.

**Apparent exceptions to the low-fantasy rule among HAs.**

Exceptions to rules are very useful in reminding us that the present level of Psychology can only offer likelihoods and not the more comprehensive laws of the Physical Sciences. On the BBC Radio 4 show, ‘Desert Island Discs’ (Sunday 19th January 1997), Hugh Laurie (age 36) was the guest. Hugh had won a place at Cambridge University and rowed in the world famous Oxford v Cambridge Boat Race, while also being elected President of the Cambridge Footlights (the acclaimed student drama society). Before he was even 30, Hugh had gone on to become a household name in the UK as a TV actor-comedian (partnering Stephen Fry), and latterly as a fiction author. In the radio interview, he said he was a great worrier, and then added:

I have an extremely intense fantasy life. It’s quite debilitating because it actually stops me getting things done. My fantasies are so accurate, so realistic, that I never bother to do any of the things for real. I was and still am a great fantasiser.
Yet Hugh Laurie has quite patently achieved very highly in all of three arenas: academic, extra-curricular and professional. I would suggest that in Hugh Laurie’s case, the real-life of acting and comedy may have drawn very heavily upon his fantasy-world which was thus made highly productive in the service of the real-world. Vaillant has noted a similar occurrence in the life of the Nobel Laureate writer Eugene O’Neill whose “capacity for fantasy allowed him salvation” (1993: 270). This also bears comparison with Storr’s (1988) observation of how the writer Anthony Trollope was bullied at public school and retreated into his imagination “Thus it came to pass that I was always going about with some castle in the air firmly built within my mind.” Trollope went on “There can, I imagine, hardly be a more dangerous mental practice; but I have often doubted whether, had it not been my practice, I should ever have written a novel. I learned in this way.... to live in a world altogether outside the world of my own material life” (ibid.: 92).

The above offers circumstantial evidence at least that considerable fantasy-use, even to the extent that it is the dominant feature of a personality, need not necessarily inhibit high-achievement, particularly it would seem if that fantasy can be harnessed to serve real-life aims.

4.4.6 The phenomenon of ‘Localised Anti-Reality Traits’

One of the reasons perhaps that my proposed Anti-Reality syndrome might have proved so invisible or mercurial, is that some individuals may only exhibit its characteristic cognitive-behavioural traits in very particular arenas of their lives. My model in the previous chapter refers to this as ‘localised’ Anti-Reality traits. One example of this is my long-interview with an accomplished professional who enjoys rich, stable and long-term friendships with same-gender friends, but in the arena of his extra-curricular hobbies and in terms of heterosexual relations, that same person feels strongly that his real-life endeavours in these latter two arenas may have been significantly inhibited by his resort to wishful daydreaming and fantasy about the lovers that have not been, and the sporting potential that was never realised. As he told me:
I have escaped into fantasy by the ton! A couple of hours per day, probably a lot more, at times almost a continual thing. It wasn’t a good place to invest.

This self-assessment is made all the more credible because the participant is a well-qualified and highly experienced psychotherapist. His personal account demonstrates how lives are not necessarily brought to a standstill by Localised Anti-Reality Traits, but are simply not as fulfilling as they might be because the individual is unaware of, or unable to control, the inhibiting and maladaptive role that fantasy might be playing in some quarter(s) of his or her real life. Thus, the 1st Questionnaire investigated this possibility among 97 participants:

1st Q: 101) The following questions wish to know whether your level of fantasising or reality-orientation is the same in all areas of your life (work, hobbies, sex life etc.), or whether there are parts of your life that are different?

(A linear dimension was used as illustrated below, and participants marked a cross to denote their own typical position).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1st</th>
<th>2nd</th>
<th>3rd</th>
<th>4th</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fantasy</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Real-life</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>50/50</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

80% of 97 respondents placed themselves in the 3rd or 4th quartiles as regards Working or Studying Life and also Friendships, i.e. they rated themselves as strongly reality-oriented in these arenas. Hobbies and sports and past-times were similarly rated. However, when it came to ‘Your Sexual Experiences’, and ‘Your Romantic Life’, and ‘Your Physical Features’ (i.e. your looks and voice), 33% in total across the groups placed themselves in the 1st and 2nd quartiles where fantasy accounts for 50% or more of their mental engagement with that feature of their lives.

4.4.7 Self-report of how thinking-types effect real-life

The table 4P below shows the self-reporting of questions 18a to 26a inclusive on my 2nd Questionnaire, which asked “How true is it that your (type of thought) gets in the way of real life.
Table 4P shows the ratings for the present day, and the figures are percentages referring to how many participants in each group replied with a rating of 4, 5 or 6 on my Likert-scale:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Thought:</th>
<th>HA(n=48)</th>
<th>MA(n=42)</th>
<th>UA(n=50)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Worry</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pleasurable Remembering</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regretting the past</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Daydreaming</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fantasy</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 6.10

Analysing table 4P, note the familiar and predicted pattern on all items: HAs are considerably lower than MAs and UAs. This may be taken on face value to mean that fewer HAs engage in these thought-types; or it may mean that HAs don’t let these thoughts interfere with their real life; or it may simply mean that more HAs are grateful for their relative high-achievement and see no reason to think these thought-types got in the way, whereas MAs and UAs are rather more pleased to have the opportunity to attribute blame for present circumstances. Unfortunately, this type of quantitative data can offer no explanations. Nonetheless, levels of prevalence are by no means negligible, and as has been noted previously, the account of the years before university were quite similar to the present-day ratings. Unfortunately, too, this data does not reveal the intensity of the different types of thought, nor the level of effect on real life, but there is at least acknowledgement that such thinking-types can sometimes be thought to interfere with real-life in some way, and the above table suggests that this may differ significantly between groups. The particular parts of real-life affected by one thought-type or another were invariant between the HA and MA groups (unfortunately UAs rarely answered this question), and were ranked as follows: ‘working life/college life’ was mentioned twice as much as ‘sex life’, which was mentioned three times as much as either ‘friendship’ or ‘sport’. Some representative qualitative replies to this question included:

Media images of beautiful/sexual/complex women make it hard to settle for the imperfections of real life people.
I didn't work hard enough at sex life and friendships.

Future plans were hindered.

Of the various types of thoughts proposed in the list above, fantasy was rated by far the least-frequent offender in terms of ‘getting in the way of real-life’, but when one considers the several quite striking responses that follow below, the role of fantasy and daydreaming are arguably more complex than the above findings suggest, and also more prevalent than the above rating indicates:

1st Q: 58) How important is your Daydreaming & Fantasy to you, personally?

A total of 32% of 97 participants evenly distributed across the four groups said ‘very or vital’; a further 40% said ‘quite important’.

1st Q: 53) How much do you think Daydreaming and Fantasy is a vital “safety-valve” for your unfulfilled needs and desires?

A striking 90% of 97 participants thought it was a vital safety-valve ‘sometimes or more often’. This indicates perhaps the perceived significance of these faculties for mental good-health, and that it might be a grave mistake to attempt to curtail these activities altogether without a fuller appreciation of the role they play for any particular individual. Nonetheless, it would seem the users of this ‘safety-mechanism’ are anxious as to its negative potential:

2nd Q:24) Are you addicted to at least some particular Daydream & Fantasy themes or scenes? (By ‘addicted’, I mean a strong desire or almost irresistible urge to fantasise or daydream about something)

58% of 140 gave this 4, 5 or 6 on my Likert-scale; and an identical question in the 1st Questionnaire had 45% of participants agreeing ‘quite true’ or ‘very true’. (Note that my model specifically suggests it is useful to make such comparisons with addictions to substances).
1st Q: 51) You sometimes feel that you do *too much* D & F for your own good?

47% of 32 HAs said quite or very true, compared with 55% of 33 MAS, 76% of 17 UAs and 36% of 14 RMCs.

1st Q: 55) You sometimes worry that your D & F might be too extreme

30% of respondents evenly spread among the groups said ‘sometimes or more often’.

1st Q: 60) In your own experience, too much D & F makes it hard for reality to live up to the D & F?

A total of 64% of 97 participants said ‘sometimes or more often’.

1st Q: 88) You have dreamt so high, imagined so much, that real life (real lovers, real jobs) seem quite a let down

44% of 97 participants said somewhat true or truer.

My theory had not predicted the keen sense of dissatisfaction with real-life that so many of these youngsters report feeling. Moreover, the level of responses to the above group of questions indicates yet again that daydreaming and fantasy may play an important role in many young people’s lives.

### 4.4.8 Behaviours used to escape real-life

On the 2nd Questionnaire, Questions 27 to 36 (inclusive) investigated which behaviours (as opposed to cognitive activities) were used to ‘escape real-life for a while’. The questionnaire suggested the following:

*We Sometimes Use One Or More Of The Following To Escape Real-Life For A While (Perhaps Because Our Real Life Feels Too Uncomfortable Or Too Tiring):*
Table 4Q: The percentages of groups giving each proposition a 4, 5 or 6 on the Likert-scale:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>HA(n=48)</th>
<th>MA(n=42)</th>
<th>UA(n=50)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Watching TV</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Listening to Music</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reading Fiction</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Computers/Internet</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drinking alcohol</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Taking Drugs</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*Other activity</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 6.11

*This was very often sport, though masturbation was also mentioned.

Note in 4Q the low alcohol and high drug prevalence among the UAs, reflecting the peculiarities of their custodial environment. Note too, how the UA group scores highest on almost every other escapist-use of an activity. Also consistent with my model is the pattern of MAs scoring higher frequencies than HAs on every factor but ‘computers’ and ‘other activity’; indeed very considerably more MAs use tv, drugs, fiction and music to escape reality. It is particularly interesting that sport is seen by some participants as a means to ‘escape reality’. It may simply indicate that those participants have interpreted very broadly my turn of phrase ‘to escape reality’, or it may indicate that sport is sometime very deliberately used to postpone or escape real-life problems or responsibilities; in which case, it may prove to be a very positive way of doing so.

The following question was a further investigation of those behaviours used to ‘escape-reality for a while’:

2nd Q: 34a) You feel addicted to at least one of the following (i.e. you find it very hard to resist them): television, films and videos, music, computers or internet, novels, pornography. Please circle the activity (s) in this list to which you feel rather addicted.

(50% of the participants bothered to circle particular activities to which they felt addicted. The range of addictive activities were common to all groups: computers, pornography, television, novels and films and video were equally
cited; but 'listening to music' was cited *twice* as many times as other activities).

As regards question 2nd Q:34a above, self-reported frequency of 'addiction' to a behaviour or activity at a 4, 5 or 6 rating on my Likert Scale were HA = 33%  MA = 61%  UA = 56%. This trend was supported by the Anova which revealed a highly significant difference (p < .005) in my Likert Scale ratings between the means for all three groups in reply to this same question about addiction, with HAs at 2.6; MAs at 3.7; and UAs at 3.8. An almost identical question in the 1st questionnaire (1st Q: 79b) revealed similarly highly significant differences (p = .008) between the means for an MA and HA group, with the MAs reporting higher frequency of addiction than the HAs. The day to day effect of such differences is perhaps well illustrated in the answer to the following question:

1st Q: 8) How many hours of tv and video did you watch on an average weekday between getting up in the morning and going to bed? (including morning tv and evening watching and any other times of the day)

There was a very significant statistical difference between the HAs and MAs (p < .001) with the MAs most likely to say over 4 hours, and HAs were more likely to say over 2 hours.

In summary, the above sub-section reveals that fewer HAs than MAs report themselves addicted to some behaviours or using behaviours to escape reality, and the UAs are more likely than either group to do so. Furthermore, I suggest that the very fact that participants are ready to self-report that they are 'addicted to certain activities (i.e. you find it very hard to resist them)', and in addition are prepared to self-report that some activities are not always engaged in for their own sake but simply to 'escape reality', are potentially two important findings.

### 4.4.9 Thoughts and behaviours used as investments in real life

2nd Questionnaire questions 37 to 47 inclusive were largely concerned with inviting the participants to consider their 'reality-oriented thoughts and behaviour'. For example:
2nd Q:37) How true of you is it that the vast majority of the time you deliberately use things like music, books, TV and films to inspire and encourage you in your real life activities (in the same way perhaps that people use music to motivate themselves through aerobics sessions or sports training).

Only 46% of 140 people evenly distributed across the groups gave this 4, 5 or 6 on my Likert-scale. Similar questions received similarly modest ratings which seem to offer supportive evidence of the self-report claims that people may be spending a lot of time escaping reality through thought or behaviour.

4.4.10 Changes in thinking-type ratios over time

The 2nd questionnaire asked people to rate many of their answers for not only the present day but also their last two years of school and found little variation between the two figures. The expectation might be that 'escapist' thinking will diminish as people grow older, but such a trend seems weak. Perhaps it is a more gradual process than can be identified by the time span that I was looking at, or perhaps it reflects some tendency for the participants to give the same answer for past and present because it was easier for them to do so. (It might have been a better test to have placed the past and present questions in different sections of the questionnaire, so that the two scores were more likely to be generated separately.)

4.4.11 The potential motivations for fantasy and daydreams

I was interested to know what might be the self-reported 'conscious motivations', by contrast to unconscious ones, for fantasy and daydreaming:

1st Q: 65-72) What do you think are the causes of you personally spending time in daydream and fantasy?

In response to this question, the following explanations all elicited quite or very true from between 43% and 51% of 97 participants:

1. Feeling lonely.
2. Anger and frustration in your life.
3. Some horrible real-life experiences that just got you down.
4. Some fantasy and daydreams make-up for feelings that you don't have enough of in your real-life.
5. Some fantasy and daydreams give you a refreshing sense of self-control.
6. Some fantasy and daydreams give you a refreshing sense of power over situations.

Responses to these last two questions on the list were very notable for how HAs particularly distinguish themselves for being very low on the need for a sense of control via fantasy or daydreaming in comparison with any of the other groups. (The anova revealed highly significant differences of \( p < .001 \) between HAs and MAs.) Perhaps HAs derive their sense of control from being in control of their real-lives.³

This thesis did not have the resources to begin to empirically investigate the possible origins of daydreams and fantasies. However, my literature review in combination with my interview and questionnaire work might very tentatively suggest investigating a model whereby an early predisposition to cognitive styles is exacerbated by the individual feeling a chronic lack of control over their lives, perhaps due to a bullying sibling or parent, or some other adverse social environment at school or work. Similarly, acutely stressful life-transitions, whether moving from one culture or institution or life-stage to another (e.g. adolescence to adulthood and student life to working life), might encourage the resort to fantasy as a coping-strategy cum defence-mechanism.

### 4.4.12 Speculations as to what might promote Pro-Reality traits

I was interested to know how participants rated a relatively un-distorted real-life by comparison to the satisfactions they derived from fiction and fantasy and ‘recreational drugs’:

1st Q: 74) How much do you agree with the following:-
Real-life cannot beat the best feelings from your fantasy and fiction (fiction = books and films and tv and magazines etc.).

³MacCulloch (1983) proposed that “fantasy of power is an operant that is negatively reinforced by relief from the experience of failure.”
A total of 24.5% of 97 participants evenly spread across the groups replied quite or very true to this. A further 8.5% said Not Sure. This is quite an indictment of their perception of reality, or quite a testimony to the potency of fantasy and fiction.

1st Q: 76) The thing that makes real-life special is: a good relationship with someone we can share our experience of life with.

A total of 86% of 97 participants said quite or very true to this with a very even spread through all four groups. Only 7% said not true or not true at all. This suggests the key importance of the “significant other” in these young people’s lives, which is a theme that is repeated in reply to the questions below:-

1st Q: 77) Is there anything else that makes real-life better than fantasy and fiction? Explain in a line or two:-

Representative replies from MAs were as follows:

1. Being loved.
2. Real-life achievement (mentioned six times).
3. Having other people you can turn to in real life (mentioned twice).
4. Real life is unpredictable - that’s what makes it fun and interesting.
5. Real life is uncensored; real life is open-ended and unlimited; the feelings real life elicits are raw and bi-directional.

Representative replies from HAs to 1st Q:77 were as follows:

1. unexpectedness and unpredictable responses from other people (mentioned 5 times).
2. The buzz of ‘achievement’ was mentioned three times. Somebody added: “Achievement is permanent.” Another wrote: “The best feelings from real life last, whereas fantasy and fiction have no staying power” (mentioned twice)
3. The feelings from real life can affect your actions in the future more powerfully than those from fantasy and fiction.
4. More vivid and satisfying. (mentioned four times)
5. A lot more emotion in real life (mentioned twice).
6. Real life provides the raw ingredients from which fantasy and daydreams are formed.
7. Real life achievements make other people happy, not just you!

The above offers some compelling testimonies which begin to indicate the possibility of at least 5 characteristics offered by real-life which, as far as my participants are concerned, may to some extent distinguish it from the experience of fantasy and fiction

- The opportunity that real-life presents for a positive reciprocal relationship.
- The unpredictability of real-life.
- The superior strength and durability of feelings generated by real-life activities, particularly achievement.
- The strength and durability of feelings generated by real-life allow ‘reminiscing’.
- Other people are effected by real-life activities.

In search of further evidence as to what might encourage reality-orientation, I noted that the following statements received 4, 5 or 6 on my Likert-scale from 64% of 140 and 84% of 140 participants, respectively:-

2nd Q: 70) You believe a sense of where you’re going in life (i.e. plans for the future) encourages you to pay attention to reality rather than escape it by some means.

2nd Q: 71) You believe feeling good about yourself encourages you to pay attention to reality rather than escape it by some means.

This strong support for the above two questions, suggests the importance of a goal and a strong sense of self-esteem. In chapters 5 and 6, my thesis will go on to consider what part a ‘career goal’ can play in the former, and an ‘occupational identity’ might play in the latter.
4.4.13 Evidence of a level of effects that might warrant classification as a personality disorder

To establish whether some mental or behavioural traits are sufficiently prevalent and maladaptive within an individual to be considered as forming part of a personality disorder, it is not sufficient simply to examine the self-reported amounts of one activity or another. Some assessment of the thinking or behaviour's affect on the individual's life is necessary. To this end, I examined how many participants answered with a 5 or 6 Likert Scale to some of the following key questions. Please note that:

6 = Extremely True of you (i.e. more than 90% true of you)
5 = Very true of you (i.e. more than 75% true of you)

I asked 'How true is it that the following sometimes gets in the way of your real life?'

In response, at least 20% of participants gave the following 5 or 6 on the Likert Scale:

- worrying about the future
- remembering pleasurable things from your past
- regretting the past

Only 15% of participants gave Daydreaming this extreme rating, and only 5% gave it to Fantasy, and only 5% said they don’t bother to do things in real-life because they can fantasise about them so satisfyingly. This said, over 40% said they were ‘addicted to some fantasy or daydream scenario’.

When it came to using the following activities (rather than cognitions) to very deliberately ‘escape real-life for a while because real-life feels too uncomfortable or too tiring’, at least 20% of participants gave the following 5 or 6 on the Likert-scale:

- watching television and videos
- listening to music
- reading fiction
- abusing drugs
Only 10% of participants gave a 5 or 6 rating to computers and alcohol, but 30% of participants gave the rating to 'other activities' which seemed to include sport and masturbation. 30% also self-reported being addicted to some 'escapist activity' or another.

Finally, 15% said 'Real-life didn’t feel as good to them as the feelings they got from fantasy', and 10% felt they had 'dreamt so high, imagined so much, that real-life seems quite a let down'.

It should be noted that in all of the above examples, the figures are comprised of participants from all three groups, though there was a trend for HAs to be less represented than MAs who were less represented than UAs. In discussing the above, two issues seem important. First, the data cannot tell us exactly to what extent the thoughts and behaviours are 'getting in the way of real life', nor can the data tell us whether that level of interference would constitute a disorder in any clinical sense. Secondly, it can be seen how worry, regret and reminiscing seem much more prevalent as a troublesome activity than do fantasy and daydreaming, and my original model did not fully appreciate this possibility. However, I argue here as I do elsewhere in the thesis, that it is possible that individuals may be so unfamiliar with evaluating fantasies and daydreams and other cognitions which at best receive only partial or 'tacit' acknowledgement in our society, that they may be under-reporting the outcome-effects that such cognitions may be having. My evidence for this statement is that their evaluation of its apparent effects are in stark contrast to the large quantities of time that they report spending on fantasy and daydreaming (and which were detailed earlier in this chapter). I argue that such potentially Anti-Reality thoughts may not be inherently damaging in themselves, but may have a detrimental affect simply by precluding an individual from practising and applying other potentially more adaptive thinking-types such as step-by-step planning and imaginal rehearsal.

4.4.14 Is there any evidence for a relationship with reality personality dimension comprised of cognitive and behavioural traits?

In my introduction, I hypothesised about a concept that could be called Relationship with Reality. I offered a detailed model of this theory in Section
4.1. To investigate this possibility, I first examined the correlation between the self-reported number of minutes spent in difference types of thought (2nd Q: 3, 4, 5, and 6):

1. Fantasising has a moderately low correlation with daydreaming (Pearson correlation = .303) which is significant. This suggests that fantasising and daydreaming as I have defined them in my research, are not necessarily practised by the same people, and this makes strong theoretical sense when one considers that, by my definition, wishful daydreams can happen in real-life whereas pure fantasies cannot, and these quite different prospects might attract quite different personalities. In other words, the fantasiser is theoretically considerably more ‘escapist’ than the daydreamer.

2. Fantasising has a low correlation with step-by-step planning (Pearson correlation = .174), which is significant. Theoretically these are antithetical practices, however, my findings have suggested that even HAs do at least some fantasising in a ‘typical day’, and that perhaps it is ‘important’ to do so as some form of psychological ‘safety valve’, so this low correlation is not so paradoxical.

3. Daydreaming has a moderately low correlation with step-by-step planning (Pearson correlation = .395) which is significant. This makes theoretical sense, as the daydreamer may well decide to plan for his daydreams; and it would also be expected that a planner would also do some daydreaming in eager expectation of his plans ‘coming to fruition’.

4. Daydreaming has a moderate correlation (Pearson correlation = .463) with worry and regret, which is significant. This suggests that a personality who looks backwards to the past via ‘regret’ is also quite prone to look forwards to the future through worry and daydreaming. Furthermore, worry and daydreaming are also very akin in the sense that they are anticipating events that may not necessarily happen.

Summarising the above sub-section, I note that

a) There is no suggestion that any of the above-named thinking-types are one and the same phenomena, otherwise they would have correlated much more strongly.
b) It should not be expected that daydreaming personalities are also necessarily fantasising personalities (or vice-versa).

c) Daydreaming and step-by-step planning and worry and regret may all four moderately cluster together in a personality.

I then extended my investigation of the hypothesised Relationship with Reality personality dimension by analysing the whole of section one of the 2nd questionnaire data, using exploratory Factor Analysis. A principal component analysis was conducted using a Varimax Rotation with Kaiser Normalisation, and four components (factors) emerged. Please see table 4R. Note that all of the questions used for the rotation are for the ‘B’ items in the 2nd questionnaire which asked participants to give answers according to the two year period before the participants went either to a university or prison (rather than the present day). I reasoned that this pre-prison/university period was the ‘watershed’ period in their lives. (The questions corresponding to the items in table 4R can be found in Appendix E, but their key themes are distilled below.)

COMPONENT ONE could be called ‘Reality-escaping and Reality-inhibiting Cognitions’.
This component is comprised of Fantasising, Daydreaming, Worry, Regret and Pleasurable Remembering which are all self-reported by at least some people as ‘getting in the way of real life’.

COMPONENT TWO could be called ‘Reality-oriented, Reality-investing Cognitions’.
This component is comprised of self-control of escapist thinking, combined with investment in reality through planning. It can be noted that nearly all of the items run in number sequence, which could suggest a trait of the answering style; but note how items 44 and 48 are missing from the sequence for component 2. These latter two are reverse-ordered items requiring a different response from the others, and their absence from the list might be an indication of the careful attention that many participants were paying the wording of these questions.

4 The data was considered factorable; Bartlett’s test of sphericity was significant (chi square = 911.37, df = 435, p<.001), and the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy was .674, which is generally considered adequate.
Rotated Component Matrix

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<th>4</th>
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Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.
Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization.
a. Rotation converged in 9 iterations.

Component Transformation Matrix

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Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.
Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization.

Total Variance Explained

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<th>Cumulative %</th>
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<td>3</td>
<td>1.693</td>
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</table>
COMPONENT THREE could be called ‘Reality-escaping and Reality-Inhibiting Behaviours’. This component is comprised largely of activities such as listening to music, drinking alcohol, watching tv and using computers.

COMPONENT FOUR could be called ‘Drugless Addiction to Cognitive Escapism’ (or even ‘Fantasy-addicted rather than drug-addicted’). This component is comprised of ‘feeling addicted to a daydreams or fantasy’ and ‘sometimes fantasise about being someone much more impressive than you are’; but another very interesting feature of this component is that ‘being addicted to certain daydreams and fantasy scenarios’ has a moderately low negative correlation with ‘you sometimes take drugs to escape real-life’ (Pearson correlation = -.233; p < .05). Not forgetting that it is quite a weak component (its position in the Varimax Rotation indicates this), it is theoretically credible that a high-daydreamer/fantasiser does not feel the need to ‘do drugs’, or conversely the high-drug user does not feel the need to fantasise and daydream. This apparent pattern was also noted in the 1st Questionnaire, when more women than men reported fantasy and daydreaming being important to them (1st Q: 58), and yet the women reported using less drugs such as marijuana, heroin or LSD (1st Q: 79a). Indeed, these finding corroborate Singer’s (1976) work which suggested that drug-users, particularly those using the hallucinogenic drugs, tend to be externally-oriented individuals seeking external sensations and not much given to elaborating inner fantasy. However, it would make equally good theoretical sense to presume that a high-fantasiser would be a high-drug-user, as well. This issue might deserve greater research.

In summary of the above sub-section, I advocate that these first three factors lend some support to the theoretical concept of the Relationship with Reality personality dimension which was itself theoretically comprised of Reality-Disengaging Cognitions and Behaviours (termed Anti-Reality Traits) and also Reality-Investing Cognitions and Behaviours (termed Pro-Reality Traits). It can be noted that the Pro-Reality Traits are apparently less well represented among the components produced from the factor analysis, but this may be because such behaviours were inadequately asked about (i.e. the lack of pro-reality traits may reflect a shortcoming in the question design rather than a non-existent psychological phenomenon). Only item 37 specifically inquired
after reality-investing behaviours, whereas items 38 and 41 (which formed part of component 2) asked about both thinking and doing, so it is impossible to know whether the respondents would have preferred to distinguish between them.

One possible criticism of the above analysis is that the similar wording of questions may be responsible for the items clustering together in analysis, and so creating what is sometimes known as a 'bloated specific'. Furthermore, questions are sometimes ambiguous or misinterpretable. Moreover, the component composition was a little unstable i.e. if one item was taken out, the components would alter their composition.

I was interested to know how the factors might distinguish my three groups. Table 45 below shows the Anova between the HA, MA and UA groups for the above cited 4 components is as follows:

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<th>Component</th>
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<td>4.24</td>
<td>p &lt; .05</td>
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<td>Component 4</td>
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<tr>
<td>'Drugless addiction to cognitive escapism'</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>12.6</td>
<td>p &lt; .001</td>
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</table>

In summary of the above table 45, there is a considerable difference between the groups in terms of components 1, 3 and 4. My model of Relationship with Reality that I proposed in Section 4.1 would have predicted components 1 and 3 (i.e. ‘reality-escape’ of one sort or another) would have distinguished between the groups; but the non-significant difference as regards component 2
was not predicted and at first sight appears paradoxical. One plausible explanation for why Component 2 does not significantly distinguish between the MA, UA and HA groups, is because the UAs and even the MAbs may not be good at distinguishing between what is a 'realistic plan and reality-oriented' and what is 'wishful daydreaming'. In other words, the quality and nature of their planning may be more akin to what the HAs might term wishful daydreaming or even fantasising.

Table 4T below (and figures 4T i to iv inclusive overleaf) offer a closer inspection of the Anova relating to the components, and reveals the following:

Table 4T
On component 1: 'Reality-escaping and Reality-inhibiting Cognitions'.

HA differed highly significantly from MAs (p < .005)
MA differed highly significantly from UAs (p < .005)

On component 2: 'Reality-oriented, and Reality-investing Cognitions'.

No significant differences between any of the groups.

On component 3: 'Reality-escaping and Reality-Inhibiting Behaviours'

HAs differed significantly from UAs (p < .05)

On component 4: 'Drugless addiction to cognitive escapism'

HA differed very significantly from MAs (p < .01)
HA differed highly significantly from UAs (p < .001)

In consideration of the above component/group Anova tables overall, I argue that the difference between the HAs and UAs is perhaps to be expected (though one should not forget that these Factor Analysis findings all apply to
Factor 1 scores by Group

Means (standard error)

![Graph showing Factor 1 scores by Group with N values: HA = 22, MA = 22, UA = 17.]

Factor 2 scores by Group

Means (standard error)

![Graph showing Factor 2 scores by Group with N values: HA = 22, MA = 22, UA = 17.]

Figure 4T i

Figure 4T ii
Factor 3 scores by Group

Means (standard error)

Figure 4T iii

Factor 4 scores by Group

Means (standard error)

Figure 4T iv
the two year period before imprisonment or university, so one cannot dismiss high-fantasy among the UAs as being correlated with being in prison). However, my model of Relationship with Reality did not predict the inverse correlation that may exist between cognitive escapism (addiction to daydreams and fantasies, particularly about ‘being impressive’) and escapist drugs-taking. However, it is theoretically highly plausible that HAs use a ‘drugless strategy’ to cope with life, and it may be that their tendency to fantasise and daydream is causally correlated with their lower drug-use, but my data cannot tell us this.

Most interesting to my mind is the significant difference between the HAs and MAs on component 1: i.e. MAs rated themselves as doing considerably more reality-escaping and inhibiting cognitions in the time before doing their important pre-university examinations. This feature seems relevant to the very crux of my model of Relationship with Reality and its potential relationship with major life-outcomes.

4.4.15 Comparing my 1st and 2nd questionnaires to the SIPI and EPQ-R

My own empirical work is still exploratory and I have as yet no well-developed inventories and scales with which to compare my constructs with the long-established Short Imaginal Processes Inventory (that measures daydreaming) and the EPQ-R. As has been indicated above, my limited resources have for the present precluded the extensive and exhaustive factor analysis which might produce a stable and credible scale from the several dozen question items that investigated several target factors that might be theoretically related under a model of Relationship with Reality. Notwithstanding this, below I attempt some rudimentary comparisons of how the 1st and 2nd Questionnaires might overlap with or distinguish themselves from the SIPI and EPQ-R.
Results of the UA and HA groups on the SIPI

The SIPI has enjoyed such a monopoly in the field of daydreaming for so long, that it was interesting to test it on two of my three groups HAs and UAs; financially restrictions precluded the MA group. There are three scales on the SIPI test:

1st) Positive-Constructive Daydreams: according to Huba et al. (1982) the high scorer on this scale would believe that daydreams are positive, pleasant, helpful and important. The mean test scores for each group on this sub-scale were:

HA = 50.94
UA = 49.18
Norm = 48.46

There are no significant differences between the HA and UA groups.

2nd) Poor Attentional Control Daydreams: the high-scorer would tend towards being easily distracted. Very surprisingly, the UA group who are so often attributed with being distractible (e.g. Ross and Fabiano, 1985) are not significantly different from the HAs. The mean test scores for each group on this sub-scale were:

HA = 47.17
UA = 46.85
Norms = 46.90

There are no significant differences between the HA and UA groups.

3rd) Guilty and Fear of Failure Daydreams.

The mean test scores for each group on this sub-scale were:

HA = 35.06
UA = 40.87
Norms = 34.27

There are significant differences between the HA and UA groups. It is not surprising perhaps that imprisoned youngsters scored high on this scale. High-scorers in the group could be characterised as follows: "has daydreams with depressing, frightening, panicky qualities - has fantasies of winning awards, being expert and in a recognised group - has fantasies of fearing responsibilities, not being able to finish job, failing loved ones, becoming
angry, getting even, and aggressing toward enemies, having friends discover lies, feeling guilty and afraid of doing something wrong” (Huba et al. 1980).

In summary of the above, the SIPI distinguishes between the two groups only as regards Guilty-fear of Failure Daydreams, which for boys serving time in prison compared to Oxbridge undergraduates is perhaps understandable.

**Searching for commonalties between the SIPI and my Relationship with Reality personality dimension**

There is no strong theoretical basis upon which the SIPI should be related to my own approach and conception of the phenomena of daydreaming and fantasy. Unlike my own taxonomy the SIPI demonstrates no explicit concept that daydreams might get in the way of real life and the SIPI results do not distinguish between the groups on this aspect which my own theory deems so important. For example, in my own 2nd questionnaire, 41% out of 140 participants gave a 4, 5 or 6 rating on my Likert-scale when asked if ‘Daydreaming sometimes gets in the way of real life.’ This figure of 58 included twice as many UAs as HAs.

So as to empirically investigate my hypothesis that there would be little correlation between what the SIPI measures and what my Relationship with Reality measures, I chose to compare the mean scores on the three sub-scales of the SIPI with results from my 2nd questionnaires as regards the self-reported minutes spent in a typical day doing one or another type of thinking. (i.e. 2nd Q: 3a, 4a, 5a, 6a, and 7a referring to fantasising, daydreaming planing, worrying, and pleasurable remembering). Not only had responses to these latter questions strongly distinguished between my three groups (in both the 1st and 2nd questionnaires), but they were also a very direct measure of my proposed Relationship with Reality. Below I summarise the correlations between the means for the SIPI subscales and the means for self-reported timings on various types of thinking. I also offer an interpretation of these correlations ((by definition a two-tailed significance level of $p < .05$ level):
1. There is a significant moderately low correlation (Pearson correlation = .310) between my 2nd Q daydreaming factor and the SIPI’s Positive-Constructive Daydreaming sub-scale.

2. There is significant moderately low correlation (Pearson correlation = .322) between daydreaming and the SIPI’s Guilty and Fear of Failure Daydreaming sub-scale.

3. There is a significant but moderately low correlation (Pearson correlation = .252) between planning and the SIPI’s Guilty and Fear of Failure Daydreaming sub-scale.

4. There is a significant but moderately low negative correlation (Pearson correlation = .270) between fantasising and the SIPI’s Poor Attentional Control sub-scale.

5. There is a significant but moderately low correlation between Pleasurable Remembering and all three of the SIPI sub-scales:
   a) Positive and Constructive daydreaming (Pearson correlation = .341)
   b) Guilty and Fear of Failure daydreaming (Pearson correlation = .384)
   c) Poor Attentional Control daydreaming (Pearson correlation = .268)

The above correlations are not wholly surprising because the SIPI and my own questionnaire measures are both dealing in daydreams and fantasies and related topics. The correlations are all moderately low, and I suggest that this is because, as I have argued extensively in Section 4.2, the SIPI and my own questionnaires are looking at daydreaming and related issues from very different perspectives indeed. Nevertheless, so as to further investigate the possibility, I went on to compare the SIPI sub-scales with the three strongest components that I established from my factor analysis:

Component 1: ‘Reality-escaping and Reality-inhibiting Cognitions’ showed a significant moderate correlation with the SIPI’s Positive and Constructive Daydreaming subscale (Pearson correlation = .461). It is reasonable to assume that there would be this overlap between these factors, but it just as strongly indicates the amount of differences between what the scales are measuring.
Component 2: ‘Reality-oriented, and Reality-investing Cognitions’ showed a significant moderate correlation with the SIPI’s Poor Attentional Control (Pearson Correlation = .416). This can perhaps be interpreted as individuals who report ‘poor attentional control’ on the SIPI scale, also self-reporting (via the 2nd questionnaire) their efforts to control this tendency.

Component 3: ‘Reality-escaping and Reality-Inhibiting Behaviours’ did not significantly correlate with any of the SIPI sub-scales. This was predictable because my own component No.3 clusters ‘escapist behaviours’ rather than the ‘escapist cognitions’ that the SIPI’s daydreaming characterises.

(Component 4: the ‘Drugless Addiction to Cognitive Escapism’ is a weak component, and for this reason it is not surprising that it did not correlate significantly with any of the SIPI sub-scales).

I must first of all conclude from the above that there is a significant but moderately low correlation between the SIPI and my own measures of Relationship with Reality, which on the face of it is surprising because daydreaming is ostensibly a key overlapping concept; but as I have argued, my conception of daydreaming and other thinking types is substantially different from that conceived by the SIPI. This leads me to conclude that in order to investigate the factors that I set out to in this research, it was better that I devised my own questionnaire rather than deploy the SIPI as the main tool.

**The Relationship between the EPQ-R and the HA and UA groups**

I hypothesised that my Relationship with Reality was theoretically very distinct from the three key factors Extraversion, Psychoticism and Neuroticism of the Eysenck Personality Questionnaire (1970). For instance, if we consider first the dimension of Extraversion andIntroversion: imagine, for example an Introverted/Pro-Reality Personality who could be caricatured as a ‘lone-wolf Computer Hacker’ successfully siphoning off money to pay for 7 years’ training as an accountant (i.e. demonstrating Pro-Reality traits). This character is leading a very different real-life from the Introverted/Anti-Reality Personality who could be caricatured by the individual who simply plays computer games alone until dropping out of college with poor grades (i.e. demonstrating Anti-Reality traits). To summarise my example: both the
caricatures are ‘introverted’ personalities, but their reality-orientation determines their life-outcomes.

As regards the P dimension (tough-mindedness) it could be argued that the high-P scorer might not feel the need to retreat from reality; on the other hand because the high-P scorer is unsocial and does not so much care about people, it could equally be envisaged that the high-P scorer would be happy to escape in to fantasy and daydreaming. I conclude that my Relationship with Reality would theoretically not correlate well with this factor.

Similarly, as regards the N (neuroticism) factor, the high-N personality is prone to ‘anxiety, depression, and poor self-esteem’, traits that I would argue are so commonly part and parcel of so many personality disorders and coping deficits that I did not hypothesise that it would correlate with my proposed dimensions of Relationship with Reality.

Finally, I felt that nowhere in Eysenck’s description of his subscales were my key factors of daydreaming or fantasy mentioned by name or any pseudonym, and moreover leading figures in the field of daydreaming, Singer and Bonanno (1990), also explicitly discount any connection between daydreaming and either of Eysenck’s P and N scales.

However, in a personal correspondence, (autumn 1996), Professor Hans Eysenck suggested that my Anti-Reality traits were very probably subsumed within his P and N constructs. I set out to investigate this proposal. Two groups (HA=48; UA=48) both completed the EPQ-R. Unfortunately 4 tests had to be discarded because they were poorly completed; and financial limitations meant that the MA group were not invited to complete the test. In the following tables, I simply compare the HA and UA groups on the EPQ-R subscale results (which has intrinsic interest), and will then go on to compare the EPQ-subscale with my own 2nd questionnaire findings.

(Norms apply to 16 to 20 year old males (inclusive) for the EPQ-R 106 item test (Eysenck and Eysenck, 1998). All descriptions attributed to the Eysenck scales are drawn verbatim from the Eysenck and Eysenck 1998 manual of scales):
1. Lie Scale
The mean test scores for each group on this sub-scale were:
Norm = 5.37
HA = 5.38
UA = 6.03

The Anova revealed no significant difference between HAs and UAs (p > .05). Both groups were very close to the norm, so there can be a degree of confidence that both groups were taking this questionnaire seriously. Similarly, there was little evidence on my 1st and 2nd questionnaires that people were falsifying their answers.

2. The N Scale (Emotionality)
The mean test scores for each group on this sub-scale were:
Norm = 11.12
HA = 12.9
UA = 13.8

The Anova revealed no significant difference between HAs and UAs (p > .05) but both groups were just slightly above the norm on this factor. My own 1st and 2nd questionnaire findings as regards ‘worry’ (the defining feature of the high-N scorer) are markedly different from the EPQ-R, which might suggest our scales are measuring a different factor.

3. The P Scale (Tough-mindedness)
The mean test scores for each group on this sub-scale were:
Norm = 9.57
HA = 7.73
UA = 11.95

The Anova revealed a very highly significant difference between MAs and HAs (p < .001). A high-P scorer is described as solitary, not caring for people, cruel, lacking in feeling or empathy or sense of guilt. The UAs are predictably above the norm on P, but the stereotype of the high-P group is not supported by my UA group who self-report themselves in my 1st and 2nd questionnaires as prone to worry and regret, though as has been mentioned...
above, they are not particularly high on Eysenck's N, and only a very little higher than the HAs. This would suggest that there may be some disparity between the phenomenon our questionnaires are measuring, or how they are measuring the same phenomenon.

4. The E Scale (Sociability)
The mean test scores for each group on this sub-scale were:
Norm = 15.97
HA= 15.71
UA = 18.42

The Anova revealed a very significant difference between UAs and HAs (p<.001). The highly Extravert personality craves company and excitement in which respect the UA group are consistent with expectations; but there is no mention in the definitions of the Extravert of their rich inner-life or their cognitive activities, and this is in marked contrast to my 1st and 2nd questionnaire findings that indicate such high levels (relative to the HA and MA groups) of reminiscing, regret, worry, fantasy, daydreaming and even planning. It can be noted, too, that the HA group are not gauged by this Eysenck test to be the typical Introverts (who can be defined as 'preferring books to people, planning ahead, and being introspective').

5. The Addiction Scale
The mean test scores for each group on this sub-scale were:
Norm = 11.60
HA = 12.6
UA = 14.37

The Anova revealed no significant difference between UAs and HAs. (p > .05) Both groups are a little higher than the norm, but far from the norms for drug or alcohol addiction (A norm for drug addicts is 19.8). It is interesting how much 'addiction to escapist thought and behaviour' is self-reported on my own 1st and 2nd questionnaires.
6. The Criminality Scale
The mean test scores for each group on this sub-scale were:
Norm= 9.01
HA= 12.98
UA = 17.16
Norms for prisoners = 15.57

The Anova revealed a very significant difference between UAs and HAs (p < .001). Both groups are particularly high on this scale for what one would expect of them. In the final pages of this chapter, I will discuss the possible criminal propensity of HAs in relation to the Hirschi and Gottfredson (1990) model of criminality, and suggest an elaboration of that model in the light of the evidence from this thesis.

Seeking commonalties between the EPQ-R and my Relationship with Reality personality dimension.

Below, I summarise the correlations between the means for the EPQ-R subscales and the means for self-reported timings on various types of thinking as measured by my 2nd questionnaire. I also offer an interpretation of some of these correlations, but only where a theoretically sound interpretation suggests itself6:

1. There is no significant correlation between the fantasy, daydreaming, planning and worry scores in comparison with the E scale. This finding supports my proposition (elaborated at the beginning of this section) that my Relationship with Reality Dimension and the Eysenck Extraversion-Intraversion dimension are theoretically independent of each other.

2. There is a significant but moderately low correlation between the N scale and Hopeful Daydreaming (Pearson correlation = .248). It is reasonable to presume than a ‘worrying’ personality might also tend to anticipate the future through daydreams.

3. There is a significant but moderately low correlation between the P scale and Pure Fantasy and Hopeful Daydreaming. (Pearson correlation = .277

6 Significance level of p < .05
and .241 respectively). This might be explained by envisaging the high-P, who is characterised as being unsociable and uncaring of other people, as being rather happier than others to escape in to fantasy and daydreaming.

4. There is significant but moderately low correlation between the A scale and Hopeful Daydreaming (Pearson correlation = .25). I can offer no explanation for this, because if the correlation exists on account of daydreaming providing an emotional reward for an addictive personality, one would expect other rewarding escapes such as Reminiscing and Fantasy to correlate with this scale, which they do not.

5. There is a significant moderately low correlation between the C scale and Hopeful Daydreaming (Pearson correlation = .341). Since many of those scoring high on the EPQ-R Criminality scale are imprisoned, it would not be surprising if they are daydreaming about the future, perhaps to distract themselves from their uncomfortable present situation. Similarly, there is a correlation with Pleasurable Remembering (discussed in 6 below), probably for the same reason that many of the high C respondents were imprisoned young offenders.

6. There is a significant moderately low correlation between my questionnaire item called Pleasurable Remembering and the following sub-scales: P (.273), and E (.224), and A (.220), and C (.354). My model did not comment on the prospect of such correlations, and very possibly would not have predicted them. However, the correlations are only modest.

From the above, I propose that there is some suggestion that Eysenck's N and P might have a moderately low correlation to my Relationship with Reality dimension. So as to further investigate the possibility, I went on to compare the EPQ-R sub-scales with the three strongest components that I established from my factor analysis:

Component 1: 'Reality-escaping and Reality-inhibiting Cognitions' significantly correlated with Criminality only (Pearson correlation = .36).
Component 2: ‘Reality-oriented, and Reality-investing Cognitions’ did not significantly correlate with *any* of the EPQ-R sub-scales; nor did Component 3: ‘Reality-Escaping and Reality-Inhibiting Behaviours’.

As I have argued above, this weak or insignificant correlation is to be anticipated, as it is notable that nowhere in the Eysenck and Eysenck’s (1998) manual of scales do any of its sub-scale factors refer to daydreaming or fantasy or any synonymous or similar descriptors. There is little theoretical or empirical evidence to suggest anything other than a moderately low correlation with the ‘Relationship with Reality’ dimension, though I concede that I have hitherto only conducted an analysis by group rather than by individual, which might in time be more illuminating. However, in concluding this brief comparison between my proposed dimension and the EPQ-R, I do not find support for Professor Hans Eysenck’s proposal that my constructs are subsumed under those of his P, N or E subscales.

### 4.4.16 Summary and conclusions as regards the proposed Relationship with Reality personality dimension and its component cognitive and behavioural activities

**Summary of findings as regards Relationship with Reality**

1. There was a range of self-report evidence from the long-interviews and the 1st and 2nd questionnaire that supported the following statements as being reasonably valid for at least a substantial number of participants in all groups. There is little evidence to suggest that the self-report data was falsified or poorly-considered, although test/retest reliability of the reports was not directly measured.7

2. The distinctions my model made between daydreaming and fantasy and problem-solving and planning were acknowledged by a strong majority.

3. The proposed categorisation of 8 types of thought was regarded as sufficiently comprehensive and recognisable by a strong majority.

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7There was a considerable discrepancy of the quantity of anti-reality activities self-reported by interviews with one HA group compared to another HA group answering anonymous questionnaires. This may demonstrate the potentially high ‘embarrassment factor’ related with the phenomenon of fantasy.
4. The study was reported as being highly unusual in its target interests by a strong majority.

5. There are strong patterns between the HA, MA and UA groups in the self-reported prevalence in terms of absolute time spent on various types of thinking. A substantial number of participants reported their responses on the ‘timing’ questions as modestly accurate, and there are consistent differences between the groups. However, it should be noted that the self-reported rate of accuracy was significantly different between the groups which may have confounded these results.

6. Fantasy and daydreaming and the other types of thinking are reported as being important in terms of life-outcomes by a substantial minority of the respondents. By the term ‘important’, it is meant that the participants rated these types of thinking important in their lives to a level of 4, 5 or 6 on my Likert-scale. I do not believe my research methods provide a level of evidence to make any greater claim than this. In hindsight, it could have been illuminating to have the participants rate the importance in their lives of my four target factors, relative to factors that are already well acknowledged by the mainstream literature.

7. It was self-reported by a substantial minority that some types of thinking can sometimes ‘get in the way of real-life’. Though fantasy and daydreaming were ranked lowest on this list, fantasy and daydreaming were subsequently reported as being for a strong majority of participants of considerable importance in other ways e.g. as a ‘vital safety valve for unfulfilled needs and desires’.

8. It was self-reported by a large minority that certain behaviours are used to ‘escape’ real-life as opposed to ‘invest’ in it. There were significant differences between the groups in self-reported ‘addiction’ to certain behavioural escapes.

9. It was self-reported by a strong majority of all groups that so called Anti-Reality traits can be ‘localised’ to certain arenas of life.
10. 44% of a group of 59 HA and MA individuals self-reported that a ‘fantasy identity’ was one of the components of their sense of identity just as much as their sense of their past, present and future identities.

11. Conscious reasons for fantasy-use seem apparent, but underlying origins and causes of the individual differences were not explored.

12. Compared to all other groups, UAs were particularly prone to engage in significantly more fantasising, worrying, regretting, pleasurable reminiscing and planning. Their doing more planning is on the face of it a paradoxical result in terms of their life-outcomes, but one explanation is that UAs may be making ‘ineffective’ plans.

13. All of the above summarised phenomena seem quite stable over time within individuals.

14. There is some suggestion that real-life might have particular qualities that can help make it a more attractive environment than fantasy and fiction, qualities that may even be exclusive to real life (e.g. fantasy is predictable and fiction is unilateral, whereas by comparison real-life is both unpredictable and interactive).

15. There is insufficient evidence from the type of data available to evaluate whether or not anti-reality traits might reach levels that constitute clinical diagnosis as a personality disorder.

16. There is some modest factor analytic evidence to support the concept of a Relationship with Reality personality dimensions akin to the one proposed in my theoretical model. The components that emerged from factor analysis may to some degree correlate with group membership.

17. There is a significant but moderately low correlation between the SIPI and my own measures of Relationship with Reality. The SIPI distinguished between HAs and UAs on only one of its three sub-scales: the amount of ‘guilty and fear of failure daydreaming’ presently experienced.

18. The EPQ-R seemed to be measuring largely different factors and constructs than the one’s apparently investigated by my 2nd
Conclusions as regards my findings on Relationship with Reality

Firstly, it is very important to acknowledge that it may be the quality of a particular type of thinking not just the absolute amount that is done, which is the deciding factor of the effect of that thinking style in terms of life-outcomes. I.e. though my research considered the 'quantity' (in terms of hours and minutes) of various types of thought, and the 'Intention' (or motivation) and the possible 'effect' in life-outcomes, a fuller assessment of thought type might also need to comprise such features as frequency, duration, purity, intensity and perspective. It may be that the absolute quantities the participants attribute to one thinking-type or another will be proven (in future research) to be less important than some other characteristic(s) of the thinking-type. That said, acknowledging that there may be considerable difference in the absolute amounts of types of thought is of itself a step-forward in our appreciation of this whole arena.

With the above caveats made, my empirical research has accumulated some modest qualitative and quantitative evidence as to the role that fantasy and daydreaming might play in my young participants' lives, and how something akin to my proposed 'Relationship with Reality' personality dimension might begin to provide a useful lens through which to interpret a wide range of thoughts and behaviours. Caution is necessary because my evidence hitherto also suggests that if an appreciation of an individual's Relationship with Reality proves with future research to be a useful psychological construct, it is unlikely to be a simple relationship. We must be careful not to expect simple models (nor simple solutions) for what are very likely to be complex and interwoven phenomena. For instance, there is no evidence here to suggest that daydreaming and fantasy on their own have the power to undermine a young person's achievements. Several HAs declared very considerable use of fantasy and/or daydreaming, but have none the less achieved impressive levels of objectively acknowledged accomplishment. Also, the findings from the inventory suggest how valuable it might be to look beyond daydreaming and fantasy towards other facets of the Relationship with Reality – such as
worry and regret and reminiscing and imaginative rehearsal which have shown themselves to be prevalent thought-types among my groups. Furthermore, this thesis does not conclude from the above evidence that certain mental phenomena under focus are necessarily negative. It may be that worry and regret are useful motivational discomforts, that reminiscing is a useful reward mechanism, that fantasy and daydream serve a vital strain-release function that ameliorates real-life performance. Only future research can tease out the possibilities.

4.4.17 Discussion: possible explanations for why these findings have few precedents

Introduction

My findings suggest that two key target phenomena of my research, that is ‘fantasy’ and ‘daydreaming’, are self-reported as prevalent and important to a substantial number of the young people among whom I researched. As the literature reviews have indicated, there has apparently been very little empirical work that has suggested such levels of significance and prevalence of these cognitive phenomena, and there has been no previous proposal of a Relationship with Reality Personality Dimension. The following section discusses possible explanations for this.

Firstly, few studies have taken a sufficiently holistic perspective to indicate the correlation that I propose exists between fantasy and daydreaming and eventual life-outcomes. As I have noted previously, marked exceptions are the works of Vaillant (1977, 1993) and Skynner and Cleese (1993). Appropriately, Adler (1927:155) warned that:

the understanding of human nature can never be learned by examining isolated phenomena that have been taken out of their whole psychological context. We must always see them in relation to social life.

Secondly, my research suggests that unless the method of inquiry actively demonstrates a non-judgmental appreciation that daydreams and fantasy can ‘get out of hand and interfere with reality-based life’, the participants are unlikely to volunteer their experiences of such. I sensed during the research that the participants needed permission and reassurance that the subject was
not taboo or idiosyncratic. In this regard, it is particularly interesting that *Talented Teenagers* (Csikszentmihalyi et al., 1993) does not mention fantasy or daydreaming once, despite the use of the Experience Sampling Method whereby random beepers required diary accounts from the young participants. There was no report of the wishful daydreams and pure fantasies of sexual adventure, heroism, professional expertise and revenge that the great majority of my own HA group self-reported in their anonymous questionnaires. This suggests at least two possibilities:

1. Perhaps the participants were inhibited in testifying as to such personal phenomena because there wasn’t a place explicitly set aside to acknowledge daydreaming or fantasising on the inventory they were required to fill in for the Csikszentmihalyi et al. study (see appendix 3.2 in *Talented Teenagers*). It seems likely that fantasy and daydreaming could have been masked in one of the more general categories offered to them, such as ‘thinking and reflecting’.

2. Perhaps because of their youth (they were aged 13-17) participants were not as confident and forthcoming with their inner lives as the older sample (age 18-25) in my own study. Csikszentmihalyi et al’s methods did not allow anonymity in the way that my own questionnaires did.

**Explanations for why the proposed Anti-Reality traits have not been acknowledged by wider society.**

Below I posit five possible explanations for why the patterns and correlations that I am proposing in my thesis, have not been readily identified in everyday life or clinical practice:

1. On account of the very covert nature of fantasy and daydreaming, even when ‘toxic’ levels of themes or frequency are reached, their true extent and nature can be concealed. There are other examples of how seriously self-damaging yet similarly covert behaviours may be overlooked; for example, Bulimia Nervosa was clinically described only in the early 1980s (Wartella, 1995).
There is a social taboo against discussing one's fantasy worlds even with our closest friends. My findings suggest that fantasy and daydream issues are not formally or informally discussed by professional educators, and parental monitoring and insight is commonly negligible. This can mean an individual has little or no benchmark against which to compare their own thoughts and behaviour.

As with alcohol consumption, the more overt traits of the Anti-Reality syndrome (such as fiction-use) are socially quite acceptable. Indeed, the USA's largest export industry is the feature film business, and 80% of cinema audiences are 14-24 year olds (Mednick, 1990). Moreover, by the age of 18, the statistically average British or American teenager will have spent more time watching the television (and videos) than in any activity other than sleep (Centerwall, 1992). This assertion is supported by Csikszentmihalyi et al. (1997). Such observations provide a strong indication as to many young people's appetite and capacity for life not experienced first-hand (or 'once-removed from reality' as it were), and indicates society's willingness to provide for these appetites.

Many of the more extreme behavioural symptoms of the proposed syndrome of Short-Term Reality-Improvement (e.g. drug abuse and impulsive crime) are common to other psycho-social disorders, and may be attributed to those rather than any notion of a Relationship with Reality disorder.

Fantasy and daydreaming can offer such rewarding beneficial effects, and are commonly regarded as such a natural part of everyone's childhood, that mainstream society may be unwilling to entertain the idea that these creative faculties can sometimes have negative outcomes.

The possibility that the incidence of Anti-Reality personality traits has greatly escalated in recent years

This is theoretically possible for the following reasons:
1. On account of the greatly mechanised domestic lifestyles of many societies, there is considerably more time for thinking that is not ‘survival-oriented thinking’.

2. There is a far greater availability of media products that may prompt and fuel daydreaming and fantasy (see Valkenberg, 1994).

3. There is far greater availability of fantasy-promoting recreational drugs (see Parker et al. 1995).

4. Reality is arguably an increasingly complex environment to negotiate, while at the same time those once stabilising influences such as the two-parent and extended family, ‘jobs for life’, and the institution of the Church, are all diminishing in the western world (see Giddens, 1991).

5. Unemployment and prolonged vocational-training seems to delay some of the very factors that my research suggests are likely to promote pro-reality engagement, such as the taking on of a satisfying occupational identity.

4.4.18 Discussion: monitoring our types of thought

In light of the potential correlation that I suggest may exist between one’s Relationship with Reality and life-outcomes, it is reasonable to inquire as to the possible benefits of monitoring one’s thoughts and behaviour in this respect. Singer claims that

our research has shown increasingly that keeping a record of your daydreams or of your night dreams as well, you can begin to trace out the main themes and interests of your life... a recurrent fantasy indicates that you are denying a side of your personality which was actually of importance (1975: 258).

My 1st and 2nd questionnaires set out to test this proposition, and it will be shown below that support for monitoring enjoyed a modest majority among my participants:

1ST Q: 102) It could be very useful to ‘keep a track’ of your own daydreams and fantasies for the following reasons:
a) as a pointer to some of your most important interests and desires.

42% of the total of participants were ‘not sure’ or ‘disagree’.

b) as an “early warning signal” of feelings and desires that might cause you trouble if not dealt with properly.

46% of the total participants were ‘not sure’ or ‘disagree’.

c) as a sign of how happy or unhappy you are with your everyday real-life.

42% of the total participants were ‘not sure’ or ‘disagreed’. My line of inquiry culminated with the following question:

1ST Q:103 and 2nd Q: 51) It would make good sense to openly discuss with children and teenagers the possible benefits and problems of using daydreams and fantasy and planning and other types of thinking.

About 70% of 237 participants (the combined force of my 1st and 2nd questionnaires) agree or agree strongly, so there is by no means universal consensus. Perhaps the reticence to countenance the above self-monitoring and formal discussion of fantasy and daydreaming is because these arenas of thought are so private to individuals that the idea of monitoring and studying them is simply too threatening. Alternatively, it may simply indicate a sense of the lack of significance of fantasy and daydreaming to a substantial minority of individuals.

Thought management: the self-regulation of the focus of our conscious attention.

There are undoubtedly life-circumstances, such as extreme physical or psychological stress, when reality cannot at that time be improved, and so Anti-Reality thoughts and behaviours may play a highly adaptive protective role in reducing the severity of psychological discomfort or damage. In respect of this, my thesis is arguing only that Anti-Reality thoughts and behaviours
are sometimes deployed in less intransigent real-life circumstances, and deployed with an individual's inadequate appreciation of the likely costs and side-effects of such a strategy. I argue that such cases are most often the result of deficits in psychological skills cum strategy which it may be in the interests of both the individual and their community to address. In other words, I advocate that an individual could benefit from a more conscious consideration of whether he or she is more satisfied with life, (and perhaps more positively contributive) when practising one configuration of thinking-types rather than another. i.e. by making a more conscious analysis of what ratio and combination of thinking-types maximise satisfaction.

It seems from my findings, which corroborate the research most notably of Singer (1975), that it is extremely unlikely that complete and permanent abstinence is possible or even desirable, but self-awareness, self-monitoring and self-management might be profitable. Work by Csikszentmihalyi (1978) suggests that subjects are engaging in a 'stimulus-independent mentation' 40% of the time, particularly when not engaged in a challenging task that absorbs tremendous attention. Csikszentmihayli noted that when asked to curtail such daydreaming, it proved uncomfortable for subjects to do so.

The concept of self-controlling levels of types of thought is not a foreign practice to many of my 2nd questionnaire participants. The following sizeable minorities of participants replied with 4, 5 or 6 on my Likert-scale in reply to the following statement:

You deliberately stop yourself from:

Q 39) Daydreaming = 37% of 140
Q43) Fantasising = 32% of 140
Q46:) Worry and regret = 42% of 140

However, only 12% of 140 claimed to have had 'detailed discussion with adults about controlling their types of thinking when younger or in their last two years of school'.

\[8\]Similarly, my own attempts to considerably curtail my daydreaming and fantasy for 14 days as a form of mini-experiment, resulted in a sense of uncomfortable mental fatigue, accompanied by unusually vivid night-time dreaming.
Prior literature on self-directed thought-management and thinking-types

To what extent can or should an individual proactively exert self-control over the focus of his conscious mind so as to maximise the benefits from his engagement with reality? Singer (1976) cites the example of two international tennis stars of the late 1970s and early 80s, Stan Smith and Chris Evert, who describe how when in a winning position they had allowed themselves to daydream about future events that their imminent victory would bring. They claim that the result of this was that they began to lose concentration and eventually lost their matches. This is an illustration of how deployment of one type of thinking style rather than another might ostensibly influence life-outcomes, either for better or for worse.

Other authors have speculated and researched upon how different types or styles of thinking might considerably influence important outcomes. Sternberg and Ruzgis write:

If we wish to fully understand the success of children in school (and, we would speculate, adults on the job), we need not only to look at abilities and achievements, but at the interface between intelligence and personality – at thinking styles (1994:156; italics added).

Sternberg (1997) went on to claim that ‘successful intelligence’ is characterised by the individual who invests considerable resources in strategic planning. These people think in terms of the long-range and are more willing to delay gratification. Similarly, Gardner (1997) claims that ‘extraordinary’ individuals reflect on their lives more than others by deploying regular, conscious consideration of the events of their daily lives, in the light of longer-term aspirations. John Clausen (1993) conducted in-depth life history interviews with 60 men and women subjects (part of the Berkeley Longitudinal Study) analysing nearly 50 years of their lives. Clausen found that what he called ‘planful competence’ in late adolescence was associated with occupational and family success in the adult years. Individuals high in ‘planful competence’ made more realistic educational, occupational and marital choices, whereas their low-competence counterparts found less satisfying jobs, shifted jobs (and spouses) more often and changed their lives more often.
For a forensic example of the attention paid to ‘thinking types’, there is Ross and Fabiano’s (1985) ‘Social Cognitive Skills Training’ which was discussed in detail in chapter 4. In the world of business management, there are parallels with this concept of ‘thought management’ in De Bono’s (1997) 6 Thinking Hats, wherein it is advocated that the individual does not change the focus of his attention, but rather he deliberately adopts a different perspective on the problem, one particular perspective after another, so as to very consciously search for different solutions. De Bono (1986) also criticises an over-reliance in western cultures on ‘critical thinking’, and he champions instead ‘generative, productive and creative thinking’. We can note, too, that Csikszentmihalyi et al. (1993: 83) in Talented Teenagers, advocate that in order to maximise our experience of what the authors call ‘flow’ ( - that state of enhanced concentration and absorption - ) “the challenge consists in direct control over consciousness itself”. The authors conclude that ‘attentional habits’ cultivated in early years form something akin to a personality trait (ibid.:96). This statement strongly echoes the Canadian Olympic Team Sports Psychologist, Terry Orlick (1990: 87), who makes three claims that bear directly on the issue of metacognition and taking responsibility for and control of the focus of one’s conscious attention:

- Worry is one of the greatest inhibitors of skilled performance. Do not dwell on negative images.

- Focused concentration can be practise; distractibility can be progressively reduced.

- If I were asked to chose one mental skill that distinguishes athletes at the top, I would name their ability to adapt and refocus in the face of distractions.

Attitudes and emotions are arguably types of thought, and it has been proposed that these too can be very proactively managed. For instance, Victor Frankl (1984) advocates the human ability to actively chose one’s attitude in a given set of circumstances, and he refers to this choice as a potential opportunity for ‘Attitudinal Heroism’. More latterly, Goleman (1995) in Emotional Intelligence, calls for ‘emotional literacy’ to be formally and explicitly taught to young people. However, there is a note of caution provided by Vaillant’s (1995) psychoanalytic perspective which suggests that a
defensive mechanism may be a largely unconscious and far more enduring trait than is commonly appreciated. For example, Vaillant explains that a resort to fantasy as an unwitting defence is best breached by improved personal relationships, by repeated confrontation or by example.9

Altogether, the above literature suggests some compelling possibilities and findings, and so as to explore this important but sensitive issues of ‘thought-style management’, my second questionnaire asked:

2nd Q: 52) You think it would be useful for young people to learn at school how to take more deliberate control over what type of thinking they do (in the same way that we might learn about a balanced food diet so as to maintain good health).

64% of 140 participants gave this a positive 4, 5 or 6 on my Likert-scale.

Two questions on from this, my questionnaire invited general comments on the above proposal. About 50% of all MAs wrote something and almost all of these felt that mental training would be a positive thing. However, in marked contrast, 50% of the HAs wrote something and nearly all of these were against such instruction. It would seem that the whole issue of monitoring or intervening with thought-types was a contentious issue among my participants. In respect of these apprehensions, I must stress that my thesis does not conclude that fantasy (or worry or regret) are intrinsically villainous phenomena; I am simply suggesting that they might be the medium through which life-stressors can sometimes do damage to a person’s experience of living. Consequently, I advocate that it warrants further consideration whether individuals of all ages can be usefully helped towards a well-informed choice about how they spend their finite amounts of cognitive energy and time.

9 “What shapes our futures is the quality of sustained relationship with important people, not particular incidents or traumas” (Vaillant, 1995: 29).
4.4.19 Summary and conclusions of the above discussion

Summary

1. Explanations are posited to explain the apparent dearth of observation of my proposed Anti-Reality traits in a general population, with particular reference to the prevalence and quantities of fantasy and daydreaming. It is suggested that either inappropriate methodologies or an ‘era effect’ (whereby Anti-Reality traits may have escalated in recent years) might be part of an explanation. Moreover the very covert nature and/or intention of many of the phenomena is a factor implicated as a possible cause of it being little recognised, and I acknowledge that many of the so called Anti-Reality traits are socially very acceptable.

2. The proactive ‘monitoring’ of thought types was self-reported as possible and even practised by a majority of my participants.

3. The possibility of proactively ‘self-managing’ one’s thought-types was also self-reported as possible and even practised by a sizeable minority of my participants, though a number of them voiced reservations as to the potential dangers of this.

4. There is a considerable body of prior literature in the field of ‘thought-style self-management’, which I argue might usefully include the self-management of attitudes and emotions.

Conclusion

In hindsight, I suggest that the questionnaire method was not wholly appropriate for themes as nebulous and unfamiliar as the ones I was investigating. However, more qualitative responses on the questionnaire, when participants generated their opinion, were often illuminating.

Future research might be best advised to take a small, manageable number of young adults participants: perhaps 4 people in each of an HA, MA and UA group and to invite them to proactively monitor their thought-types (via tape-recorded stream of conscious, bleepers and thought-diaries), though this does raise the strong possibility that monitoring in itself can affect the very
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phenomena that are being monitored. Nonetheless, it would offer a new perspective on the issues. Subsequently, it might be possible with a well-informed, closely monitored group of adult participants, to invite them to make some preliminary attempt to alter in some systematic way the ratio of their types of thinking (in terms of time allotted to each type), and perhaps even make systematic alterations to the intensity and duration of that type of thinking. I acknowledge that there is a very real danger that too hastily putting into place an intervention programme could result in demonising such thinking-types as worry or reminiscing or fantasising or daydreaming. My own research suggests that these might be very important, necessary and highly contributive cognitive phenomena which form part of an adaptive balance and ratio in people’s cognitive lives.

4.4.20 Further possibilities for future research

I have two further suggestions for future research that are speculations borne out of my empirical findings.

The remedial potential of thinking types
The previous section considered the possibilities of the proactive self-management of thinking types. This concept, in conjunction with the results from the following question, has prompted a speculative hypothesis which is discussed below.

2nd Q: 17) Please rank the following 3 activities in order of the energy they require of you (i.e. Which is the most tiring activity? 1st will be the hardest, 3rd will be the easiest).

Responses to this question are represented in the following table 4U (N = 136):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Step by Step Planning and Problem Solving</th>
<th>Fantasising and Daydreaming</th>
<th>Watching TV &amp; Listening to music</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1st</td>
<td>2nd</td>
<td>3rd</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>112</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>79</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
From the above table 4U it can be seen that Step-by-Step Planning and Problem Solving are overwhelmingly perceived by 82% of 136 respondents as the hardest mental activities; fantasy is placed a very distant second; and passive viewing and listening is ranked the easiest. Unfortunately, what the above rank-ordering cannot do is shed light upon how much harder or easier one type of mental activity is compared to another; but my long-interview data from the HA and UA groups suggested that there was a strong majority of respondents who felt there were very considerable differences in the perceived mental difficulty between the three activities above. In light of these findings, I would suggest that it is possible at least that a person who is frequently resorting to Anti-Reality thinking and behaviour may be atrophying their problem-solving and reality-negotiating abilities. On the other hand, Pro-Reality personalities could be exercising these adaptive abilities. My rationale for this proposition, is that reality with all its social and physical constraints to be negotiated, is akin to swimming against the current – hard work! Whereas fantasy worlds are effectively a ‘zero gravity environment’ offering little or no resistance to the thinker’s will.

At least one implication of this possibility is that Reality-Investing Cognitions could be used remedially so as to invigorate and maximise problem-solving ability. In physiological terms, I would also speculate that when someone is fantasising or watching TV, it may be that the pattern of blood flow to the brain will be substantially and meaningfully different from when they are engaging in a difficult problem-solving task. Figure 4W below illustrates the proposition of a continuum that differentiates the type of mental activities by the amount of brain activity that they might require, with implications for rehabilitative thinking tasks.

Low Brain Activity

X ___________________________________________ X

High Brain Activity

Fantasising * Watching TV * Listening to Radio * Reading * Chatting * Debating * Long-term Planning

Figure 4W: an hypothesised relationship between ‘thinking-type’ (related to a particular level of activity) and ‘brain activity’ (Baylis, 1998).

There is little evidence to date that there are any structural changes to a brain that is or is not exercised in the ways that I am advocating are possible, but there may well be functional and process changes as neural pathways and
connections may be facilitated (Rose, 1998). Brain-imaging facilities may soon be able to offer correlational evidence to help corroborate or dispel this physiological proposition.¹⁰

The criminal potential of the extreme Pro-Reality Personality

A second topic I would propose for future research concerns the theory of criminality proposed by Gottfredson and Hirschi (1990) who distil criminality down to the individual trait of ‘self-control’ – a lack of it. However, I propose that these theorists may have neglected to acknowledge the possibility of an extreme Pro-Reality personality who, having achieved elite status in legitimate fields of endeavour, decides that he does not wish to be controlled or restricted by the system prescribed by legal and social mores. Rather than escaping into fantasy or drug abuse as the Anti-Reality personality might do, the extreme Pro-Reality personality might set out to aggressively manipulate (i.e. control) his social reality, for instance by engaging in complex white-collar crime. Figure 4Y below illustrates how the Pro- and Anti-Reality Personality Dimension (linear dimension A in Figure 4Y would most likely correlate to various behaviours and life-outcomes. By way of explanation of Figure 4Y:

**Linear Dimension B** suggests the likely relationship between an individual’s life-outcome in terms of recognised achievements and his Relationship with Reality.

**Linear Dimension C** suggests the likely relationship between an individual’s level of self-control and his Relationship with Reality

**Linear Dimension D** suggests the likely relationship between an individual’s propensity for self-damaging, delinquent, or criminal acts and his Relationship with Reality.

I was interested to note that my HA group were very significantly above the norm on the Criminality sub-scale of the EPQ-R (HA = 12.98; norm = 9.01), and

¹⁰In consideration of these possibilities, I am grateful to conversations with Dr. Jim Lucy of Barts Hospital Dept of Psychological Medicine, and Dr. Oscar Meeham at the University of London Institute of Psychiatry (January, 1998).
Figure 4Y: The proposed relationship between an individual's Relationship with Reality as defined by dimension A, and its relation to the following dimensions:

- B: the individual's level of recognised achievements
- C: the individual's level of self-control as regards social mores
- D: the individual's propensity for delinquent and criminal behaviour

**ANTI-REALITY** The 'Relationship with Reality' Personality Dimension PRO-REALITY

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>A</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
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</thead>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>B</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Atrophying life</td>
<td>Stagnation/Underachievement</td>
<td>Moderate-Achievement</td>
<td>Elite-Achievement</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>C</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Aims to escape social reality</td>
<td>Lack of self-control</td>
<td>Self-control</td>
<td>Aims to control social reality</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>D</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Self-damage</td>
<td>Greater propensity for impulsive crime.</td>
<td>Less propensity for impulsive crime.</td>
<td>Increased propensity for complex crime.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
through my own 2nd questionnaire I had attempted a preliminary investigation of the above model that I propose, via questions 109 and 110:

Thinking of nowadays:

109) You very much like the idea of your committing a complex crime – perhaps a clever fraud or a very skilful jewel heist. Something that requires a great deal of step by step planning.

110) You would probably break the law in all sorts of very serious ways if you could be sure to get away with your crimes?

18 of 48 (38%) and 13 of 48 (28%) HA individuals respectively gave these two questions 4, 5, or 6 on my Likert Scale. It is unfortunate that there is no MA or UA group to compare these answers with, but even standing alone these self-reports indicate how high-accomplishment does not necessarily preclude self-report of a strong attraction to serious criminal acts.
4.5 The proposed relationship between the four psycho-social factors explored in this thesis

Contents of Section 4.5

4.5.1 Introduction
4.5.2 How occupational identity might be connected to Relationship with Reality
4.5.3 How careers guidance might be connected to Relationship with Reality
4.5.4 How mentorship might be connected to Relationship with Reality
4.5.5 How mentorship might be related to careers guidance
4.5.6 How mentorship might be related to occupational identity
4.5.7 How careers guidance might relate to occupational identity
4.5.8 Conclusions on the conceptual relationship
   • Precedents for integrating these four factors
   • My findings provide inadequate empirical evidence to evaluate the conceptual relationship between factors
4.5.1. Introduction

Having discussed the prior literature, my theory and my empirical evidence concerning a Relationship with Reality personality dimension, this next section proposes what I conceive to be a universally bilateral relationship between all four psycho-social factors discussed in this thesis. This relationship is illustrated in Figure 4Z, and is also outlined below, so as to give an overview of how I believe the remaining chapters of this thesis bear a pertinent relation to each other and form a coherent whole.

My investigation of the proposed Relationship with Reality personality dimension forms the central tenet and hub of my thesis; but the motivation for my investigating four hypotheses rather than the one, was the belief that this more holistic perspective would procure a more illuminating impression of Relationship with Reality and some little acknowledged factors that might bear very significantly upon it. For instance, my model 4Z implies that Relationship with Reality is the central feature of an individual's psycho-social dynamic relative to the other factors, as I suggest that this personality dimension might be the medium through which positive or negative experiences, and adaptive or maladaptive strategies or traits, can have much of their effect upon an individual's life.

4.5.2 How occupational identity might be connected to Relationship with Reality

A positive sense of occupational identity is likely to encourage an individual towards Pro-Reality orientation and investment, because the positive sense of identity is likely to make living real-life a more rewarding experience (just as the absence of any rewarding sense of identity might increase the likelihood of an anti-reality orientation). This relationship is potentially bilateral. Hence, a pro-reality orientation and willingness to invest in improving reality is likely to promote the individual's striving for and developing a satisfying occupational identity (just as an anti-reality orientation might decrease such a likelihood).
Careers Education & Careers Guidance are likely to promote:
1. identification with an occupational goal
2. a positive Relationship with Reality
3. seeking out a mentor relevant to the occupational goal

A positive Relationship with Reality is likely to promote:
1. the search for a satisfying occupational identity
2. the search for potential mentors
3. the search for careers information and careers guidance

A sense of Occupational Identity is likely to promote:
1. a positive Relationship with Reality
2. the search for potential mentors
3. the search for more careers information and careers guidance

Being Mentored is likely to promote:
1. a positive Relationship with Reality
2. the search for a satisfying occupational identity
3. the search for careers information and careers guidance
4.5.3 How careers guidance might be connected to Relationship with Reality.

I propose that enhancing the provision of careers education and guidance is likely to encourage a young person to further engage with reality, as he or she will be motivated by the prospect of finding a satisfying career goal with which to identify. And as has been argued above, this occupational goal may in turn foster an improved sense of occupational identity. This hypothesised causal relationship might also operate in the other direction: a positive Relationship with Reality is likely to result in the individual attempting to seek out careers education and guidance as a means of identifying an attractive career goal and/or occupational identity.

Adaptive use of fantasy may have a positive role to play here. Cochran (1997) describes how ‘guided fantasy’ can be used in careers counselling whereby the individual describe an ideal day in his or her life in a year’s time, and so aids the task of the careers counsellor. On a similar note, Singer (1975) has proposed that if one examines the fantasies of adolescents in high school and then follows them up a decade or more later, the dominant themes of the subjects’ adolescent fantasies are, at least in moderate degree, reflected in their adult choice of occupation, style of life, selection of mate and degree of success.

4.5.4 How mentorship might be connected to Relationship with Reality

I propose that receiving mentorship in personal and occupational life is likely to foster within a young person a more positive Relationship with Reality (i.e. likely to foster reality-engaging and investing thoughts and behaviours) because of the emotional encouragement and practical advice and support that characterise mentorship. I suggest, too, that the young person who is developing a more positive Relationship with Reality is likely to be intrinsically motivated to seek advice from experienced, trusted and impressive adults on how to improve further his or her experience of real-life.
4.5.5. **How mentorship might relate to careers guidance**

At the cutting edge of Careers Guidance, there is apparently a growing appreciation of the importance of invisible and very personal motivations. The pre-eminent careers theorist Savickas advocates that "the wholeness embodied by simultaneously examining public reasons and private yearnings transforms Vocational Guidance into Career Counselling" (Cochran, 1997:3). It is possible, then, that a mentor could not only promote the services of careers counselling to their mentees, but that a mentor could also team with the mentee and guidance counsellor to discuss what might be the underlying motivations for a particular career choice.

4.5.6 **How Mentorship might relate to occupational identity**

A mentor who is provenly competent in the working world, could enhance a young person’s sense of occupational identity by providing the mentee with a window into that working arena, and a sense of already being involved with the profession to which he or she aspires. Conversely, a young person with a developing sense of occupational identity will be likely to seek out mentorship to help develop this role.

4.5.7 **How careers guidance might relate to occupational identity**

Careers education and guidance should promote the likelihood of an individual establishing a rewarding career goal with which to identify and with which to establish a sense of occupational identity. Conversely, having a sense of occupational identity is likely to encourage the individual to seek out more careers information and guidance so as to develop his or her sense of that occupational goal and identity.

However, a sense of occupational identity is not necessarily synonymous with a specific career path, and one can achieve the former without being aware of the latter. It is for this reason perhaps that Savickas observes how
"Pre-eminent vocational psychologists... have characterised careers guidance as a translation service in which the counsellor portrays a client's vocational identity and then translates that identity into viable occupational roles" (Cochran, 1997:3).

4.5.8 Conclusions on the conceptual relationship

There are strong conceptual reasons for hypothesising that these factors interact very substantially with each other and very possibly in complex and multiplicative ways. For instance, the combination of a motivating career goal and good mentorship may have a positive effect upon Relationship with Reality that far exceeds the sum effect of one factor with the other.

Precedents for integrating these four factors

Bringing together these factors for theoretical or empirical investigation seems to have been a rare enterprise. The only precedent I am aware of is the inclusion of three out of four of these factors in the work of Vaillant (1993) who, in *The Wisdom of the Ego*, addresses the importance of fantasy (as an ego-defence mechanism), of 'career consolidation' (as a psycho-social developmental stage), and of the role of mentorship. However, it is notable that Vaillant does not explicitly integrate these three topics.

My findings provide inadequate empirical evidence to evaluate the conceptual relationship between factors

For the following reasons, I was unable to make even a rudimentary statistical analysis of the theoretical inter-relationship which I have proposed exists between the factors.

1) It seemed to be the case that participants either had no substantial or formal experience of careers education and guidance or of mentorship, or that my definitions and data-gathering methods
were inadequate to secure a systematic and comparable measurement of their idiosyncratic experiences.

2) It seemed very likely that I had inadequately defined mentorship so that it was misunderstood, and taken as too inclusive, or that participants themselves were unable to distinguish criteria for positive or negative mentorship. In view of the evidence to be presented in chapter 7 that mentorship is a little-aired concept in British education, this misunderstanding and misattribution among my participants is understandable.

A detailed inventory of criteria for the definition of ‘mentor’ might help participants assess whether their own experience of support form non-parental adults meets such a definition.

3) As will be shown in Section 5.2, my conception of Occupational Identity was found to be an inaccurate and insufficient concept to encapsulate a central source of motivation for the majority of my participants.

More appropriate concepts will be suggested in 5.2, and these could form the basis for future research.

From the above I hope that it is evident that although there are conceptual reasons why the four target factors of this thesis might be integrated, my empirical research has been unable to shed light upon these.
Chapter 5

Occupational Identity
Contents of Chapter 5

5.1 Review of the specific literature relating to Occupational Identity

5.2 My findings relating to Occupational Identity
5.1 Review of the specific literature relating to Occupational Identity

Contents of Section 5.1

5.1.1 Introduction
5.1.2 Evidence of the beneficial effects of employment – with particular reference to the prevention of crime and delinquency
5.1.3 The importance of having a sense of Occupational Identity: humanistic and psychoanalytic models.
5.1.4 The mere prospect of an Occupational Identity may prove beneficial
5.1.5 The changing value of Occupational Identity and its changing availability
5.1.6 Unemployment’s effect upon Occupational Identity
5.1.7 Summary and conclusions of reviewing the specific literature relating to Occupational Identity.
In the social jungle of human existence
there is no feeling of being alive without a sense of identity.
Erik Homburger Erikson (1968: 76)

5.1.1 Introduction

In the introduction to this thesis, my second major hypothesis was that young people’s self-reported history of their sense of ‘Occupational Identity’ would correlate with substantial differences in observable life-outcomes. In my review of the general literature relating to this thesis (chapter 2), I suggested that identity is a subject very little documented in the mainstream UK textbooks on adolescent and young adult psychology or psychiatry. The following review will examine what evidence exists in the literature to suggest that what I term ‘occupational identity’ might offer older teenagers and young adults something more than financial rewards.

5.1.2 Evidence of the beneficial effects of employment, with particular reference to the prevention of crime and delinquency

There is mounting evidence to suggest that employment itself has an ameliorative affect on seriously anti-social and delinquent behaviour. I list three quite different types of evidence below:

First, the wholly quantitative, longitudinal, prospective Cambridge Study of Delinquent Development (West and Farrington 1977; Farrington and West, 1990) concludes that the three major factors that fostered desistance from crime were getting married, moving out of London, and obtaining employment.

Secondly, the quantitative and qualitative work of Sampson and Laub (1993) involved a re-analysis of the longitudinal data on the persistence and desistance from crime among the 1,000 men in the Glueck and Glueck (1950) study ‘Unravelling Juvenile Delinquency’. Sampson and Laub quote Clausen (1990) who spoke of ‘key turning points’, such as marriage, meaningful work and serving in the military, and themselves go on to state that “strong job
stability... reduces the likelihood of involvement in criminal and deviant behaviour”. They explain this phenomenon by referring to ‘social capital’, by which they mean the social ties embedded in work and family institutions (Sampson and Laub, 1993). This concept of ‘social bonds’ (also associated with Hawkins and Catalano, 1992) was discussed in greater detail in chapter 2.

Thirdly, evidence from largely qualitative work has associated employment with non-delinquency. For example, in a paper given at the British Criminology Conference in Belfast (July 1997) Parker, Measham and Aldridge recount the results and conclusions of a 4 year longitudinal study of 1,100 young people aged 14 to 19, who were surveyed between 1991 and 1996. The researchers concluded that three factors distinctively insulated at least some of the youngsters from partaking in drugs either as a trial or a more permanent pursuit. These three factors were: Religious beliefs that legislate against drug use; Health and sporting goals that they were loath to jeopardise; and Career goals and/or prospects that they were loath to jeopardise.

A recurrent theme of the above three studies is the role played by having employment, or at least the prospect of such, with a strong suggestion in the latter two studies that the employment should be ‘meaningful’ to the individual. The following section examines the evidence that this correlation can be explained at least in some part as being due to ‘an enhanced sense of identity’.

5.1.3 The importance of having a sense of Occupational Identity: the Humanistic and Psychoanalytic models.

Adler (1927) proposes that, in order to live more effectively and have life feel more meaningful and worthwhile, we need to impress and feel important through rank and wealth. Indeed, he suggests that the psyche can develop only when a certain goal has been set. In our civilisation, he proposes that this goal will involve ‘social recognition and significance’ (ibid.:152). My interpretation of Adler’s statement is that occupational identity may provide a primary means of fulfilling this requirement.

The fundamental importance of an intrinsically motivating vocation was later theorised upon by Maslow (1971) who described ‘self-actualising’
individuals as those “devotedly working at something which is very precious to them - some calling or vocation in the old sense, the priestly sense... so that the work-joy dichotomy in them disappears.”

Yet arguably the most important voice in the field of occupational identity is that of a contemporary of Maslow’s: E.H. Erikson. In *Identity: Youth and Crisis*, Erikson (1968: 61-65) makes some highly illuminating statements in his chapter devoted to adolescence:

> When we wish to establish a person’s identity, we ask what his name is and what station he occupies in his community.

> In general it is the inability to settle on an occupational identity which most disturbs young people.

> The choice of an occupation assumes a significance beyond the question of remuneration and status. It is for this reason that some adolescents prefer not to work at all for a while rather than be forced into an otherwise promising career which would offer success without the satisfaction of functioning with unique excellence.

> The adolescent is looking for men and ideas to have faith in - in whose service in which it would seem worthwhile to prove oneself trustworthy.

> This first stage is characterised by a loud, cynical mistrust of much that he sees around him. He does not wish to be pushed into anything. Hence youth’s joy at finding some new technology or music or fashion or creed to follow. At least originality (if not goodness) is guaranteed.

In *Identity and the life Cycle*, Erikson (1980) continues to describe the importance of adolescents finding a niche for themselves, and being recognised and responded to as people with function and status. He proposes that identity (which he defines as ‘self-representation’) develops throughout the life of the individual.

Though it was Erikson who so dramatically extended the Freudian conception of human psychoanalytic development into adulthood, it is Vaillant (1993) who has most notably operationalised and empirically researched the Erikson
model of adult development, and Vaillant who suggests significant modifications. He proposes two key and distinct stages of his own, one of which is particularly relevant to this chapter: Career Consolidation, which is the individual wanting an occupational identity that is a specialised role valued by both self and society. Vaillant acknowledges how Erikson sometimes tried to link career-identity formation with adolescent identity formation, but whereas Erikson conceived of a long period of moratorium after the initial identity formation, Vaillant chooses to “distinguish the development of identity within one’s family of origin from identity with one’s world of work” (1993: 150). Vaillant operationalised an individual’s achievement of this latter psycho-social stage by the following criteria: a clear, specialised career identification characterised by commitment, compensation (i.e. material compensation) contentment, and competence. Four defining words that distinguish the ‘career’ from the ‘job’. 1 It is very pertinent to my work that Vaillant proposes that

the contented and committed perennial graduate student lacks competence.

The amateur full-time golfer, unpublished poet or solitary birdwatcher who continues an adolescent hobby into adulthood lacks compensation (ibid.: 154).

Vaillant also proposes the universal and historical prevalence of the notion of career consolidation:

The medieval hierarchy that led from apprentice to journeyman and from journeywoman to master craftswoman was as clear a thousand years ago as is the path that leads a premedical student to resident to specialist today (ibid: 154).

Erikson and Vaillant both propose that these over-lapping adult developmental stages exist across gender, class and ethnicity, and the achievement of each stage is not a once-only event but rather it is a process which must be continuously renewed. In other words, Career Consolidation needs continual productivity otherwise rigidity and stagnation will set in.

1Equally important, Vaillant recognised that career consolidation may mean being a housewife.
My own thesis adheres to this Erikson cum Vaillant model of adult development, but I suggest that for two reasons a young person’s need and capacity for some form of Career Consolidation may have been brought forward several years from the time of onset that Vaillant recounts from his major longitudinal study of the College sample men who were aged circa 20 in the early 1940s. Vaillant’s graphical representation of their psychosocial development suggests onset might be expected from age 25 onwards with circa 80% of the sample achieving Career Consolidation by age 30 (see Vaillant, 1993: 167; figure 5). Almost 60 years on from that generation, I suggest that contemporary young adults may experience a need for such consolidation partly to compensate for there being fewer social structures offering a sense of security and a sense of personal identity to youngsters (see Giddens, 1991). I suggest that the institutions of family, local community and church offer a contemporary individual less social stability and less of a sense of being known and valued for his or her personality and informal roles. It is possible that in contemporary society one’s professional identity is more and more becoming a means by which one’s feeling of stability and one’s sense of personal value and public esteem are achieved. In our geographically mobile and socially heterogeneous urban society, one’s professional identity may offer the individual a ‘self-representation’ that is more universally recognisable than personal identity.

The second reason I posit for explaining why young adults may seek Career Consolidation earlier than Vaillant’s College sample, is the possibility of an earlier experience of intimacy with another person, which according to the Erikson cum Vaillant model is the immediately preceding psycho-social stage. I suggest that earlier puberty and a liberalisation of social and sexual mores have facilitated such intimacy, and once again I would suggest that the diminishing ontological security offered by institutions such as family church and community (Giddens, 1991) has promoted a social climate in which intimacy is eagerly sought.

I conclude this review of the Erikson cum Vaillant model by noting that it is theoretically of great importance for society that young people achieve a sense of Career Consolidation, because the achievement of such makes it very much more likely that the individual will progress to Generativity - the stage in which he or she cares for younger generations and the well-being of society as a whole.
The importance of occupational identity proposed by Erikson and Vaillant has found a strong consensus among subsequent researchers of the phenomenon. Jahoda observes that in modern societies

status and prestige are defined in the public eye by the nature of the job that a person holds... Because of widespread consensus in public life about the social status assigned to varying jobs, people tend to adopt this assignation as one clear element in defining themselves to themselves (1982: 26).

Latterly, Kroger (1989) and Petersen and Leffert (1995) concur that fidelity to a vocation, a set of values, social roles and a sexual identity are indicators of successful identity resolution in late adolescence, and the benefits of such are a flexible strength in dealing with the world. Moreover, they find no evidence that the work-ethic is diminishing in a new generation.

5.1.4 The mere prospect of an Occupational Identity may prove beneficial

Winefield et al. (1993:100) point out that acquiring a satisfactory occupational identity, in Erikson's (1956) terms, does not seem to depend on getting a satisfactory job immediately after leaving school. According to Erikson, the most obvious concomitants of an increasing sense of identity “are a feeling of being at home in one’s body, a sense of ‘knowing where one is going’ and an inner assuredness of anticipated recognition from those who count” (Erikson, 1956: 72). Given that most professional careers require several years of tertiary training, it is possible that embarking on a tertiary training course leading to a professional qualification might fulfil a similar function.

The value of such prospects is underscored by Victor Frankl (1984) who published the psychological treatise Man’s Search For Meaning in which he wrote of his time in the Nazi ‘Death Camps’: “When we spoke about attempts to give a man in camp mental courage, we said that he had to be shown something to look forward to in the future” (ibid.:133). Frankl acknowledges his debt to Nietzsche when he says “he who has a why to live can bear with almost any how.” Hence was born Frankl’s ‘Logotherapy’, literally translated as ‘meaning-therapy’. “The Logotherapist’s role consists of widening and
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broadening the visual field of the patient so that the whole spectrum of potential meaning becomes conscious and visible to him" (ibid.: 135) In effect, this Logotherapist seems strongly akin to a Careers Guidance Counsellor cum Mentor, and in this respect the concept of Logotherapy supports the importance I attribute to careers guidance later in my thesis. Frankl sets high standards for what constitutes meaning in life:

this meaning is unique and specific in that it must and can be fulfilled by [the individual] alone; only then does it achieve a significance which will satisfy his own will to meaning (ibid.:121).

Frankl does not fear that such an ardent purpose or ambition will over-stress the individual:

if architects want to strengthen a decrepit arch, they increase the load which is laid upon it, for thereby the parts are joined more firmly together (ibid.:127).

My own first-hand experience of empirical evidence for the potential positive effect of a future-based ‘occupational role’, began when I conducted in-depth interviews with 10 Guardsmen of the British Army’s 1st Battalion the Grenadiers2. The self-reported life-histories suggested to me that at least 8 out of 10 of the Guardsmen consciously used their early-identified career ambition as one means by which to insulate themselves from strongly criminogenic environments that included highly delinquent peers, poverty-stricken family background, and seemingly negligible academic achievement (Baylis, 1995).

5.1.5 The changing value of Occupational Identity, and its changing availability

I suggest that there are additional factors which in most western societies have indirectly contributed to the psycho-social importance of Occupational

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2 The Grenadiers are a highly prestigious regiment who, when not at war, wear the distinctive red tunics and black bearskins and are known the world-over as the traditional guards of the royal palaces in London.
Identity. One factor is the diminishing importance of competing identities, which may have been brought about by the following:

- the increasing dilution of religious identity
- the widespread strengthening of gender equality in social and economic environments
- an increasing acceptance of sexual orientations that are not heterosexual (i.e. an increasing social acceptance of those who identify themselves as gay, lesbian or bisexual).
- An increasing sense of internationalism that has diluted national identity.

Meanwhile, the process and panorama of identity-choice is itself becoming more complex; there are at least 5 reasons why this may be the case:

1. Gardner writes that,

   issues of identity have become increasingly crucial in our era, where younger individuals no longer do just what their ancestors did and one's options may change (voluntarily or involuntarily) several times during one's life (1997: 30).

2. Adolescents are increasingly isolated from working adults. This theme is elaborated by Rutter who writes:

   preparation for adult work roles now requires years of schooling, and preparation for adult family roles is more difficult for some to acquire through observation. In some communities, children and especially adolescents spend most of their daily lives isolated from the working-world of adults. Our increasingly complex societies have made it even more difficult for adolescents to understand what kinds of adults they are to become and how they are to accomplish this (1995: 3).

3. Economic and technological changes have decreased the requirement for unskilled and semi-skilled labour which had once been suitable for young people and novices. Moreover, a greater proportion of work-roles require an increased level of skill that in turn necessitate a prolonged vocational training, and hence prolongs the identity of 'student' as opposed to 'qualified professional'. Rutter and Smith hypothesise that this
"lengthened adolescence might mean the prolongation of an insecure status, and of an uncertain personal identity" (1995: 800).

4. As I argue in Section 6.1, mechanisms by which young people are helped to consider and negotiate the transition to adult working roles have not kept pace with contemporary changes. Parents and schoolteachers are still ill-prepared to advise teenagers on career choices, and specialist careers guidance mechanisms are under-appreciated and under-funded and under-developed.

5. Rutter (1995) suggests that the increase of individualistic values such as self-realisation and fulfilment have increased an individual's expectations. He claims that youngsters want intrinsic interest, personal development, responsibility, and pay and promotion prospects. These expectations are running ahead of the market's ability to satisfy them, and they must find other means of satisfying their needs beyond paid employment.

All of the above pressures arguably make it difficult for contemporary young people to acquire an occupational identity other than their universally expected one: that of schoolboy or schoolgirl or student. Yet, this enforced uniformity comes at a time in their lives and during a socio-historical era when a sense of individuality and personhood would be most beneficial. This may partly explain adolescents' ever more extreme attempts at differentiating themselves through other dimensions of their identity: their appearance, their speech, their attitudes, their personal relationships, their pastimes and their group affiliations.

In the light of the above, I argue that Skynner's following statement very much applies to the subject of 'occupational identity':

there's little or no provision to help children and young people understand, step by step throughout their development, how to fit constructively and enjoyably into social groups or to make transitions from one life stage to another. They're just thrown in at the deep end without being taught to swim. It's an extraordinary lack in our social structure - and we don't even know that it's missing (1993: 220).
## 5.1.6 Unemployment’s effect on Occupational Identity

Bottoms and Wiles write that “the economically more advanced countries of the world are, in our view, at the present time undergoing some quite fundamental economic and social changes” (1997: 102). I argue that unemployment, and its potential effect on occupational identity, is one of the most significant psycho-social by-products of these changes. Winefield et al. (1993) in *Growing up with unemployment: A longitudinal study of its psychological impact*, describe a study of more than 3,000 South Australian school-leavers who left school from 1980-1982. They were surveyed annually throughout the 1980s, although attrition meant that by 1989 the number was reduced to about 450.

While we initially thought our study was to be specifically about the psychological effects of unemployment, in the end our work is really about attaining an occupational identity, one of the clearest marks of entry into adult status in our society (ibid.:ix).

To give the problem a British context: in July 1995, 650,000 young people between the ages of 18 and 25 were unemployed and claiming social security benefits in Britain (i.e. were not full-time students); one-quarter of these had been unemployed for more than 12 months (DfEE, 1998).

In the event of a dearth of lawful employment, it can be hypothesised that teenagers will look for alternative identities. “Crime is one of the cultures in which young men acquire the mantle of manhood” (Campbell, 1993: 211), and this century has a long history of social commentary on working class youngsters struggling for adulthood and identity (see Merton 1938; Cohen 1955; Goffman 1968; Cloward and Ohlin 1960; Katz 1988). The importance attributed to occupational identity and the individual’s need for acceptance and respect and status, may well suggest why ‘shaming’ (Braithwaite, 1990) can be so effective as a means of social control. But rather than the threat of shame, might our society offer instead the rich promise and rewards of self-respect? Winefield et al. write that unemployed youngsters could be taught that an individual’s worth depends not only on occupational status and wealth but also on the intrinsic value of what he or she does – the extent to which it benefits other people” (1993.:153).
Glover and Marshall (1993) advocate the idea of ‘voluntary work’ as a means of acquiring some form of social status; but Kroger cautions that the “response [from an adult world] must be genuine in its appreciation of the talents and skills offered by the young” (1989:41). She quotes from Erikson:

In this, children cannot be fooled by empty praises and condescending encouragement. They may have to accept artificial bolstering of their self-esteem in lieu of something better, but what I call their accruing ego-identity and real strength only come from wholehearted and consistent recognition of real accomplishment, that is, achievement that has meaning in their culture (1959: 88-9).

Such a call was very notably operationalised in the philanthropic educational measures of Kurt Hahn who transformed education in the first half of the 20th century. Founder of Salem School in Germany and of Gordonstoun School in Scotland, and of the nation-wide Duke of Edinburgh’s Award Scheme, a key principle of Hahn’s was to encourage outdoors activity combined with ‘Service to the Community’, particularly life-saving service through the acquisition of skills such as lifeboating, fire fighting and mountain rescue. Indeed, the motto of Gordonstoun is ‘There is more in you than you know’.

5.1.7 Summary and conclusions of reviewing the specific literature relating to Occupational Identity

1. Various types of evidence suggest the anti-criminogenic potential of employment, particularly meaningful employment.

2. The importance of an individual having a sense of ‘occupational identity’ for psycho-social reasons above and beyond economic ones, is advocated most notably by Erikson (e.g. 1968) and subsequently Vaillant (e.g. 1993).

3. Vaillant conceives of a psycho-social developmental stage called Career Consolidation. In his College sample (of Harvard men who were aged 20 in 1940) this stage was achieved by circa 80% of individuals between age 25 and 30.
4. I suggest two reasons why something akin to Career Consolidation might be a powerful psycho-social need for contemporary young adults. First, contemporary youth’s earlier achievement of ‘intimacy’ (as a psycho-social developmental stage), and secondly the ‘ontological insecurity’ that it has been suggested is increasingly prevalent in contemporary western society.

5. Social and economic changes have apparently made it increasingly difficult for young adults to find occupational identity, let alone Career Consolidation.

In conclusion, there is considerable theoretical and empirical evidence to support the proposition that what I describe as a sense of ‘occupational identity’ can have an important psycho-social value to an individual above and beyond any economic product. It seems likely too that social and economic changes can seriously impinge on the processes of acquiring such an identity.
5.2 My findings relating to Occupational Identity

Contents of Section 5.2

5.2.1 Introduction
5.2.2 The existence of a sense of Occupational Identity
5.2.3 How important is this sense of Occupational Identity?
5.2.4 Findings from the HA long-interviews regarding their sense of Occupational Identity:
   • The common feature of a 'clear, unifying and single-minded goal'
   • High-achievement as an identity in itself
   • A sense of vocation and a sense of joy
   • What helps in the face of adversity? The consensus among HAs
5.2.5 Further evidence for the potential importance of a goal with which to identify and to commit oneself
5.2.6 Summary and conclusions from my findings
5.2.1 Introduction

In the Introduction to this thesis, my second major hypothesis was that my research participants' self-reported history of their sense of 'Occupational Identity' would correlate with substantial differences in observable life-outcomes. In short, I suspected that Occupational Identity or Career Goals might be implicated by my research as a potential motivator of superior accomplishments in academic or professional endeavours. In *Talented Teenagers: The roots of success and failure*, Csikszentmihalyi et al. (1997: 6) concluded that no factor is a sine qua non for success, but in their introduction chapter there is section titled *Motivation as the key to the development of talent*, in which they write:

> The thesis of our work is in agreement with the conclusions of a recent report by the US Department of Education which claims that high academic achievers are not necessarily born 'smarter' than others, but work harder and develop more self-discipline... In short, emotional and motivational factors are equally or even more important [than intelligence].

There is even evidence to suggest this is true at the other end of the human lifespan: Argyle (1989) found that having 'purpose in life' was the strongest predictor in a study into the self-reported life-satisfaction of retired British Managers, and that having 'strong interests' which led to social interaction, was also very helpful.

5.2.2 The existence of a sense of Occupational Identity

I wanted to establish to what extent my research participants acknowledged such a concept as occupational identity, if at all. Towards the end of my research, I devised Section 6 of the 2nd questionnaire in which I proposed a model of identity made up of 6 component parts each with 4 chronological dimensions (see Figure 5A). These are not vacuum-sealed or definitive components or dimensions, but I theorised that categorising identity in this way might help me begin to tease out the potential significance of the component features of identity which I was proposing. It was unfortunate that I only devised the model in time to be tested with 16 HAs and 42 MAs, i.e. 58 people in all. The model of identity was presented thus:
Figure 5A: Model of an individual’s sense of identity (Baylis, 1998). This model comprises six components of identity, each with four chronological dimensions.
Listed below, there are 6 types of identity (Your sense of who and what you are), and I'm interested to know how much you agree or disagree that these 6 identities together make up the bigger picture of who you feel you are. i.e. Are these really the six slices of the identity cake?

Identity Part 1: Your Physical Identities - which could be such things as your sense of health and attractiveness, your sense of your gender, age, and all the implications of the accent of your speaking voice and skin colour, and your manner of dress.

Identity Part 2: Your Private-life Identities - i.e. your private-life relationships which might divide into:-

i) family relationships (where, for instance, you are not a soldier but rather a son or a brother).
ii) friendship relationships (where you are not a psychologist but rather a 'best mate').
iii) romantic and sexual relationships (where you are not a student, but rather a boyfriend or lover, or straight or gay).

Identity Part 3: Attitude Identities - which could be called your 'Personality' or 'Character' - i.e. your dominant and general attitudes and approaches to life, the way you look at things, your moods and emotions, your styles of thinking.

Identity Part 4: Your Occupational Identities (that can otherwise be known as Professional Identities or perhaps Vocational Identities) - i.e. your working-life roles, which for a young person might be largely that of schoolchild or college student.

Identity Part 5: Your Extra-Curricular Identities - the things you do outside of your main job or role. For instance: being an amateur musician, athlete, actor and so on.

Identity Part 6: Your Group Identities - your sense of affiliation with institutions, teams, clubs, fashions, movements, religions, class, and nationality.
This Model Of identity Also Proposes That Our Sense Of Our identity Is Comprised Of Four Chronological Dimensions: Past, Present, Future, and Fantasy.

A) the Past Dimension i.e. Your past identities are a permanent feature of who you are and to some extent effect your self-image.

B) the Present Dimension i.e. what we feel ourselves to be now, in the present day.

C) the Future Dimension i.e. what we are striving for, or are likely to become.

D) The Fantasy dimension
These are all those things I wanted to be, and often fantasised about being, but I knew I'd never be (e.g. my conscious and deliberate fantasies about being a Secret Agent who is part of the SAS, great looking, confident, much loved and loving... )

The table below (table 5B) indicates the identities to which respondents gave a 4, 5 or 6 rating on my Likert-scale:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 5B</th>
<th>Number of respondents who gave the identity a 4, 5, or 6 rating.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>HA(n=16)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The 6 identity categories:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1) Physical</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2) Private Life</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3) Attitude (Personality)¹</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4) Occupational</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5) Extra Curricular</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6) Group</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

¹ 'Personality' or 'Character - a person’s pervasive attitude and approach to life’, as defined by Dowson and Grounds (1995).
It can be seen from the above table 5B, that occupational identity is self-reported as recognised as part of their lives by almost double the number of my participants than recognise ‘group identity’.

My model also proposes that our sense of our identity is comprised of four chronological dimensions: past, present, future, and fantasy. The following table indicates which chronological dimensions of identity received 4, 5 or 6 on my Likert Scale from the 58 participants:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 5C</th>
<th>Number of respondents who gave the identity a 4, 5, or 6 rating.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>HA(16)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Past</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Present</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Future</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fantasy</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It is very notable from the table of results above (table 5C) that ‘Future Identity’ was recognised as important in an individual’s self-image, which suggests an explanation for the potential importance of having a positive and rewarding identity ahead of one. This finding supports the observations by Frankl (1984) and Erikson (1980) which were cited in my review of the specific literature. There is also acknowledgement by a large minority of my participants of their having ‘Fantasy Identities’ (already discussed in Section 4.4). For this reason, the possibility of having fantasy occupational identities is discussed further below.²

In terms of the overall validity of my model above, the following results demonstrate support for it from a strong majority of participants. The following three questions received 4, 5 or 6 on my Likert-scale from respectively 46, 40 and 44 of a possible 58 combined HAs and MAs (i.e. 79%, 69%, and 76%).

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² Mine is not the first model of identity to include fantasy as an important factor. It is notable that the content of sexual fantasy (whether for masturbation or associated with nocturnal emissions) is one of the three ways (along with sexual behaviour and age) that ‘sexual orientation’ is measured by clinicians (Green, 1987).
2nd Q:121) How true is it of you that your sense of who and what you are is made up of a collection of quite different identities?

2nd Q:122) How true is it that some of your identities can be very different from each other?

2nd Q:124) In your view, how good a representation of the structure/the skeleton of identity is the model?

5.2.3 How important is this sense of Occupational Identity?

The 2nd questionnaire offered some support for the proposition that there was a connection between individuals’ Relationship with Reality and their having a goal that was meaningful to them in terms of their sense of identity:

2nd Q:70) You believe a sense of where you’re going in life (i.e. plans for the future) encourages you to pay attention to reality rather than escape it by some means.

107 of 140 (i.e. 76%) evenly distributed across the 3 groups gave this 4, 5, or 6 on my Likert-scale (see chart 5D).

I then examined whether the sense of direction had to be a career goal or occupational identity:

2nd Q: 66) When it comes to your own attractiveness and impressiveness, do you think that what you do for a living (or what and where you study) is important?

85 of 140 (i.e. 61%) gave this 4, 5 or 6 on my Likert-scale (see chart 5E).

There seemed to be a reasonable majority feeling that one’s occupation was socially important, but I was interested to know why that should be so. The following question suggested a key component:

2nd Q: 68) When it comes to your own attractiveness and impressiveness, do you think that how good you are at something is important?

90 of 140 (i.e. 64%) gave this 4, 5 or 6 on the Likert-scale (see chart 5F)
Chart 5D: Participants' responses to 2nd Q: 70) 'You believe a sense of where you’re going in life encourages you to pay attention to reality rather than to escape it' (N = 140)

- 24% chose 4, 5, or 6 on Likert scale
- 76% chose 0, 1, 2 or 3 on Likert scale

Chart 5E: Participants' responses to 2nd Q: 66) 'When it comes to your own attractiveness and impressiveness, do you think that what you do for a living is important?' (N = 140)

- 39% chose 4, 5, or 6 on Likert scale
- 61% chose 0, 1, 2 or 3 on Likert scale

Chart 5F: Participants' responses to 2nd Q: 68) 'When it comes to your own attractiveness and impressiveness, do you think that how good you are at something is important? (N = 140)

- 36% chose 4, 5, or 6 on Likert scale
- 64% chose 0, 1, 2 or 3 on Likert scale
The above acknowledgements of the importance of identity because of its interpersonal value were reinforced by answers to the following questions from the 1st questionnaire:

I want to get a rough idea of the time you spend doing each type of thinking:

i) Having a job or career you’re really proud of

ii) You being an expert at something impressive

Respectively 41 and 46 out of 97 participants (i.e. 42% and 47%) said that they ‘daydream or fantasised’ about these themes once or more per day - which is almost as much as they self-reported ‘daydreaming and fantasising’ about sex. To elaborate on this finding, the following can be noted: For the 18 UAs responding to the 1st Questionnaire, the most popular themes for their fantasies and daydreams overall were, in descending order: ‘Pleasurable sex’ - ‘Having a job/career you can be really proud of’ - ‘Family and friends being really proud of you’ - ‘Being an expert at something impressive’. Other notable themes were ‘Committing an act of heroism’ - ‘Being much more physically attractive’, and ‘Revenge’. For the 33 HAs responding to the 1st Questionnaire, the most popular themes for their fantasies and daydreams were, in descending order: ‘Having a job/career you can be really proud of’ - ‘Being an expert at something impressive’ - ‘Committing an act of heroism’ - and romance and pleasurable sex.

It can be seen that there is considerable overlap in the themes of my HA and UA groups here. The prevalence of occupational identity in daydreams and fantasies has been well noted by previous researchers (Goldstein and Baskin, 1988; and Anthony and Gibbins, 1992), but what my own findings suggest is that an important component of occupational identity seems to be ‘how good you are at something’, and this raises the possibility that ‘being good at something’ or ‘expert’ can be an identity in itself. It will be seen that this proposition is supported by my long-interviews with HAs (noted later in this chapter).

The 2nd questionnaire gathered more specific data as regards what my 140 participants might aspire to being ‘professionally’ as indicated by their fiction
preferences. The following question received a 75% response rate from participants who were required to generate an answer unprompted:

2nd Q: 69) Please name one tv or film character that you admire or respect partly because of their job.

For the HA and MA groups, three-quarters cited a character from one of the following working arenas: uniformed or undercover cops, Government special agents, fire-fighters or emergency-room doctors, and other helping and caring professions (including a divorce lawyer). More specifically, James Bond was cited 5 times, the American hospital drama ‘ER’ characters were cited 3 times, and the Oxford police detective ‘Morse’ was listed twice. There was also one of each of an inventor, a bank robber, a novelist, a journalist, and a farmer.

I suggest that these choices could be interpreted as indicating a widespread aspiration for professions that would secure the individual ‘general approval’, approval that is most likely found in jobs that are highly visible and generally regarded as ‘highly pro-social’, while still allowing for a sense of action. Note how there was only one criminal occupation cited, which is surprising among young adults who might fairly be thought to hold ‘anti-establishment’ stances. Notably, the UA group had a very low response rate. This could indicate lack of compliance with the questionnaire, although there is no other evidence that UAs were rushing their answers, were resentful of the task, or were unfocused. However, there may be an explanation for their reticence found in an observation by Alison Liebling (a British specialist in qualitative prison research) who said in discussion at the British Criminology Conference in Belfast (July, 1997) that “Much of an inmate’s behaviour is self-medication for their inner life, their struggling with self-concept and self-esteem, but it doesn’t come out unless you specifically ask.” In the light of this, perhaps the UAs’ unwillingness to project their aspirations on to tv characters, might reflect some deeper quandary with their own sense of identity.

As further evidence of the importance attributed to occupational identity by my participants, the following two propositions received very strong (near maximal) approval among all three groups in the 2nd questionnaire:
Looking back at the time when you were a teenager i.e. from when you were aged 13 and upwards, which of the following do you think were (or would have been) very helpful to you and made things a lot better for you:

i) Having quite a clear idea of what profession or trade or educational course you wanted to head for, and it being something you really looked forward to.

ii) Having something you were really good at and could be proud of because it earns you a lot of respect.

Nonetheless, despite the ‘life-salvaging qualities’ enthusiastically attributed to i and ii above, it is notable that even those who self-reported having these factors in their lives, were not spared either ‘moderate achievement’ or in many cases ‘imprisonment’. This is a stark reminder of how retrospective accounts can be misleading, and that respondents may not, for a great number of reasons, possess unfailing insights to the causes and likely cures of a particular human condition.

5.2.4 Findings from the HA Long-Interviews regarding their sense of Occupational Identity.

The following evidence is drawn from interviews with HAs (n=50), who were a group of men and women with a mean age of 25 who were asked to self-report retrospectively on their teenage schooldays and university lives. (This group is detailed in sub-section 3.3.3.)

- 16 HAs claimed that they knew what they wanted to do occupationally before the end of school (i.e. age 18), or thought they knew. Thus, their sense of occupational identity came in time for it to motivate them for their end-of-school examinations.

- 21 HAs made up their mind before the end of their University career.

- Only 5 HAs left University (after honours degrees) without any firm plans about what they were going on to. It is pertinent that this uncertainty was in all cases followed by a period of mediocrity or under-achievement (relative to their previous accomplishments) that lasted between 1 and 10 years.
• 8 of the HA group hadn’t yet finished their university careers and hadn’t made up their mind or their choice was not known to me.

The above frequency counts of self-reports cannot be regarded as firm evidence that having identified a career goal is strongly correlated with accomplishments in professional or post-graduate life, but it is at least consistent with the proposition. The following quote illustrates the highly beneficial role that can potentially be played by a strong sense of occupational identity:

You need to see yourself as completely A or B or C when you’re doing something. My identity now [post university] is a Military Officer. In my second year at University it was a Sportsman. In my Third year, it was a Scientist.

The above individual is particularly notable because he excelled in each one of these three identities even in comparison to the elite peer groups in which he was operating. One of the touchstones of his accomplishment seemed to be his ability to immerse himself in a particular role or identity.

It was very common that HAs reported benefiting immeasurably when they were able to regard themselves not as ‘students’ of their subject (and so feeling in some way looked-down upon and disregarded by the qualified professionals), but as practising professionals in their own right who were taken seriously by and were fully engaged with senior exponents of their field. Such circumstances came about most readily either when the individual was paid for extra-curricular or vacation activities strongly relevant to their study field, or when they were in the habit of teaching or lecturing in some capacity.

The common feature of a ‘clear, unifying and single-minded goal’

Even in the absence of a professional or vocational goal, there was without exception for every individual in this HA group, an ‘all-purpose’ and what might be called a ‘surrogate’ career goal, such as winning a place at a top university, or taking a ‘first’ in their degree subject. I say ‘all-purpose’ because the individual felt that this ‘next goal’ would be a ‘best goal’ no matter the
future thenafter. For example, it was often the case that an HA had identified several months before his or her A-levels (and often two or more years beforehand) that he or she wanted to go on to a prestigious university. Perhaps she had visited on a choir tour, seen a documentary, or read an autobiography, but it was an experience that had brought such a goal to her attention, and brought it to life - inspiring some *emotional involvement* with that goal that had fired her motivation. Below I cite the key comments of different participants which support this theme:

I went singing with my school choir to Cambridge one evening and thought *right, that's it, I'm coming here!*

If you can reach a point in yourself where you know what you want, a point of clarity, *and it's by far the hardest thing to do*, the actual question of 'how to do it' is purely mechanical. If you have a unified goal in yourself, then the problems facing you are merely practical. In sports, particularly, this has been very influential in my training.

When I really focused - on getting that first, or on getting a job as an analyst - that made all the difference to the result.

I planned to get the first [class degree] from day one of arriving at Uni, because someone had put the idea in my head ‘Why don’t you get a first and go to Oxford as a post grad!’ So I did.

You have to be very clear about your objective. For instance for me, the goal isn’t to try. The goal is to succeed. The goal isn’t to take part, the goal is to *win*.

Reinforcing the importance of single-minded goal-directedness, instructors of HA elites commonly felt that if there are too many goals, or if they lack a unifying theme, this jeopardises the realisation of potential. As one instructor put it:

Some students underachieve here because they won’t prioritise their life and focus it. They try to do it all and dissipate their energies. That’s dangerous to their best interests.
The strategy of identifying a highly desired goal and focusing on it and unifying all energies towards it, was reiterated time and again by the HAs. It should be appreciated, however, that it is not a question of excluding everything else so that the rest of one’s world collapses around the monomania, but rather that all other aspects of life are engineered to be complementary to that goal. For instance, a ‘romantic partner’ or friend is only thought suitable if they share or support the goal:

At [my undergraduate university] there were so many people, about 90%, that didn’t have life goals, and this put a lot of strain on relationships.

It’s important to mix with like-minded people. Focused people.

One instructor of elite students in the Fine Arts observed how:

Personal and professional lives tend to run into one another, with the latter being the dominant partner.

There was evidence to support the notion that an individual invests a large part of his or her sense of identity in a meaningful goal, as it was often recounted how an essay or a project of some sort would be taken very seriously because the individual felt that it became an embodiment of their worth.

‘High-Achiever’ as an identity in itself

As we have seen in the sub-section above, there is no evidence that a specific career goal is a sine qua non in terms of high-achievement; but having made up one’s mind to do well seems rather more so. Success was not for its own sake, it had currency even if not vocational or occupational, primarily for the following two reasons:

1. HAs thoroughly enjoyed the rewards forthcoming to an achiever, and indeed many claimed to be addicted to those rewards: the self-esteem, respect from others, positive attention, a sense of control, a sense of being ‘someone’ and distinctive from the crowd. For instance:
I wrote musicals in my final high school year. The secret was feeling in the spotlight, finding something to be good at, something to shine in. The moment of epiphany is realising you have become a person in your own right independent of anyone else around you. My grades went from Ds to As because I was someone, I was me, I was happy!

2. HAs felt that their success would maximise their options and buying-power later down the line. i.e. their record of success would act as a passe-partout to a better way of life. For instance:

You have to be who you are, whatever it takes, and feel in control of your life no matter the cost. You buy this privilege by being very good at what you do.

However, despite the importance of the identity provided by high-achievement, there is another factor in terms of motivations for HAs: joy in their work.

A sense of vocation and a sense of joy

Among the HA group, there was also a very strong feeling of being ‘a natural’ for their field and unable to deny its call. This was particularly true of those pursuing sport, medicine, psychology, teaching, artistic endeavours, the military and the hard sciences.

I think about my work more than I am paid to. It's a passion for me.

I have a goal and I have a dream - ever since the Shuttle went up when I was 8.

I love what I do and wouldn't want to do anything else.

These findings support a strong weight of evidence that sees ‘sheer enjoyment’ as a key factor in high-achievement. Csikszentmihalyi et al. cite Nobel Laureate Francis H.C. Crick, “Co-discoverer of the double Helix... who rated enjoyment of work as the characteristic most responsible for his
success... and this ahead of 32 other traits” (1997: 8). In a similar vein, Howe cites the headmaster of the Yehudi Menuhin School for young musicians, who says that in “trying to select the most promising individuals, what was sought above all was evidence of an appetite for music that was insatiable, and so strong that without music the child would feel deprived” (1990:181). Csikszentmihalyi (1996) argues that we are not driven simply by deficit-needs, and pays tribute to Maslow (1971) for his work in recognising the importance of positive drives for such feelings as self-esteem and self-actualisation.

**What helps in the face of adversity? The consensus among HAs**

Of my sample of 50 HAs, 75% self-reported experiencing at least one of the following serious adversities in their growing up years:

- Chronic and severe bullying at home by a parent or sibling;
- Chronic and severe bullying at school;
- A parent being clinically treated for mental illness;
- Parents separated or divorced in a highly antagonistic manner;
- The individual was gay but had not disclosed this, and was profoundly fearful of being found out;
- There was an incident of serious trauma: either an accident, or serious physical assault;
- A chronic personal illness or disability such as dyslexia;
- A profoundly disturbing (shattering) incident of failure (For example, failing to earn a place in a long-hoped for university or profession.)

One third of my HA group self-reported having experienced not one but *two* of these adversities in their teenage years. There were also circumstances in which an individual felt that his or her identity was lost or blighted (perhaps by exam failure), and such circumstances offered a valuable alternative perspective on the significance of identity:

> Being the ‘clever girl’ was my identity. When I failed to get into Oxford, I felt devalued as a ‘bright person’. It was quite a blow.
You define yourself by your achievements: the 'A-grade student'. I tripped at 18, [failing to get in to an Ivy League University] and it absolutely threw upside down what I thought about myself.

[A young woman who for a while was seriously anorexic] I lost my identity and felt anonymous at University until I met my boyfriend.

[Failing to get into her first choice university] It was the most keen sense of failure that I've ever had in my life.

The evidence from this section on 'damaged identities' brought home how much an individual can be interested in what other people think of her or him. Bearing in mind the potential importance of identity to one's social relations, tangible rewards and personal sense of well-being, it is arguable that this is not vanity but psycho-social survival.

From the interview evidence, it seemed that three factors corresponded with these HAs' ability not only to cope but to thrive in the face of their adversity, or 'damaged identities':

1. There was at all times some structure to their lives, in that they belonged to a family and attended an educational institution which provided a medium through which to enact any solutions that might be forthcoming. However, sometimes there had to be a fresh start involving getting away from former social groups or parental supervision which it can be supposed would otherwise inhibit such transformation.

2. The individual never resorted (for anything other than a very brief period of days or weeks) to abusing drugs and alcohol, and so their circumstances of adversity were not further compounded.

3. The individual managed to identify a very appealing and profoundly satisfying way out of their problem. That is to say, an appealing route forward that offered an identity-goal which in itself was an appropriate or fitting compensation for the adversity they had endured. As one participant put it:
You have to find a direction and achievements that are meaningful to you, and independent of your parents or anyone else bullying or overshadowing you. But no one ever asks 'What would be a meaningful life for you?'

4. Once a goal had been identified, the individual had a source of 'know-how' about how to progress effectively towards that goal and maximise the likelihood of accomplishing it. That source might have been a teacher or a parent, an older sibling, or a coach or mentor.

From the conversations of the long, semi-structured interviews, it was apparent that HAs believed the third-listed factor was the cornerstone on which they built their coping and recovery in the face of adversity, i.e. a well-founded plan for improvement; an expectation of life getting better or at least back to normal. However, it would seem from the evidence of this thesis (in Section 7.2 under Mentorship and Tacit Knowledge) that there is a great difference between planning for things to get better, and having the detailed strategies and know-how to put such plans in to successful effect.

5.2.5 Further evidence for the potential importance of a goal with which to identify and to commit oneself.

In the 2nd questionnaire, the following question was asked of all 140 participants:

2nd Q: 55) You were keen to work well and stay out of trouble because you had a clear idea of where you wanted to go in life, and you didn’t want to mess-up those plans?

The Anova revealed very significant differences between the means (p < .001) of the Likert-scale ratings, with HAs at 4.8; MAs at 3.3 and UAs at 2.8. (see chart 5G). It would appear that having a goal may be strongly correlated with important life-outcomes, but the following section presents evidence that my original hypothesis concerning identity placed too much emphasis on the importance of a career or professional goal. The following question was only asked of 48 HAs:

2nd Q: 106) Why did you decide you wanted to be so successful in your A-levels? What motivated you? Please give three brief explanations in order of importance with the most important reason coming first. (For instance: it might have been ‘to impress someone you fancied’..... or ‘to emulate an historical hero’.....or whatever.....).
Chart 5G represents the participants’ responses to the following question:

2nd Q: 55) You were keen to work well and stay out of trouble because you had a clear idea of where you wanted to go in life, and you didn’t want to mess-up those plans?
Six categories of response emerged overwhelmingly from the data: A to F below represent the reasons that individuals gave for working hard for their A-levels to gain entry to their leading Oxbridge Colleges:

A = for personal pride; to feel good about themselves; or for fear or failure.

B = they loved the work; they had a sense of competition with their school mates

C = they wanted to go to Oxbridge for its own sake because it was a badge of excellence.

D = they felt they owed it to other people, particularly parents and teachers.

E = wanting to guarantee themselves a better life after university through good employment prospects and a higher income.

F = wanting to guarantee their eligibility for a specific job

The proactive response rate for this question was very high with almost all the 48 HAs writing at least a line or a phrase for the 1st and 2nd ranking.

Table 5H
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Referring to table 5H above, it is very striking that only 5 of 48 HAs cited anything to do directly with careers or professional lives as their primary reason for working hard for their end-of-school examinations. All of the
Six categories of response emerged overwhelmingly from the data: A to F below represent the reasons that individuals gave for working hard for their A-levels to gain entry to their leading Oxbridge Colleges:

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Referring to table 5H above, it is very striking that only 5 of 48 HAs cited anything to do directly with careers or professional lives as their primary reason for working hard for their end-of-school examinations. All of the
other motivations given are far more immediate reasons, i.e. related to shorter-term benefits that had personal meaning in their present, everyday lives of school and family, rather than a wider social context or longer-term context. I discuss this phenomenon in points 5, 6 and 7 of the conclusions below.

5.2.6 Summary and conclusions from my findings

1. Among a 58-strong sub-section of participants questionnaired, there is strong support for my proposed 6-component and 4-dimensional model of identity.

2. Though it is dangerous to infer motivations from participants’ preferences for television characters, there is some suggestion that participants aspire to socially approved occupations, and also to ‘being good at something’. There is self-report evidence from frequency counts and content analysis of daydreams and fantasies to support such propositions.

3. At the outset of this thesis research, I had theorised that what I termed Occupational Identity would be by far the dominant identity in my participants’ lives; but there is no evidence to support this from my sample. Occupational Identity appeared to be a strong component of these participants’ identity, but very possibly not as important as what I have called Private-life Identity, Physical Identity, and Attitude Identity (i.e. personality). An explanation is offered in point 5 below.

4. A strong majority of the 140 young people across all three groups self-reported feeling that in the two years before they went either to university or prison, they felt good at something and felt they had a role to be proud of, and barely a quarter of them felt ashamed, awkward, or looked down upon. These factors as measured did not discriminate between the groups, and these factors were not sufficient to produce high-achievement or prevent criminal convictions. Though they may well have ameliorated the subjective experience of growing up, they did not alone affect the outcomes. I will suggest in subsection 7.2.6. that this may be because some participants did not know how to put their best intentions into practice (because of a deficit in their ‘tacit knowledge’), and that good intentions
and strong desires may not in themselves be sufficient to guarantee success.

5. My defining an Occupational Identity as strongly synonymous with a career identity appears to be too restrictive a definition. It may be more helpful to investigate the importance of a much broader definition of Occupational Identity than my thesis originally investigated. There is evidence that what may be more important is a goal that is pregnant with meaning for an individual and with which he or she is pleased to identify; a goal that is closer in time and less specific and long-term than a career identity. For instance, such a 'meaningful and motivating goal' might be 'to get three A-levels of grade 'B' or higher,' and the occupational identity that such a goal supports is the general and all-purpose identity of 'clever guy'. I.e. 'Goal-achiever' can be an identity in itself.

6. It cannot be concluded from the above that career goals would not be beneficial because, as will be seen in Section 6.2, very few of my participants in any of the three groups felt they had experienced sufficient careers guidance.

7. Since a revised hypothesis would advocate that this group would have benefited from the right sort of satisfying goal with which to identify, future research could explore exactly what are the ingredients of a satisfying goal, and which activities and goals might be most motivating and rewarding for young people, (for instance, voluntary work, or 'Outward Bound' adventures, or working-world apprenticeships).

8. A satisfying and attractive goal with which an individual can identify, might be helpful when facing up to and overcoming adversity.
Chapter 6

Careers Education & Careers Guidance
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6.1 Review of the specific literature concerning Careers Education and Careers Guidance

6.2 My findings regarding Careers Education and Careers Guidance
6.1 Review of the specific literature concerning Careers education and careers guidance

Contents of Section 6.1

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- Key sources of literature for this chapter

6.1.2 The theoretical importance of careers guidance for the economy, society and the individual.

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6.1.4 The present level of British provision of careers education and careers guidance:
- Provision in the school setting
- Provision in higher education: universities and colleges
- Provision in young offender prisons

6.1.5 The common perception of careers guidance by young people

6.1.6 Why might the importance of careers education and guidance have been underestimated in the UK?

6.1.7 Potential conflicts of interest that may inhibit the unbiased and unfettered transmission of careers education and careers guidance:
- Potential conflicts of interest in schools
- Potential conflicts of interest in higher education
- Potential conflicts of interest in community careers services
- Where might a powerful and unfettered lobby for careers guidance be found?

6.1.8 Comparisons with the USA

6.1.9 Summary and conclusions on careers education and careers guidance in the UK
6.1.1 Introduction

This chapter will examine the evidence for the proposed importance of careers guidance and will review the formal educational mechanisms in the UK for encouraging the identification of suitable and satisfying occupational roles among young people.

Some key definitions

A 'career' can be defined as a progression through a range of roles or jobs broadly relating to a specific profession or vocation. Careers Education refers to learning generally about the panorama of the careers available and their broad characteristics, whereas Careers Guidance (synonymous with Careers Counselling) covers a range of activities designed to enable individuals to make and implement informed decisions about their career development. The main emphasis in current practice at the end of the 1990s is on helping individuals to make their own decisions based upon a true understanding of their abilities, skills, interests and values, and of the options open to them (Watts, Law, Kileen, Kidd and Hawthorn, 1996 ). Watts et al. argue that,

many individuals... are constrained by experience deficits. Their awareness both of their capacities and interests, and of the opportunities open to them, is limited by the experiences they have had, which in turn are restricted by their social background... Guidance can perform a valuable role in raising the aspirations of individuals from disadvantaged backgrounds, making them aware of opportunities, and supporting them in securing entry to such opportunities (ibid.:380).

It should be noted that 'career choice' is considered to be a process not an event, and when I refer to careers guidance below I mean a series of in-depth interviews supported by a considerable course of background education.

Key sources of literature for this chapter

In this chapter there will be a very strong reliance on the papers published by NICEC and CRAC:
CRAC is the Careers Research and Advisory Centre and conducts applied research and development work. CRAC also sponsors NICEC.

NICEC is The National Institute for Careers Education and Counselling who aim to develop theory, inform policy and enhance practice.

The reason for this reliance is that there are very few scholarly books published in Britain (or the USA) on the theory and practice of Careers Guidance. Careers Guidance receives some attention in the majority of North American text books on general adolescent development, albeit an average of barely 2% of the volume’s pages (e.g. Santrock, 1998), but there appear to be no British equivalents. My personal interviews with key informants supplement this sparse literature where possible.

6.1.2 The theoretical importance of careers guidance
For the economy, society and the individual

A statement issued jointly by The National Institute for Careers Education and Counselling and The Policy Studies Institute, estimated that every 1% impact on occupational mismatch could save £10 million per annum for the Exchequer in unemployment costs (NICEC and PSI, 1992). Certainly, it makes good theoretical sense to suggest that there may be potential benefits to the individual, to our society, and to our national economic prosperity, of a proactive emphasis on careers education, guidance and training. Individuals who enjoy and are well-suited to their work, are likely to be more efficient and take fewer days-off on the grounds of mental and physical illness. If these same individuals have grown up with the concept of ‘lifelong learning’ and flexible career paths, they should more readily adapt to the ever-accelerating changes in the work market. In support of this proposition, the Confederation for British Industry (1993) argue that if Britain is to be competitive, a quantum leap will be required in the nation’s education and training performance, and that the way to achieve this is to motivate and empower individuals to improve their skills throughout their working lives. The need for effective guidance appears all the more pressing because the careers landscape is changing rapidly, evidenced by the estimate that by 2010, some 50% of the population will be working flexibly:
The structures of work and of careers are being fundamentally re-cast. Existing structures are being fractured. A new concept of careers guidance for all could be one of the keys to achieving economic prosperity and social cohesion within a flexible labour market and global economy (CRAC, 1996: newsletter 57).

6.1.3 The dearth of research evidence on the potential benefits of careers guidance

The above section extolling the need for a skilled workforce is based on the assumption that it is careers guidance that is the missing link between young people and a more highly skilled workforce. However, this may not be warranted: John Killeen’s chapter in the definitive British text *Rethinking Careers Education and Guidance: Theory Policy and Practice* begins thus: “Perhaps one of the most important questions to be asked is: ‘Do learning outcomes lead to economic benefits?’ Killeen’s answer is ‘we are currently unable to answer this question - but an answer must soon be attempted’ (Watts et al., 1996:79).

It is this dearth of supporting evidence or any published example of an economic cost-benefit analysis that may partly explain why the arena is under-valued by educational regimes; and as the following example suggests, this impasse seems quite intransigent: In October 1998, NICEC and CRAC arranged for a national conference very aptly called *Developing a Research Culture in Career Education and Guidance*. It concluded that:

if Careers Education and Guidance practitioners want to be seen as professionals, reflective practice and, by direct implication, developing a research culture are essential (NICEC, 1998c).

Almost 7 years before, the NICEC and PSI (1992) briefing paper called *Economic Benefits of Careers Guidance* concluded an Agenda for Action which insisted:

there is a need to develop a culture of evaluative research, in which practitioners are encouraged to collect and publish evidence of the relative effectiveness of different techniques and programmes, with particular client groups and under particular circumstances. Government professional associations and higher education institutions all have an important role to play in developing such a culture (NICEC, 1992).
It would seem that very little has been achieved since the plea for research in January 1992, and it would seem a fair assessment when Watts et al. state that funding for research work with adults remains insecure and patchy, and no one agency at national or local level has yet definitely emerged to take responsibility for its coherent development (1996:194).

6.1.4 The present level of British provision for careers education and careers guidance

In the face of the advocacy of CRAC and NICEC and the Confederation of British Industry (despite the absence of empirical research), I now examine the state of provision for young people in the latter half of the 1990s.

Provision in the school setting

It is worth noting from the outset that there may be a need for academic guidance provision because work-experience for British teenagers is minimal. A British teenager will receive an average of just 10 days worth of work-placement by the age of 16 (DfE survey, 1992). By contrast, in Sweden all students are expected to spend up to ten weeks in work places between the age of 7 and 16, and by law these placements must include each of three sectors of working life: manufacturing, commerce, and social services (Watts et al., 1996).

Despite the lack of formal provision for work-experience in the British education system, Careers Education and Guidance does not receive even a quarter as much time and attention on school curricula as an academic subject such as Geography or Chemistry, and it is still not part of the statutory National Curriculum. Nonetheless, Clause 1 of Section 7 of The Education Act (1997) requires all schools to provide a programme of Careers Education and Guidance for 13, 14 and 15 year olds. However, the average number of hours of such a statutory programme is circa one hour per week in the average Senior School, and it is likely that the class will be omitted during the examination term. There will be no examinations in the subject itself. It is little wonder that in a NICEC briefing (NICEC, 1998d) a plea was made that “the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority should recognise the
importance of career-related learning in its current revision of the National Curriculum.”

Furthermore, it should be noted that the one hour provision referred to above may or may not be taught by a careers specialist from the local service, as opposed to a general-subject schoolteacher who adopts careers guidance as a secondary teaching role. It is notable that German law forbids schoolteachers to give careers counselling, reserving this task for officials in well-developed networks of ‘labour offices’ who visit schools; however, it has been argued that neither option is ideal (NICEC, 1998a). On the one hand the schoolteacher may know or have easy access to a lot of useful background about the teenager in question, but that teacher is very unlikely to have sufficient specialist careers guidance knowledge. On the other hand, the local Careers Service specialist will have the reverse problem. NICEC (1998a) also note that much of the careers guidance work is vested in only one schoolteacher, with the risk that if that member of staff were to fall ill or leave, the careers programme is vulnerable to collapse. One logical solution of these scenarios is that what is needed is a careers guidance specialist and an assistant in each Secondary school; a tutor who holds at least the one year post-graduate diploma in careers guidance. This specialist would then liaise with the student and his or her form-teacher to discuss careers prospects. However, there are close to 5,000 Secondary Schools in England and Wales, and even one dedicated Careers Guidance Counsellor would be hard-pressed to serve the three or four hundred children in an averagely sized school who might require teaching in this subject. This implies that a small department of teachers is needed, as is usually the case for academic subjects.

**Provision in higher education: universities and colleges**

In 1998, there were 710 professional Careers Advisors and Information Officers in the Association of Graduate Careers Services (AGCAS) throughout the UK and Ireland. The staff to student ratios for Careers Services have been closely monitored, especially over recent years, and have been the subject of several (unimplemented) recommendations. In 1964, the Heyworth Report into Higher Education recommended a ratio of Careers Guidance Officer to final-year students of 1:100. In practice, the 1994 AGCAS Resources Survey (an unpublished report circulated within AGCAS) indicated a staff/student ratio
ranging from 1:1,000 to 1:7,251 full-time students. These figures exclude part-time students who are now a substantial proportion of the student body: this could effectively almost double the ratios herein stated if full services were made available to them (NICEC, 1998e).

**Provision in Young Offender Prisons**

Research indicates that though under ordinary circumstances friends and family have the most influence on young people’s career decisions, young people from disadvantaged families may be more reliant than others on professional careers advisers (Watts et al., 1996). Careers Services may therefore need to attend particularity closely to the guidance needs of such groups (NICEC/CRAC/DfEE, 1996). Imprisoned populations of young people arguably present a very particular problem in terms of careers guidance, and the voices below support this proposition. In view of the dearth of adequate quantitative evaluations of careers education and guidance, I have supplemented the documented evidence by recounting (with their kind permission) the personal communications, both written and spoken, of those professionals who might reasonably be expected to have a highly informed opinion in this arena:

Judith Williams (one of the country’s ten Education & Training Advisers to Prisons) said that

> too many of these boys make decisions based on insufficient information about the range of possible routes and possible outcomes......These youngsters are rarely a part of an education system, and so not exposed as a matter of course to vocational guidance material, and they are, as a youth culture, unaccustomed to making use of the facilities of local careers centres and libraries. In short, if we do not reach them with this careers inspiration and information while they are in custody, the likelihood is that they will not be reached at all” (personal communication, autumn, 1996).

These key points were under-scored by Her Majesty’s Chief Inspector of Prisons, General Sir David Ramsbotham, who notes that some 80% of imprisoned young offenders had either been excluded or opted out of school education before the age of 16, and so have had little or no exposure to formal
careers guidance opportunities. The Inspector argues that they lack the role model, and better still the mentorship, of competent and prosocial males enjoying legitimate working lives. He felt that not to address such issues while they were in custody was to miss a priceless opportunity of making that individual into a productive contributor to our society’s future.¹

In the face of the above, we can now examine the standard provision, an example of which is that of HMYOI Feltham, in which careers education and guidance has been provided by the local careers service whose team of counsellors offer altogether per annum up to 50 days work within the prison, and up to 80 days follow-up work outside of it (to a total value of £12,000 worth of guidance.) In real terms, this allocation translates as:

1. 5 minutes when the boy arrives at the prison and is lectured as part of a group of 10 or 12 inmates;
2. Later in their stay the boy can request a half-hour Careers Interview; (there is a waiting-list because there are just 5 of these sessions available in the prison one afternoon per week.)
3. There is a one day Pre-Release Course at the local Careers Centre in the last week of a boy’s sentence, and this course accommodates a group of 10 or 12 inmates.

If the above account gives the impression of an impoverished provision, such an impression is supported by the comments of Mike Clark, (President of the Institute of Careers Guidance 1994/95, and secretary of the ‘Task Group on Guidance Work with Offenders 1997). Clark writes:

there are signs that contact-time with clients is shrinking as other priorities bite and the institutions limit access to individual – one interview is often standard (Italics added).

He continues:

Staff know the benefits of more client contact time, one-to-one work, and of continuity, raised-aspiration and positive attitudes, but are frustrated by the lack of formal evidence (Careers Guidance Today, 1997).

¹ A lecture given in March 1997 at Cambridge University.
The criminological psychologist, David Farrington (1996) argues that most interventions of a psychological-skills and behavioural nature such as Ross and Fabiano's (1985) 'thinking skills', may often only achieve 10% or 15% improvements on the 75% standard rate of recidivism for young offenders, and this 10 or 15% is the highest achieved by any intervention. I argue that the effectiveness of such 'thinking skills' programmes might be invigorated if integrated into a carefully selected occupational goal and identity. Research is perhaps justified on ethical grounds when one considers that the HM Prison Service mission statement reads Her Majesty's Prison Service serves the public by keeping in custody those committed by the courts. Our duty is to look after them with humanity and to help them lead law-abiding and useful lives in custody and after release.

6.1.5 The common perception of careers guidance among young people

In a major study called Opportunity and Disadvantage at Age 16, Hagell and Shaw (1996) surveyed over three thousand 16 year olds from 34 schools in English inner cities. Only around one fifth of all these pupils found Careers Lessons to have been 'very helpful', although over half thought they had been 'quite helpful'. However, there were vast differences between schools: in some schools the 'very helpfults' fell as low as 5%. Around 50% of the youngsters surveyed agreed with the statement that "It is mainly a matter of luck whether a school-leaver gets a job or not." This statistic is all the more alarming when one considers that careers education was potentially extremely important to these same youngsters cited above, as only 7% of their parents were skilled and only 28% were semi-skilled, which meant that 65% of these youngsters lacked parental role-models for the increasingly skilled working lives that individuals and the future British economy will require.

Further relevant evidence comes from The Industrial Society's 20/20 Vision Research Report (1997) which publishes findings from a survey of some ten thousand British 12 to 25 year olds, and long-interviews with a further 159 young people. Of these, 63% felt school did not prepare them for life in the real world, and 82% of 16-25 year olds thought practical vocational training should start at school. Hence, one of the 12 statements on the overall Summary Action Agenda was "Make the curriculum more flexible and
relevant to life and work!” In this same survey, no less than one third of 22-25 year olds still believed they would work not only in the same occupation but for the same employer throughout their careers; yet, according to all predictions, 90% of them will work for 5 or more employers (NICEC, 1998f).

Finally ‘If unemployed and wanting work’, only one third of the respondents to the Industrial Society (1997) survey said they would seek Careers Advice. This is poor indictment of how little has been achieved since the Careers and Research Advisory Council in February 1995 acknowledged the need to make guidance attractive and accessible to a general population which is not in the habit of seeking it (Sterling, 1995).

6.1.6 Why might the importance of careers education and careers guidance have been under-estimated in the UK?

From the above it is arguable that careers education and guidance is a subject under-appreciated by young people and by their educational institutions in relation to its potential benefits. Below, I suggest some possible reasons for this:

1. Up until the mid 1970s, an organic and stable career structure was a highly prevalent feature of most working arenas in Britain, reflecting a highly stable work-market, and this made formal guidance of little import. This stability was born of a time when careers were very often predetermined for the working- and middle-classes by the occupation of the parent. Moreover, a university degree, any university degree, was a sufficient end in itself. More recently, the demands of an increasingly complex and very rapidly changing employment panorama are out-stripping the ability of parents and education systems to respond.

2. “People do not understand or value [careers] guidance until they have experienced it” (CRAC/NICEC 1996). This is perhaps unsurprising because there is no convincing and well-publicised body of evidence to inspire pre-emptive measures, which is itself compounded by the problem that the effectiveness of guidance is difficult to evaluate. The end result is very limited funding from public bodies or potential clients.
3. For the above three reasons, the great majority of British people are still unaccustomed and unwilling to pay for careers education and guidance. Compounding this problem is the absence of any incentive for any individual company or industry to do anything but attract personnel to its own arena, so there is no co-ordinated effort for unbiased generic information other than from the State which has financial restrictions and also macro-agendas that may not be in the individual's best interests.

My review of the arena suggests that there is another powerful reason for the poor acknowledgement of the subject, and the chronic resistance to change. I call this factor 'a conflict of interests' and I advocate that it inhibits and taints the provision of guidance in school, college, and communities. This next section will evaluate the evidence for such an assertion.

6.1.7 Potential conflicts of interest that may inhibit the unbiased and unfettered transmission of Careers education and careers guidance

Potential conflicts of interest in schools

The guidance role itself is sometimes liable to bias. Her Majesty's Education Inspectorate have criticised the tendency in some schools to bias guidance at age 16 so to encourage students to stay in school until 18 rather than to encourage youngsters to move on to learning or vocational opportunities elsewhere. The schools' motive is the financial advantages this brings to the school, estimated at circa £2,000 per pupil per annum (Watts et al., 1996). A stark illustration of the widespread nature of what I advocate is a 'financially motivated self-projectionist attitude' among schools, is the way in which schools do not now invite career lectures from potential employers from the Armed Forces, who were once (and would still like to be) an annual fixture on all school calendars (Personal communication: Cambridge Army Recruiting Office, 1997). This is arguably a particularly negative development in the light of the excellent research work that suggests that military careers provide a very protective and positive prospect for youth at risk of delinquency and crime (e.g. Sampson and Laub, 1993). Moreover, the Armed Forces are still an active and substantial employer, proven by the fact that the British Army alone spends £20 million per year on television, radio and
magazine advertising trying to attract teenagers and young adults into its ranks to serve as soldiers and officers (personal communication, Saatchi and Saatchi, 1998). NICEC (1998a) believes that the attitudes of head teachers and school governors to careers education and guidance are critical to securing the status of careers work in schools, and until these policy-makers are convinced of how it serves their institutional well-being, it is unlikely there will be changes.

**Potential conflicts of interest in Higher Education**

The Cambridge University Careers Service, arguably one of the foremost university services in the country, presently receives 15% of its income from a ‘Supporters Club’ of companies which are also ‘clients’ in the sense that they are actively scouting for the cream of Cambridge graduates. (At present, The Supporters Club makes donations equivalent to the salary of at least one full-time senior Careers Advisor). The Service envisages how, with central Government cutbacks, this funding from the private sector will grow ever larger, and so too will the pressure for ‘value for money’ in terms of ever more final year students encouraged towards those ‘Supporters Club’ companies (Personal Communication with the Cambridge University Careers Service, 1998).

Yet another impediment to university-based young adults receiving unfettered and unbiased careers guidance, may be the claim by many university careers departments that they face a strong resistance from the University’s academic departments who do not want their best students ‘lured away’ from the research world by the temptations of jobs in commerce and industry, a phenomenon that is particularly true of the hard sciences where senior researchers need good juniors to fill the ranks of their research teams (personal communication from two University Careers Services, 1998).

**Potential conflicts of interest in community careers services**

Among local Careers Services, which in England and Wales are all now private companies who bid for funding contracts from the central
Government’s Department for Education and Employment, there may be two potential influences:

1. There are intransigent financial restrictions on the Careers Service for England and Wales that must necessarily limit the amount and quality of guidance, no matter the stated philosophy of ‘free access to all’.

2. Government macro-employment agendas (let us say for the gross numbers of nurses or teachers or skilled electrical engineers) may filter down through these ostensibly independent Careers Services in the form of informal directives and policy documents, yet these macro-requirements may not necessarily be in the best interests of the individual who is seeking advice. Indeed, NICEC observe how “Careers Education and Guidance can sometimes appear... to be dominated by the policy concerns of central government” (NICEC 1998c). It is only logical to presume that these private services that receive the very great bulk of their income form Government contracts will be reluctant to challenge government directives or agendas, for fear of jeopardising the chances of their own future bids for funding.

Where might a powerful and unfettered lobby for careers guidance be found?

As has been discussed above, the vast majority of parents are unlikely to be fully aware of the need for guidance for their children, and schools and colleges and universities may all have a conflict of interests. Furthermore, CRAC and NICEC have no personal profit-incentive or self-interest to further lobby central Government to legislate in this arena, and the careers guidance profession itself and its membership groups have only a few thousand members and so are unlikely to carry much political weight. On the other hand, the CBI and Trade Unions have a vested interest in advocating the potential import of guidance so as to further the well-being of their members, and it is from here that the most powerful lobby may come (NICEC and TUC, 1998). Nonetheless, before a convincing case can be made for improvements in guidance provision, it is reasonable to expect that there must be research into the likely cost-benefit of careers education and guidance in comparison to
other measures offering economic benefits, such as health-education for the workforce, or interest rates and foreign exchange rates.

6.1.8 Comparisons with the USA

Britain is not an island of ignorance as regards the potential benefits of adequate careers education and guidance. In the USA, the problems are all too similar to the British experience. American-born theories of career development are at best more than 15 years out of date (e.g. Ginzberg, 1972; Super, 1976; Holland, 1983) which is unacceptable in a field as fast-changing as ‘career horizons’, and these theories are unconvincing not least because there is little or no empirical research evidence for them. Santrock summarises the prevailing situation thus:

many adolescents do not adequately explore careers on their own and also receive little direction from guidance counsellors at their schools. On average, high school students spend less than 3 hours per year with guidance counsellors. In many schools, students not only do not know what information to seek about careers, they do not know how to seek it (1998:450-455).

In 1986, The College Board Commission on Pre-college Guidance and Counselling, heavily criticised existing provisions: ‘insiders’ complained about the large number of students per school counsellor and the weight of non-counselling administrative duties; ‘outsiders’ complained that school counselling is ineffective, biased, and a waste of money.

6.1.9 Summary and conclusions on careers education and careers guidance in the UK

1. Though British industry lobbies the Government for increased provisions of guidance in schools and universities, there is very little evidence available as to the cost-benefit ratio of the provisions.

2. There is minimal provision in schools and universities and in young offender prisons in relation to the strong theoretical potential of guidance.
One hour is the average annual provision received by a 14, 15 and 16 year old in a British school. This fact makes careers education and guidance the poorest relation of all other subjects taught in British Secondary Schools in the State Sector.

3. A majority of school-age teenagers who have been surveyed feel that the subject is ineffective and irrelevant to them, and they feel too that their school education generally is insufficiently relevant to their subsequent professional lives.

4. Some senior managers of schools, colleges and universities may be reluctant to improve guidance services, and it has been suggested that there are conflicts of interests in its provision by schools, universities, and community services.
6.2 Findings relating to careers education and careers guidance

Contents of Section 6.2

6.2.1 Introduction

6.2.2 The participants' self-reports of their experiences of careers education and careers guidance

6.2.3 The potential role that could be played by careers guidance

6.2.4 Summary and conclusions from my findings

6.2.5 Possible future research regarding careers guidance
6.2.1 Introduction

In the introduction to this thesis, my 3rd tentative hypothesis stated that 'Research participants will self-report that they want to receive more Careers Education and Careers Guidance'. The following section will establish what the research participants' experience of careers guidance had been, and then compare this with the potential for enhancing life with which they attribute the subject.

6.2.2 The participants' self-reports of their experiences of careers education and guidance

The following questions referred to the participants' last two years of Secondary School or 6th Form College before going to university, or the two years prior to imprisonment.

2nd Q:72) You went to weekly classes given by the School/College Careers Teacher

96 of 140 (i.e. 69%) gave this 0-3 on the Likert Scale. i.e. two-thirds of these teenagers self-report not experiencing weekly tuition in this subject. When they did come into contact with it, the following quotes are representative of the HA and MA responses. There was a 40% response rate to the invitation to generate a written comment about their careers advice, and 95% of those comments were distinctly negative and critical:

My school careers advice was irrelevant and given by an incompetent master.

It was an absolute load of rubbish, and I had to get guidance for myself from books.

The choice was overwhelming.

Didn't feel I was given enough help to make a fully-informed decision.

I did not find it useful at all (however, other school teachers were helpful in influencing me).
It's been peripheral to my life so far.

We must be cautious not to conclude that this 40% response rate represents those 60% who did not write a comment about their experience of careers guidance, but there is at the very least a substantial minority of self-reported dissatisfaction. Such an impression is one supported by the following survey of ‘key influencers’ in table 6A, which shows how it is ‘family or relatives or close family friends’ who played by far the biggest role in career decisions among my participants. This leading influence is closely followed by ‘school teachers’ for the HAs and ‘friends’ for the MAs and UAs. Indeed, the UAs are very notable for the influence of ‘friends’ on this issue. The participants were responding to the following question:

2nd Q: 76) Overall, which 2 people or experiences have most influenced your career decisions or work/study directions so far in your life?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of participants reporting the following ‘influencers’</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>HA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Table 6A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Some Work Experience</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Schoolteacher (part-time careers advice)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Full-time/Specialist Careers Adviser</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family or relatives or close family friends</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Your own friends</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Something you saw on TV/read about</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other? (please say who/What)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1 It should be noted that UAs simply did not write anything at all in response to this question. There was no indication that this was a ‘surly’ or disapproving silence. One explanation could be that careers guidance was a relatively unfamiliar concept to them, or perhaps the prison environment discourages their voicing critical comment).
With respect to the above table 6A, the potential problem presented by non-career specialists being the major or only source of Careers Guidance (as is indicated to be the case from the above table), is that though such informal sources might know the youngster well, it could be argued that the informal sources may have only partial or incorrect knowledge of the working world and so the advice may be inadequate or misleading. The possible consequences of inappropriate guidance can be inadequate intrinsic motivations, inappropriate study-directions, inappropriate career-directions, leading to an unsatisfying and unproductive investment in the early working life. The Confederation of British Industry (1993) warns of the vast hidden cost of the unrealised potential of young people pursuing personal and working lives that are inappropriate to their aptitudes and needs.

Bearing the above table in mind, it is interesting now to note that 40% of the 140 participants claimed to have had one-to-one time with someone they felt was really interested in talking about their future working-life, and a similar percentage had useful work-experience which they felt taught them a lot about what they probably did or did not want to do for a living. That said, self-report of such experiences did not appear to distinguish between the HA, MA and UA groups (i.e. there was no apparent correlation with life-outcome). It may be that the one-to-one advice or the work-experience was of an inadequate nature for many people and it is this factor that is limiting its beneficial potential.

The 50 long-interviews with HAs supported the above findings from the questionnaire self-reports. Even for this HA group, the general tone was captured by the participant who claimed “Sure we had Careers Counsellors in High School, but they were buffoons!” Choosing a career path was for very few a thorough or systematic search. Guidance was derived mainly from parental or sibling advice, or a long-held fascination in some commonly known-about profession such as soldiering or medicine. A lecturer for an Oxbridge College summarised a characteristic scenario for his HA students:

Career choice is all too often not well-informed. It tends to focus on opportunities dictated by peer pressure, which is an influence it's hard to get through.
It was also common that a chance encounter with someone who was passionate about their work proved to be a catalyst for an individual’s self-motivated research into that same work arena.

### 6.2.3 The potential role that could be played by careers guidance

The following question was asked of the 140 participants:

2nd Q: 78) Looking back, you feel as if you received enough information and advice about the possibilities for future jobs or training or study courses or other options.

90 of 140 (i.e. 64%) participants fairly evenly spread across the groups gave this a 0-3 on my Likert-scale (see chart 6B) i.e. almost two-thirds of respondents considered their experience of such matters as inadequate. To begin to gauge the possible consequences of such an inadequate provision, we might consider the response to the following question:

2nd Q: 79) Looking back from your present situation, when it comes to working towards examinations and qualifications, you personally think it was or would have been very motivating and encouraging for you to have an idea of where you were headed in terms of jobs and careers.

95 of 140 (i.e. 68%) gave this statement 4, 5 or 6 on my Likert-scale (see chart 6C), which is consistent with the results that were attributed by participants as regards the motivating effect of having a positive Occupational Identity. Thus, ‘intrinsic motivation’ may be one of the possible casualties of inadequate Careers Guidance, and this suggestion supports the statement by the American educators Collins and Tamarkin that “until you reveal a larger world to children, they don’t realise there is anything to reach for” (1982:58).

The final question of particular interest on this subject was as follows:

82) What about now? Do you feel that in your present situation you receive enough information and advice about the possibilities for future jobs or training or study courses.
Chart 6B: Participants' responses to 2nd Q: 78 and 82:

2nd Q: 78) 'Looking back, you feel as if you received enough information and advice about the possibilities for future jobs or training or study courses or other options?'

2nd Q: 82) 'What about now? Do you feel that in your present situation you receive enough information and advice about the possibilities for future jobs or training or study courses?'

Chart 6C: Participants' responses to 2nd Q: 79)

"Looking back from your present situation, when it comes to working towards examinations and qualifications, you personally think it was or would have been very motivating and encouraging for you to have an idea of where you were headed in terms of jobs or careers?"
83 of 140 (i.e. 59%) gave this a 0 to 3 on my Likert-scale (see chart 6B), and so deemed it inadequate. Bearing in mind that almost two thirds of the 140 respondents are at university, and the remaining third are in prison, this is a serious indictment of their perception of the Careers Guidance Services they presently receive in respect of the potential with which these same participants attribute career and job goals as a motivating factor in their lives.

6.2.4 Summary and conclusions from my findings

1. For two-thirds of participants, the experience of guidance was something less than a weekly experience in their last two years before university (or imprisonment), and nearly all of the 40% who chose to rate it, rated it negatively.

2. By far the most often cited sources of guidance were very largely ‘informal advisers’ drawn from ‘family or close relatives or friends of the family’ or from teachers (non-careers specialists) or friends.

3. 40% of participants claimed that they had experienced one-to-one time with someone interested in their future working role, or work experience, but this factor did not differentiate between membership of the three groups. There is no adequate evidence from my findings that guidance is correlated with positive life-outcomes, nor lack of guidance with negative life-outcomes.

4. Two-thirds of participants strongly self-reported wanting more guidance, and believe it would be beneficial in motivating their academic and vocational goals, both in their present environment and during the two years before. This finding is arguably counter-intuitive because it is likely that their experience of formal guidance may have been largely negative hitherto.
6.2.5 Possible future research regarding careers guidance

I infer from the above findings in conjunction with my review of the specific literature in the field, that at least the following three research avenues might be worthy of exploration.

First, it would require at least a longitudinal prospective experimental research design to begin to offer a satisfactory level of evidence as to whether adequate careers guidance can provide a durable benefit for its recipients. However, the provision is so minimal in the great majority of British schools that the present normal educational environment provides a naturally occurring climate for such a study, whereby the population of one school could be provided with intensive levels of careers guidance, and students followed for several years into their working lives. This experimental group could then be compared to a matched control group who had received the ‘standard provision’ of guidance at another school. In the event of such an experimental design, it might be that the value of formal careers guidance is demonstrated; on the other hand, ‘informal sources’ described above (e.g. family and non-specialist teachers) might be found to be better than formal guidance services; it might even be found that the perceived inadequacies of school and university guidance provisions are soon compensated for once individuals have first-hand experience of the working world, and any benefits of intensive guidance soon peter out.

A second avenue of future research could investigate to what extent Career Guidance Counsellors may mistakenly close-off potential career horizons for some youngsters. This is a legitimate question in the light of the 25% of my HA questionnaire and interview participants who recounted the highly negative or restrictive horizons presented to them by highly prescriptive counsellors whose assessments and predictions had subsequently been demonstrated to be false. Gould wrote:

few tragedies can be more extensive than the stunting of life, few injustices deeper than the denial of an opportunity to strive or even to hope, by a limit imposed from without, but falsely identified as lying within (1984:28-29).

In respect of this, I argue that if a sufficiently motivating career goal could be found, and the learning environment were conducive, it would rarely be the case that such a career will be absolutely beyond the scope of the young

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individual. This possibility is built on the likes of the conclusions of the educational psychologist, Howe, who writes:

In principle, almost any person of normal intelligence may be capable of gaining virtually any exceptional ability. The idea that genetic factors severely limit the success of the individual at many intellectual skills, is false. Until that view is firmly scotched, many young people will continue to be prevented or discouraged from undertaking plans or pursuing ambitions that are in actuality quite realisable, so long as enough opportunities are made available and sufficient support and encouragement are forthcoming (1990:96).

This assertion is strongly supported by Gardner (1997). For these reasons, I argue that a Careers Guidance Counsellor should not see it as his or her task to assess the likely abilities of a youngster, because such assessments are very likely irrelevant once that youngster has identified a sufficiently attractive goal and a sufficiently rich learning environment to enable him or her to reach it.

The third avenue for future research is in respect of my findings (see Section 5.2) that it was more likely that ‘meaningful goals’ were of more importance to my young participants than specifically ‘career goals’. That finding must, theoretically at least, reframe the importance we can attribute to careers guidance which traditionally focuses on professional/vocational roles. It may be that what would make a greater contribution to young people’s lives is not a traditional concept of career guidance, but some far more eclectic category of guidance as regards short or medium term ‘life-objectives’ with which individuals are pleased to identify themselves and are intrinsically motivated to pursue. This might be an outward bounds endeavour, a voluntary organisation task, or an academic goal. It is unlikely that Careers Guidance Counsellors alone are appropriate providers of such multi-disciplinary goals.
Chapter 7

Mentorship
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7.1 Review of the specific literature relating to Mentorship

7.2 My findings relating to Mentorship
7.1 Review of the Specific Literature Relating to Mentorship

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- What does a mentor offer that a parent may not?
- What does a mentor offer that a school teacher may not?
- What does the mentor offer that the role-model does not?
- What does mentorship offer the mentor?

7.1.3 The American experience

7.1.4 The British experience

7.1.5 The wider need for mentorship beyond high-risk youth

7.1.6 Conclusions to the specific literature review
7.1.1 Introduction

It will be shown that the case is already being well-made in the UK for the mentorship of youngsters at risk of crime and delinquency or school failure, albeit some years behind the North American developments in this arena. However, this review marshals literature that suggests that a much wider group of teenagers and young adults might benefit from receiving mentorship, yet in the UK there is little or no formal or systematic provision for such.

7.1.2 What is mentoring?1

Many at-risk children, especially those who do not have many adults in their lives ... need more than a dedicated probation officer or a caring adult volunteer looking over their shoulder. They need a responsible non-parental adult in their lives on a deeper, more intensive level, helping them with their personal problems, offering them a sympathetic ear, and lending them a guiding hand. They need more than monitoring, they need mentoring.


What does a mentor offer that a parent may not?

The literature implies that mentoring may offer a young person several benefits above and beyond the help of their parents: (NICEC, 1998b)

1. A role-model for a successful working life (in cases where the parent or parents do not offer this).

2. In-depth one-to-one communication (which may be scarce in a single-parent family comprising several children).

3. The likelihood of greater disclosure about their concerns (because of the absence of complicating familial relationships).

1 The word itself comes from the Greek mythology of Homer’s Odyssey (circa 800 BC) when Mentor, the faithful companion of Odysseus, was charged with caring for the boy Telemachus in the King’s absence (Caldwell and Carter, 1993).

2 An organisation based at the Center for Civic Innovation at the Manhattan Institute, NY.
What does the mentor offer that the school teacher may not?

1. In-depth, one-to-one communication that may be rare in a class of 20 or more pupils. In the UK, secondary schoolteachers (i.e. those teaching the 11+ age group) will rarely if ever spend an hour one-to-one with a pupil, let alone on a regular basis. The school resources and curriculum simply do not allow for that (NICEC, 1998b).

2. A successful professional role model beyond the domain of academia and in a field pertinent to the youngster’s interests. Csikszentmihalyi et al. argue that

The role of teacher has largely evolved from a practitioner in a domain into that of a transmitter of information. The ethos of modern schooling discourages the development of extended and transforming relationships (1997: 178).

3. The likelihood of greater disclosure uncompromised by school hierarchies.

4. A global, holistic view of the youngster’s life: any discussion of occupational, academic or personal issues is informed by and integrated with the well-being of the individual’s whole life.

It is notable that at least 60% of the Goertzel and Goertzel (1962) 400 eminents were, as children, very likely to show a strong dislike of school but not of learning, and they liked being tutored one-to-one.

What does the mentor offer that the role-model does not?

1. A role-model has effect largely ‘by example’ - by illustrating strategies, attitudes, goals and behaviour. They are an inspiration, and the relationship is essentially one-way, rather than a dialogue. A role-model could be an older child or adult, or even a television personality or film star.

2. A mentor not only operates ‘by example’, but also interacts with the youngster and so provides a more thorough relationship and very likely a more effective one for it. For instance, the youngster can ask for an explanation of the mentor’s cognitive processes, and can disclose his or her own worries and ambitions for discussion with the mentor.
What does mentorship offer the mentor?

We should not forget the benefits that should accrue the mentor in a successful relationship: the sense of personal satisfaction at helping someone in need. It is also an opportunity to reflect on his or her own life and career and industry, and to take satisfaction from expressing their enthusiasm for what they do. And finally, it can be a demonstration of their ability to mentor someone, and mentorship is increasingly being recognised as a valuable skill in the business world (Caldwell and Carter, 1993).

7.1.3 The American experience

In a review of mentorship, the United States offers far more examples than the UK. For instance, mentors are used in the Career Academy scheme in the USA whereby youngsters in their middle teens who are falling behind at school are put in touch with a mentor from industry who introduces the student to his or her workplace and joins the student for recreational activities at least once a month. Students who stay in the program are promised a job when they graduate from high school. (Glover and Marshall, 1993). Arguably the best known and best evaluated mentorship programme in the USA for youth-at-risk is Big Brothers, Big Sisters, a three year study reported by Morrow and Styles (1995) which had 959 youngsters in total in the treatment and control groups. It involved, on average, an untrained volunteer spending three and a half hours per week, three weeks per month, for a year with their youth, and this apparently succeeded in halving the incidence of problem-behaviour among 10 to 16 year olds. This programme was heavily supported by the Council on Crime in America, who wrote:

The Council strongly believes that the key to producing more resilient youth is to get more caring non-parental adults into the lives of the at-risk children who so desperately, and so obviously, need them....The council advocates that strong relationships with caring adults are the bedrock of a young person's civil behaviour towards others, as well as the primary avenue for securing other services and opportunities (such as jobs) that are key to a civil and self-sufficient life (1997).

From the results of the Big Brother, Big Sister study, it was concluded that effective mentors were likely to:
• involve the youth in decisions about what to do

• were consistent and dependable in their calls and visits, even when, as was often the case initially, the youth was unresponsive

• paid great attention to their youth’s need for fun, rather than focusing quickly on problems or issues in the youth’s lives

It was concluded, too, that less effective mentors tended to:

• attempt to transform or reform the youth by setting goals and tasks early on, and adopting an authoritative role in their interactions with youth. (Such authoritative relationships ended on average after 9 months, rather than lasting the full two years.)

• emphasise changes in behaviour more than development of mutual trust and respect in the relationship

• have difficulty meeting with youth on a regular and consistent basis, often demanding that the youth play an equal role in initiating contact

In the section, *The Challenge Ahead*, the Council On Crime In America recommends substantial efforts be undertaken to test the utility and content of mentoring for older adolescents, and to explore how best to integrate mentoring and/or its practices into public youth-serving institutions such as schools and juvenile detentions centres. One of the strongest conclusions reached in this seminal study was the importance of providing mentors with support in their efforts to build trust and develop positive relationships with youth. There must be an infrastructure for this: to screen, to orientate, and to train, and then to monitor and support.

We must be very cautious in concluding that the above will apply to the mentoring of older teenagers (for instance in the Trail-Blazers Project) because the *Big Brother, Big Sister* programme was concerned very largely with 14 year olds and younger. It may be that occupational mentorship requires a certain amount of developmental maturity on the part of the mentee. For instance, Vaillant’s conclusion from his longitudinal
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psychoanalytic study of peoples’ lives, is that intimacy must be achieved before ‘Career Consolidation’ because “to gratefully allow another person to serve as one’s model requires trust, maturity, and a capacity to love” (1993:159). Moreover, there is evidence to challenge the Council on Crime’s conclusions cited above on the characteristics of the effective mentor. For instance, Mandel (1997) advises how a mentor should be confrontive of unacceptable or unhelpful attitudes, directive, and provide structure, and argues that positive attitude and the offer of a relationship are ‘necessary but not sufficient’ agents of change.

7.1.4 The British experience

Britain has published few if any textbooks on the mentoring of adolescents. Organisations that mentor tend to produce pamphlets and summary reports and handbooks, and the evidence below is drawn from these.

‘Youth at Risk’ delivered its first programme in 1992, and is typical of the emerging schemes. It is a 12-month programme for circa 40 teenage participants who have been in trouble with the law. It begins with a one week residential course in which the youngsters evaluate themselves and taste some confidence and team work with potential mentors. The mentors are given 7 or 8 evening sessions of training. The Coach then meets with the young person once per week and speaks on the telephone twice per week. This particular scheme claims to be akin to ‘sports coaching’ in its use of Socratic questioning and ‘self-set’ goals and action-steps. The key philosophy is about ‘taking responsibility for your own life’. It costs the Local Authority £177 per youth per week, which at a conservative estimate is half the cost of imprisoning a youth, to say nothing of the cost of the crime itself and the legal process. In 1997, the scheme enjoyed a 95% completion rate of that one year commitment with both mentors and youngsters.

This initiative and others like it (e.g. the Dalston Youth Project in East London) inspired The Mentoring Action Project which launched 20 projects around the UK between 1995 and 1997, whereby disengaged youth at risk of delinquency and serious offending (15 and 16 year olds) received careers guidance from counsellors as part of a one-to-one and more holistic framework of support (NICEC, 1998b).
A variation on the mentorship theme, is the idea that mentees can be mentors, too. A scheme deploying so called ‘Pupil-Mentors’ has been running successfully in some English Secondary Schools, whereby the 15 year olds and older pupils are paired one to one with a child from the youngest classes in the school, so as to hear-out their problems - particularly as regards bullying or the intimidating size of their new institution. Through the above schemes it is conceivable that individuals in the future will experience mentoring as both a mentor and a mentee so that mentoring can be appreciated as a satisfying ‘learning relationship’ that one first encounters in early childhood and continues to partake in throughout one’s lifetime.

The most recent major innovation under the name of mentorship was in November 1998. The Prince of Wales revealed his millennium idea which was to mobilise some 3 million people who have taken early retirement so as to act as volunteer mentors (as ‘surrogate grandparents who can care about a child and take an interest’) with the goal of helping teenagers help themselves. This was volunteered in an attempt to break the cycle of crime and inner-city deprivation (The London ‘Times’ newspaper: 1/11/98).

7.1.4 The wider need for mentorship beyond high-risk youth

Rutter has not written about mentorship himself, but many of his observations suggest a gap in young people’s experience that could potentially be filled by it. He writes:

our increasingly complex societies have made it even more difficult for adolescents to understand what kinds of adults they are to become and how they are to accomplish this (1995: 443).

He also observes how today’s youngsters spend a prolonged period with same-age peers, (at least up until the age of 18, and university experiences are not always that different). As Rutter and Smith observe:

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3Mentoring was the key feature of BBC Radio 4’s ‘Education Matters’ 10.30pm-11pm Monday, 9th February, 1998.
Chapter 7: Mentorship
7.1 Specific literature review

The lengthening of youth and the postponement of economic independence, may tend to insulate young people from the influence of adults in particular their parents, and increase the influence of the peer group. It may therefore be that it is an isolated youth culture that leads to the increase in psychosocial disorders. That theory seems worth investigating in future research (1995: 801).

However, even when there are adults around, Csikszentmihalyi et al. note that:

Previous research suggests that teenagers are singularly uninspired by the lives of most adults they know. Often their parents and teachers are not interested in their jobs; they spend long hours in drudgery for the sake of earning a living, and wait for their weekend free time, which in its turn is filled by activities that are passive, uninteresting and fleeting. The majority of teens worry about this situation, at least from time to time, and wonder how they can avoid a similar fate. But many lack the skills and focused motivation to prevent daily life from slipping into similar patterns (1997: 184).

Evidence to suggest that mentorship can aid in the achievement of excellence in the face of adversity in the growing up years, derives from Harrington and Boardman’s (1997) account of their 60 exceptionally high-achieving professionals from very disadvantaged socio-economic backgrounds. The authors note that 75% of their participants retrospectively self-reported mentors as having been very important in their professional careers. In support of the proposition that ‘mentorship can often aid in adversity’ is the seminal work of Fitzharding (1999), who conducted two-hour retrospective interviews with each of around 80 very highly accomplished British and American 20 to 45 year old men and women – all of whom grew up either lesbian, gay or bisexual. During the interviews, Fitzharding posed one question in particular whose typical response bears heavily on the mentorship factor. That question was: “What one thing would have made the greatest improvement to your experience of growing up?”
At least 50% of the participants replied with essentially the same answer: 'The example close at hand of an adult who was 'gay' and 'out' but thriving in their personal and professional life.'

There is also a variety of evidence that high-achievement may be made more likely by mentorship. Walberg, Rasher and Parkerson (1980) note that 82% of the eminents they studied through biographical analysis were exposed to numerous adults very early in life, and 68% grew up in the presence of adults who were working in areas where eminence would be achieved as an adult. Csikszentmihalyi et al. (1997:149) also support this evidence:

Until a few generations ago, gifted artists, musicians and even scientists did not learn to develop their skills in school. Talent was honed by working as an apprentice to a master or by individual enterprise, trial and error and solitary study.

They go on to note that Donatello, the great sculptor of the early Renaissance, had for an apprentice the goldsmith painter and sculptor Andrea del Verrocchio whose apprentices included Leonardo da Vinci and Perugino, the latter in turn becoming the teacher of Raphael. They conclude that such lineage of eminent mentors and apprentices are commonplace in the annals of history (see Eisenstadt, 1978) and that over half of the Nobel Laureates in science were apprenticed to previous laureates" (Simonton, 1994; Zuckerman, 1977). Radford (1990) interviewed the world’s top performers in a range of sports, two thirds of whom considered that they would not have reached the top without the help of their coach. This is about the same ratio observed by Lewis (1997) among his 67 eminent figures recounting the key influences in their own lives.

Csikszentmihalyi et al. (1997: 122) conclude their advocacy of mentorship with the following summary:

Mentorship enhances a student’s feeling of support and membership in the field in several ways. It brings greater sensitivity to the personal needs of the student. Closer contact with a teacher, particularly if he or she is a professional working in the field, provides a real-life model for personal commitment and enjoyment.

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4I am grateful for Sarah’s permission to cite her unpublished research.
One of the USA’s most famous embodiments of such an ethos, whose ‘research and mentorship programme’ has been in development over the past 20 years, is The Bronx High School for Science, and suitably enough the school’s alumni include four Nobel Prize Winners in Physics.5

As a final caveat, though, mentorship can harbour potential negatives. For instance, apart from the obvious potential abuses of a relationship by either party, Simonton (1994) suggests that the pressure of the mentee to imitate the mentor can hinder the former’s originality. To counter this, he advocates having several mentors instead of just one.

7.1.5 Conclusions to the specific literature review

There is as yet little long-term confirmation of the actual benefits of mentoring (Harrington and Boardman, 1998), and inferences must be cautious. However, there is certainly some impressive evidence suggesting that mentorship may for some teenagers and young adults, in some circumstances, be a learning relationship that can complement the roles of parents and schoolteachers, and benefit a wide range of young people for purposes ranging from reducing recidivism, to improving the subjective experience of growing-up, to increasing the likelihood of high-achievement in both academic and professional arenas. In these times of single-parent families (Santrock, 1998) and such a rapidly evolving work-market (Watts et al. 1996), this once commonplace but long neglected Master-Apprentice relationship could perhaps play an ever more contributive role.

5 Carole Green’s (1988) paper describing the programme is available from the school, along with a handbook for implementation.
7.2 My findings relating to mentorship

Contents of Section 7.2

7.2.1 Introduction
7.2.2 The participants' experiences of mentorship
7.2.3 The possibility of a latent need for mentorship
7.2.4 What sort of mentorship is wanted?
7.2.5 Summary and conclusions from my findings
7.2.6 Suggestions for future research:
   • 'Tacit knowledge'
   • 'Mentorship by Mail'
7.2.1 Introduction

In the introduction to this thesis, my fourth and final tentative hypothesis stated that ‘My research participants will self-report wanting to receive one-to-one holistic Mentorship to foster their personal and occupational development’.

7.2.2 The participants’ experiences of mentorship

I was not convinced that there exists a generally accepted or commonplace definition or understanding of mentorship, so I did not use the term in my questionnaires. Instead, participants were posed descriptive questions, such as the following:

1st Q: 3) Could you turn to an older and much more experienced person who was successful in their own life, someone who you could discuss all of your problems with, no matter what. (That person may or may not have been your parent.)

An even spread of more than half of the 97 participants who completed the 1st questionnaire said ‘fairly true’ or ‘very true’, yet such experience did not correlate with life-outcomes in terms of their membership of my three groups. Corroborating this impression of mentorship being neither ‘necessary nor sufficient’ for high-achievement was the fact that there was apparently something closely akin to mentorship in the lives of only half of the 50 HAs that I interviewed. That said, the absence of a competent adult with whom all secrets, hopes and concerns could be discussed, was something deeply lamented by the majority of the young people who shared their lives with me in long-interviews. For almost all of the HA interviewees, the likelihood of severe disapproval, disappointment, anger or lack of interest had blighted the potential of parents and adults who might otherwise have helped in their growing up years.1

HAs who had known a mentor, described him or her as being characteristically a School Teacher or Sports Coach or University Lecturer who had taken them seriously, made them feel full of potential, and was

1 The role of parents need not necessarily be negative or inhibiting. An Olympic Captain in my HA group pointed out that “Most Olympic athletes are coached by a family member who was an Olympic athlete themself”.
someone they felt they could be more honest with than with their parents. There was a suggestion that some HAs courted or attracted mentors:

There has to be some kind of inspiration. I look around at people who inspire me and I pursue them.

I also noted that written biographies or autobiographies provided a ‘mentorship substitute’; i.e. the detailed example of someone else’s life:

I got into books about women who wanted an independent life.

Also, it seemed that the first-hand example of a role-model could be very potent, though it lacked the reciprocity and thoroughness and holistic nature of mentorship, and particularly lacked the sharing of ‘personal confidences’.

### 7.2.3 The possibility of a latent need for mentorship

1st Q: 23) Is there anything I’ve missed which would have been the key to major improvements in your teenage life, or was indeed the key to major improvements in your life? Something might be very private to you, but even if you write just one line that hints at an explanation, this will help this research to design an educational project to help other young people growing up.

A representative sample of MA and HA written responses to this question were:

- To feel love, respect and support from a few grown-ups.
- Adults willing to talk about emotions with you.
- Someone should have helped me build up my self-esteem and self-worth.
- Someone I could turn to and trust who wouldn’t think I was stupid.
- Self-confidence and feeling special – which is hard when you’re only at school.
Having an approachable member of authority

Having an older experienced person coming to me rather than me coming to them – especially as I was a shy person.

I believe the last quote in the above list makes a particularly important point, that perhaps it is up to adults to involve themselves proactively with the youngster, because many of the most needy may ironically be those least likely to seek-out appropriate adult support.

7.2.4 What sort of mentorship is wanted?

My second questionnaire described a possible mentorship scenario:

Thinking back to when you were in your last two years of school, imagine you had someone who wrote to you each and every week to discuss in detail your interest in some profession, i.e. someone wrote to you who was doing the job you had ambitions to do yourself.

- They would send you relevant things to read: trade-magazines, books and such like.
- Together you would agree on what 'professional' homework would be useful for you, and they would mark that homework and return it to you in the post.
- They would put you in touch with other professionals in your field of interest so you could get a broader view of things.
- They would arrange one day workshops for some hands-on practice, to be held at your school once per term.
- They would discuss with you your personal life and other interests or hobbies, and they would help you think through any personal problems or worries that arose.

I then asked the following question of the 140 participants of the 2nd questionnaire:

2nd Q: 95) In order of importance, what would be the most valuable things a Mentor could offer YOU personally (i.e. most important)?

There was a 90% written response rate from MAs and HAs to this question, which itself indicates a strong level of enthusiasm. Ranked first most often were the following four features of mentorship which participants said they would value the most:
• Careers advice and opportunities for work-experience
• An introduction to working-world contacts
• Having someone to listen, and someone with whom to discuss their personal problems
• Absolute trust and unbiased advice and opinion

Interpreting the above results, though participants generated their own answers (rather than answering a multiple-choice) I feel there may have been an artificially enhanced emphasis on ‘occupation oriented’ mentorship because my description of a mentor in the questionnaire so emphasised this characteristic.

Most-needed mentor characteristics generated by participants as ranking 2nd and 3rd were:
• Financial advice
• General encouragement

2nd Q: 94) Could you name one other thing that a Mentor could do that you would find really helpful?

50% of the MA and HA participants generated a reply, typical of which were the following:

Someone to be trusted in help with decision-making: honest, unbiased and non-judgmental.

Someone to have dinner with on an equal par in an atmosphere of mutual respect, friendship and listening.

Emotional support and encouragement.

At all times it is good to be able to talk to someone about your problems.
It would have been nice to get a view of the world aside from that of my immediate acquaintances – to give a different perspective.2

(I noted that the UA group were typically less forthcoming the HA and MA groups in writing replies on mentorship, and their concerns were notable for being quite passive, for instance they expected a mentor to provide a job or money).

Two particularly interesting suggestions arose from the MA and HA questionnaires which might be explored by future research:

• the mentor-mentee relationship would need to be made two-way in some respect to prevent it feeling patronising.

• mentorship would be particularly useful when at university because there are not always the same close relationships with teachers as was enjoyed in school, and there is no local and daily support from the youngster’s family.

My questionnaire went on to ask:

2nd Q: 92) Do you think someone like that would have been very useful to you in those last two years of school.

95 of 140 (i.e. 68%) rated this 4, 5 or 6 on my Likert-scale, and the following question received an even more enthusiastic response:

2nd Q: 93) You think someone like that would be very useful to you NOW, in your present situation?

113 of 140 (i.e. 81%) rated this 4, 5, or 6 on my Likert Scale as something would welcome (as described above) in their present lives. (These figures are illustrated by chart 7A) This positive response-rate certainly offers support for the participant who raised the idea above that university students particularly need mentorship, though the data provide no confirmation of the explanation for why this should be so.

2 A tutor of HAs spoke for many such tutors when he said “If only experts could give Guest Lectures, the students would benefit from hearing from people whom they respect but who have a different point of view on life.”
Chart 7A: Participants' responses to 2nd Q: 92 and 93:

2nd Q: 92) 'Do you think someone like that [a mentor] would have been very useful to you in those last two years of school?'

2nd Q: 93) 'Do you think someone like that [a mentor] would be very useful to you NOW, in your present situation?'
The questions below elaborated on the nature of this ‘potential’ mentor:

2nd Q: 91) Please give an example from film or TV of a mentor-apprentice relationship which you would have liked for yourself (For instance, in *Star Wars*: Obi Wan Kenobi is the mentor of Luke Skywalker, or in Walt Disney’s version of Kipling’s *The Jungle Book*, the boy Moguli is mentored by Balloo the Bear and some other animals).

In response, more than two-thirds of HAs and MAs volunteered an example. There was a wide range, including characters real-life and fictional, legal and criminal, historical and contemporary. All the ‘desired mentors’ were male, and all of the participants were male, and this same-gender preference among young males supports work by Harrington and Boardman (1997). By way of specific examples listed by my participants:

1. The Karate Kid was mentioned by 20% of respondents who answered this question. (This is a 1980s film in which a Chinese Karate Master teaches a bullied 17 year old American school boy how to defend himself.)

2. 5% mentioned Dead Poet’s Society (A 1990s film set in the 1950s in which an English teacher in an American private school encourages his class of 16 year olds to think as individuals, to express themselves, and to question authority.)

3. 5% mentioned Yoda in Star Wars (a futuristic film in which a non-human wiseman trains a young adult warrior to discover the force within him).

It would be incautious and difficult to interpret these results beyond arguing that is highly indicative of the potential role of mentorship for these young people that two-thirds of participants engaged sufficiently with the concept to generate their own examples. As for the UAs, (only 25% of whom generated a response) their only overlap with the MA/HA choices was The Karate Kid. Other than this, the UA selections were far more physical action-based (e.g. martial arts exponents, Government agent, and action-heroes played by the likes of Claude Van Damme and Steven Seagal) in contrast to the preference for mental and spiritual and personality development style mentorship which largely inspired the HA and MA groups.
7.2.5 Summary and conclusions from my findings

80% of my 140 participants on the 2nd questionnaire self-report wanting a traditional one-to-one mentor-mentee relationship with an adult with whom to discuss personal life and specific vocational choices and development. Two-thirds would have welcomed one in their final two years of school. This said, my participants’ self-reported experience of mentorship did not distinguish between the three groups in my research.

One might have expected young people to reject the concept that they needed or would like ‘being mentored’. This was not shown to be the case. With hindsight, one might dismiss the apparent desire for mentoring as commonsense and obvious: “Of course individuals will want anything that promises to help them”. However, I am aware of no wide scale inquiry in Britain in to young people’s attitudes towards or wish for mentorship, and mentorship of teenagers has only blossomed in the UK over the past two years since 1997, and in its present form is still regarded as an educational resource reserved for a tiny minority of delinquent youngsters, or those suffering severe difficulties with academic work (NICEC, 1998). It seems from my findings that holistic ‘life-mentorship’ might prove beneficial to a very wide range of young people. Indeed, it is possible that mentoring’s level of effectiveness may be very different for a high-risk convicted young offender than for a low-risk high-achieving 16 year old, and that neither youngster has any less or more intrinsic right to the resource. In the same way that I argue in chapter 1 that there has been a disproportionate study of ‘mental ill-health’ and ‘under-achievement’ by comparison to ‘mental health’ and ‘high-achievement’, I suggest that ostensibly high-achieving youngsters may be too easily neglected with the possibility that their even greater potential is unrealised with a loss to both the individual and to the community in which they live and work.

I argue that mentorship could be viewed as a ‘supplement’ to school teaching and parenting, and some educational psychologists would concur: “On its own, a school can rarely succeed in giving the intellectual nourishment that results in a child excelling at something, rather than being merely competent” (Howe, 1990:124). Fowler echoes this when he writes “perhaps most widely overlooked in the nature-nurture equation is how few life-histories reflect even a moderate range of opportunities to acquire the skills, motivation and interest needed for excellence in any field ” (1990: 172).
7.2.6 Suggestions for future research

I have two suggestions for future research: the first concerns 'tacit knowledge';
and the second concerns a simple mechanism for encouraging wider-scale
mentorship than is presently available, at least in the UK.

'Tacit Knowledge'

There was a suggestion from the long-interviews that moderate and under-
achievement might be a result of individuals' simply not knowing how to
achieve their well-intentioned goals, and more than that, that they were
unaware of the gap in their knowledge, which meant that they proceeded in
earnest ignorance of their limited likelihood of success. Their not realising
that there were important things they did not know, could be regarded as a
Catch 22.3 This is not a concept I targeted directly or at any length in my
research, but nonetheless it emerged strongly from it. It is not a new concept,
but rather my findings offer support to previous work in the field. For
instance, Sternberg and Wagner write about tacit knowledge (defined in the
Oxford English Dictionary, 1990, as "knowledge that usually is not openly
expressed or stated") and argue that "a key element of practical intelligence in
occupational settings is the ability to learn and then apply information that is
never explicitly taught to workers but that is essential for success in their jobs.
This tacit knowledge that is rarely verbalised, enables workers to meet the
often unwritten and unspoken demands of their jobs" (1986: 178). They
conclude that much of the learning that matters to success in real-world
pursuits, happens in the absence of formal instruction. Ten years on,
Sternberg (1996) describes tacit knowledge as having four characteristic
features which I paraphrase below:

- First, tacit knowledge is about know how – about doing (about procedure).
- Second, it is relevant to the attainment of goals people value.
- Thirdly, it is typically acquired with little help from others. (There may
even be barriers to acquisition.)
- Fourthly, study after study has found only trivial correlations between tacit
knowledge and IQ.

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3 'Catch-22' is the term immortalised by Joseph Heller (1961) in the novel of the same name.
There is already evidence that tacit knowledge may be a very practical concept to apply in schools (see Williams, Blythe, White, Sternberg and Gardner, 1996) and also the working world (Sternberg 1997), but in terms of my thesis, I suggest that the concept of know-how may be applicable to the subtle and private skills of developing a positive relationship with Reality, i.e. using a more adaptive strategic ratio of one thinking-type relative to another, or one form of behaviour relative to another.

Relevant to this suggestion that there may be a shortage of sources of know-how, may be some evidence from a question posed in the 2nd Questionnaire. It is noteworthy that 97 of 140 participants (69%) gave a positive response at level 4, 5 or 6 on my Likert-scale in response to:

2nd Q:100) You think it would be helpful to deliberately study people's lives and try to learn from such things as their successes, their mistakes, their rules of thumb and their methods? (You could study famous and highly successful people and also more ordinary adults)

In contrast to the considerable enthusiasm for this idea, only 15 of 58 (i.e. 26%) combined MAs and HAs who were asked, claimed they had ever studied something akin to general explanations of life. I would suggest that future research might consider whether encouraging young people to study other people's lives proactively might begin to provide some general know-how, perhaps to supplement the role of the mentors that this thesis has already advocated. It might prove useful for educators to introduce teenagers explicitly to holistic macro-models of the psycho-social composition and processes of a person and of a lifetime - showing that an individual and the course of a life are something potentially explainable and even improvable. Such models would be more scientific than biographical, and more holistic than developmental psychology is wont to offer. The intended effect of the debate would be to give young people a chance to make sense of the lives they see around them, and to increase their sense of an internal locus of control and motivation to invest in their own life course.
Chapter 7: Mentorship
7.2 Findings

‘Mentorship by Mail’

It was noted in the review of the specific literature that the concept of mentors is growing in Britain in industrial and commercial settings (see Caldwell and Carter, 1993), and peer-mentoring is now being explored by more and more schools. There are at least two possibilities on the theme of mentorship which have not been tried in combination:

1. Accessing the entire British workforce (and recently retired professionals) by deploying volunteer adults who are well-established and proven in the working world to assist mainstream school teenagers (and marginalised young people) in their career-search and their move from school into relevant tertiary education and from there into paid employment.

2. Achieving the above by a mechanism of ‘Mentoring by Mail’, whether by conventional letters or by e-mail. In other words, a pen-friendship with a well-defined purpose of mentorship for personal and occupational life.

The ‘Trail-Blazers’ project at HM Young Offenders Institution at Feltham is the first trial of such a ‘mentorship by mail’ scheme in a custodial setting, or indeed any other setting in the UK (detailed in Appendix G). Only traditional mail is used because inmates have no access to internet. Though at first sight, Trail-Blazers is yet another example of what I describe above as mentorship being the special reserve of ‘at-risk’ youngsters, in fact the Department for Education and Employment is one of the supporters of the trial because it anticipates that such a scheme could theoretically operate at minimal cost in Senior Schools, 6th Form Colleges and in tertiary education. It is considered that senior-school children as young as eleven might find greater meaning, relevance and purpose in their classroom studies, if they could strike-up informative and inspiring correspondences (or e-mails) with ‘Career-Skills Pen-Friends cum Mentors’, and under these circumstances the pool of mentors might also include men and women who are still in university courses, vocational training or employment. It is envisaged that school children could share their pen-friend correspondences with classmates, and so help illuminate educational and career horizons.
Chapter 8

Summary of Findings, General Discussion & Conclusions
Chapter 8

Summary of Findings, General Discussion & Conclusions
Chapter 8: Summary, discussion and conclusions

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Chapter 8: Summary, discussion and conclusions

8.1 Summary of the key findings of this thesis

I cannot remember a single first-formed hypothesis which has not after a time to be given up or greatly modified.
(Charles Darwin, 1892: 55-56)

8.1.1 Introduction

Below is a summary list of those findings that seem most relevant to my four hypotheses as stated at the outset of this thesis, and those findings that seem most prominent and noteworthy. More detailed summaries have already been presented at the end of each chapter section, where they are often accompanied by suggestions for future research.

8.1.2 Summary of findings

Summary of findings from my review of the general literature

In chapter 2, I found that the target themes of my thesis, its research strategy and its theoretical perspective appear to be rare in existing British literature. However, I argue that my hypotheses are consistent with some of the theories and findings of prior work, and that my own findings may offer corroboration and even some theoretical developments of that work.

Summary of findings relating to my proposed ‘Relationship with Reality’ personality dimension

Chapter 4 addressed my proposal of a Relationship with Reality personality dimension and its categorisation of characteristic thinking-types and behaviours. It constitutes by far the largest and most important portion of my thesis. Key findings are as follows:

1. The great majority of my 300 research participants (comprising interview and questionnaire respondents) reported never before having been asked about their ‘thinking-types’ (such as fantasy, step-by-step planning, and

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worry); and my eight-category classification of thinking-types received an equally strong majority of agreement.

2. There was a range of evidence from the questionnaires offering tentative support for some key features of my theoretical explanation of a Relationship with Reality personality dimension - a dimension that represents an individual's typical type and level of interaction with real-life. However, the evidence was often contradictory or paradoxical and strongly suggests that the relationship, if it exists, is a complex and interwoven one inadequately reflected in my present hypothetical model.

3. Three of the four components that emerged from a factor analysis of the concept of Relationship with Reality, showed a significant if modest correlation with membership of either a high-, moderate-, or under-achievement group.

4. It is acknowledged that it may be the quality of a particular type of thinking not just the absolute amount, which is the deciding factor of the effect of that thinking-type in terms of real-life outcomes.

5. There was no evidence that any particular thinking-type is in itself negative, quite the contrary: it may form part of a necessary or healthy ratio of thinking-types in people's cognitive lives.

6. The proactive 'self-monitoring' of thought-types was self-reported as possible and even practised by a majority of my participants. The possibility of proactively 'self-managing' one's thought-types was also self-reported as possible and even practised by a sizeable minority of my participants, though a number of them voiced reservations as to the potential psycho-social dangers of this.

7. Different thinking-types were self-reported as requiring different amounts of effort, and this may have implications for remedial cognitive interventions.

8. A large minority of the HAs self-reported being attracted to the concept of their committing serious crime, which I suggest may be an unexpected by-product of their exceptional need and/or ability to assert control over their
experience of reality. (There were no comparison MA or UA groups on these specific questions).

9. There was a significant, moderately low correlation between the Short Imaginal Processes Inventory (SIPI – which measures the type and prevalence of a broadly defined concept of ‘daydreaming’) and my own measures of the proposed Relationship with Reality personality dimension. I conclude that the SIPI is arguably measuring largely different phenomena. The SIPI distinguished between HAs and UAs on only one of its three subscales, and that was: ‘the amount of guilty and fear of failure daydreaming’ that they generated.

10. There was at best a significant but moderately low correlation between Eysenck and Eysenck’s (1990) EPQ-R and my own measures of Relationship with Reality personality dimension, and I conclude that the EPQ-R is arguably measuring largely different phenomena. The EPQ-R found no significant differences between HAs and UAs on its Lie or Addiction or Neuroticism Scales, but significant differences on the Psychoticism, Extraversion and Criminality scales.

Summary of findings relating to Occupational Identity

1. In chapter 5, I found strong support for my proposed model of identity. Occupational Identity was reported to be a strong component of overall identity, but very possibly not as important as what I have called Private-life Identity, Physical Identity, and Attitude Identity (This latter identity is synonymous with ‘Personality’). Further to this, 44% of a group of 59 HA and MA individuals self-reported that a ‘fantasy identity’ was one of the four major chronological dimensions of their sense of identity just as much as their sense of their past, present and future identities.

2. There was no evidence that what I had defined as a sense of occupational identity in any way distinguished between the three groups of participants. What may have confounded my results, was my inadequate definition of occupational identity, because there was considerable evidence that what was more motivating than careers and vocations for these participants was a goal that was pregnant with meaning for them and one with which they were pleased to identity. Almost without exception, this was a goal that
was shorter-term and more immediately relevant to their present ‘student lives’ than any prospective career or vocational identity. I.e. their ‘goal-horizons’ reached only as far as A-level grades and a university place, and their motivations towards such horizons drew on the significant relationships with their family, school teachers and friends. However, the summary for chapter 6 below offers another dimension to this issue.

**Summary of findings relating to Careers Education and Careers Guidance**

In Chapter 6 I found that two-thirds of participants strongly self-report wanting more careers education and guidance, and believed it would be beneficial in motivating their academic and vocational goals, both in their present environment and during the two years before university or imprisonment. This is very relevant to the chapter 5 summary above, as it suggests that ‘goal-horizons’ could be considerably and usefully extended to include careers and vocations so that intrinsic motivations could be drawn from alternative sources other than the relatively parochial goals and motivations that seemed to dominate the lives of the great majority of my participants.

**Summary of findings relating to Mentorship**

Chapter 7 concluded that 80% of my 140 participants on the 2nd questionnaire self-report wanting a traditional one-to-one mentor-mentee relationship with a competent adult with whom to discuss personal life and specific vocational choices and development. Two-thirds would have welcomed a mentor in their final two years before university (or imprisonment).

**Summary of more general findings relating to this thesis overall**

1. There were only very few gender differences apparent between the combined HA and MA student groups in the 1st Questionnaire (which is the only questionnaire that included women in the sample).
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**Summary of more general findings relating to this thesis overall**

1. There were only very few gender differences apparent between the combined HA and MA student groups in the 1st Questionnaire (which is the only questionnaire that included women in the sample).
2. There were only very few differences between the HAs and the RMCs. By comparison to Oxbridge Undergraduates, the RMCs (Royal Marine Commandos) are a non-academic elite group traditionally from unprivileged backgrounds. This provides some initial evidence that the factors under focus in this thesis might be quite invariant between socio-economic groups, and that there might exist generic traits of high-achievement common to academic and non-academic pursuits.

3. Though there are ample theoretical reasons to believe that the four target themes of this thesis interact very substantially with each other (see Section 4.5) the empirical findings of this thesis do not provide a sufficiently clear picture from which to assess the evidence for such a correlation. This is largely because the participants’ experience of careers guidance and of mentorship was either so idiosyncratic or so minimal that it was unfeasible to make a systematic evaluation of this feature in relation to other aspects of their lives. Similarly, my working definition of occupational identity proved to be too limited for the experience of these participants, so once again an evaluation of its interaction with other factors would have been too unreliable.

### 8.2 General discussion of key findings

1. No single feature as measured in this study has shown itself to be a necessary or sufficient correlate for membership of any one of the three participant groups: HA, MA or UA. It is possible that there is very little or no relation between life-outcomes and the target factors. Perhaps it is not simply the absence or presence of factors within the person or their environment which is important, but rather how these factors may work with each other to produce particular outcomes. Perhaps it requires an accumulation of several positive or negative factors to increase the likelihood of one life-outcome or another. Perhaps there is a multiplicative effect whereby the combination of two or more particular factors enhance the potency of each other so that the combined effect becomes greater than the sum of its parts.
2. Bearing in mind the highly exploratory nature of even my 2nd questionnaire, and the non-random sample of participants to whom it was administered, it is debatable whether the present data warrants much greater investment in its analysis than I have already undertaken. It could be argued that resources would be better invested in progressing to more specific research goals among a random sample.

3. My aim has been to bring a greater level of objective appraisal to certain matters so as to question the popular myths and the dominant consensus of authoritative opinion that weigh upon them. Hence, this was an exploratory study intended to give some indication of the nature and potential prevalence of factors that have been little researched, and my preliminary findings have done little more than corroborate and make a small supplement to other studies. More specifically:

A. My findings on the use of fantasy in particular, and on Relationship with Reality in general, build on the work of Vaillant (1977; 1993) and Skynner and Cleese (1993).

B. My findings on Occupational Identity build on the work of Erikson (1980) and Vaillant (ibid).


While acknowledging that many of the component features of a young adult’s life that I have investigated in this thesis have been previously investigated by eminent researchers and practitioners, I must also argue that those features are still little acknowledged by the caring and educational professions (particularly in the UK), and my thesis is intended as yet another body of evidence to challenge this widespread omission or marginalisation.
4. Caveat: There is always a temptation to try to extrapolate solutions to a problem from the data that has been gathered about its nature and prevalence. I argue we must exercise caution and restraint, and no interventions should be heavily invested in until we have adequately researched the solutions which might suggest themselves.1

8.3 Conclusion: An appraisal of my Research foci and methods

The time a researcher knows best how a specific investigation should be done, is after it is finished.
M. and V. and T. Goertzel (1978)

The following desiderata section will be followed by the arguable strengths of my research focus, method and theory.

8.3.1 Desiderata

Below, I summarise some of the main ‘Desiderata’ which, in retrospect, could have considerably improved the theory, practice and analysis of my research. (Many of these following desiderata are the key points drawn from the desiderata sections contained at the end of each chapter of this thesis).

1. I believe a random sample could probably have been procured, if I had planned my interviews and questionnaires several months further in advance than I did, and made contingency plans for a greater number of refusals.

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1 Regarding my Trail-Blazers prison project and the experimental interventions that it deploys (such as ‘mentorship-by-mail for personal and occupational life’ and also ‘thought-awareness’), there is a very high ratio of supervisors to youngsters who are well monitored and mentored. I might also argue that the risks of intervention are outweighed by the statistical certainty that at present 70% of these young inmates will be returned to custody within two years of release (Home Office, 1998), and that their criminal and custodial experience is very much more likely to be more damaging than our closely monitored educational initiative.
2. It would have been interesting to include for questionnaire a ‘non-convicted’ Under-Achievement group, for instance, one comprised of long-term unemployed youths who do not self-report major accomplishments in other life-arenas. This would have helped control for the possibility that some concept of ‘criminality’ is the intervening variable producing any differences between the groups among whom I have researched hitherto.

3. I would like to have at least recorded the socio-economic status of the MA and HA groups so that I could see what correlation there might have been between these two variables and group membership. (However, I have argued that to control for these variables at this exploratory research stage would have been an unwarranted investment of my limited research resources.)

4. Although my questionnaires allowed a rapid survey of a larger number of participants, I now feel strongly that issues as little researched, as unfamiliar, and as potentially sensitive as mine, are better explored in the first instance by means of a long-interview of a couple of hours or more - and only then progressing with the very same participants to questionnaires, once a sense of trust and joint-purpose has been well-established. This might reduce the possibility of misunderstandings as regards the key concepts, and a too unreliable investment in the answers. Ideally, if resources allowed, the interviewer should be on hand to ‘assist’ with the questionnaire, and so be able to monitor the apparent investment in the questionnaire generally, (even encourage it) and to clarify misunderstanding while still allowing for embarrassing subjects, or for lists of items, to be readily addressed. Such a method, in conjunction with an ‘anonymous letter-box system’ to allow for taboo subjects to be written about and after-thoughts to be passed on, could provide a compelling level of evidence.

5. The lack of any arrangement for follow-up communication with all or a large majority of my participants (perhaps through e-mail, letters or phone calls) meant that they could not be invited to comment upon my developing theories and models. Similarly, because I had not made a near-verbatim interview transcript in the first instance, theory developments could not benefit from a continual re-analysis of the data.
6. I would liked to have deployed the Experience Sampling Method (see Csikszentmihalyi et al., 1983 and 1993) among 50 young people for one week so as to provide yet another means to explore my concept of ‘thinking types’.

7. I would like to have made a greater attempt to operationalise and to investigate the main sources and the total sum of an individual’s subjective sense of satisfaction from life. I gained impressions from the long-interviews, and I asked a couple of questions in both questionnaires about happiness, but this fundamental concept could have been much more fully explored and so have lent another key dimension to my concept of ‘life-outcomes’. For the same reason, I would like to have made an attempt to operationalise and investigate some notion of accomplishment in personal life: the friendships, family, sexual and romantic relationships.

8. I could have measured the test re-test reliability of a representative number of items on the 2nd questionnaire which, bearing in mind the potentially nebulous nature of my target factors, would have helped me gauge the reliability of my findings.

9. I would have benefited from acquiring sufficient skills of statistical analysis before I started the fieldwork so that I could have better designed a more appropriate questionnaire, and conducted a more extensive analysis of my data in the time available to me.

10. I would probably have benefited from making the opportunity to travel to the USA so as to learn from and debate first-hand with some of the North American specialists in the field of high-achievement (which appears to be a greatly under-valued arena in the UK), rather than working in relative isolation as I have felt myself to be doing.
8.3.2 Arguable Strengths of this Thesis

The focus

I believe the strongest feature of my thesis is the proposal and attempted investigation of the hypothesised Relationship with Reality personality dimension, and its component features such as my categorisation of thinking-types and behaviours.

My interview schedule and questionnaires

1. The triangulated approach of addressing the same topic with several different styles of questions proved useful e.g. requiring the participant to rank-order; to put a cross on a linear dimension; to answer a multiple choice. Also, the open-ended questionnaire items inviting personal comment resulted in some participants generating highly illuminating view-points.

2. The two full hours given to each interview seemed to allow adequate time for a good level of rapport and trust in the disclosure about the sensitive topics I was exploring. It can be noted that Maguire (1997) testifies to how field studies using quantitative and qualitative studies such as the one that I have attempted, based on semi-structured questionnaires and one-to-one interviews with non-random samples, have played a part in altering both criminologists’ and policy-makers’ perceptions of various kinds of crime. Maguire cites the Dobash and Dobash (1979) study of domestic violence; Maguire and Bennett’s (1982) work with domestic burglars; Ditton’s (1979) research on ‘routine theft’ by employees; Morgan and Zedner’s (1992) study of ‘child victims’.

My theoretical approach

1. Csikszentmihalyi advocates that “we can learn much about average development by examining positive extremes” (1997:240). However, I have come across no other research that seeks a three-way comparison between
a high-achievement and moderate-achievement group of individuals and a group of imprisoned young offenders or indeed any other kind of under-achievement group. It is regrettable that there has been so little cross-referencing or other evidence of communication between those studying youngsters who are under-achieving and at-risk, those who are statistically average, and those who are exceptional in a positive way. At times, individuals from both extremes can be difficult to access, and random samples difficult to arrange, but my thesis at least attempted to initiate a synthesis of these two polar worlds.

2. My thesis has suggested how such apparently nebulous concepts as thinking-types, identity, careers guidance, and mentorship might effectively be explored. Vaillant notes that “Perhaps the greatest problem faced by the academic social sciences is that what is measurable if often irrelevant and what is truly relevant often cannot be measured” (1993: 118). A good example of the inhibitory effect of methodological difficulties appears in the Introduction section to Psychosocial Disorders in Young People in which Rutter and Smith (1995) explain that “happiness and well-being isn’t studied because it can’t be defined well enough.”

3. Through my eclectic literature search, I have attempted to learn from and be inspired by a range of different disciplines: forensic psychology; the psychology and psychiatry of statistically normal adolescents; the psychology of exceptional achievement; the study of psycho-social disorder and the study of relatively good mental health; careers counselling and sport psychology. I have found this cross-disciplinary approach has offered new perspectives on my target issues.

Correspondingly, my thesis has attempted to draw on eclectic theoretical perspectives and methodologies so as to incorporate the strengths of the Behaviourist, Cognitive, and Psychoanalytic approaches. I suggest that unless researchers who study observable behaviour are prepared to integrate their findings with those studies that focus on cognitive processes and psychoanalytic interpretation, such behavioural studies will only be able to indicate what happens rather than offer explanations for why and how, and this limitation will in turn limit the effectiveness of remedial or preventative measures. My results suggest that if we ignore inner mental lives on account of them being difficult to quantify and
operationalise, we run the risk of misunderstanding human nature and experience, and of losing the opportunity to explain the mechanisms and processes of psycho-social life. For instance, an adolescent’s observable behaviour is more easily quantified than his fantasies, but the latter may help explain the former.

A critic of my eclecticism might retort that ‘in trying to look at everything, one sees nothing’; but I argue that if the focus of one’s attention is precise enough, an eclectic perspective on that precise focus is likely to provide at least another ‘type’ of evidence. It is not necessarily the case that any one type of evidence is better than another, but I do suggest from the evidence presented in this thesis that heterogeneity may be better than homogeneity in a healthy science.

8.3.3 The considerable limitations to the scope of my findings overall

I do not suggest that the factors I have explored in this thesis were hitherto undiscovered or undocumented, only that they might have been under-acknowledged and under-researched in relation to their potential import to some young people in a variety of settings. Rutter writes "Facilitating the development of a wide range of different types of coping skills that can be used flexibly in response to the diverse stressors of adolescence, will play an important role in the projection of effective coping in the youth of tomorrow" (1995: 269). Alas, it is much too soon for me to argue that the acquisition of certain specific life-skills and strategies and experiences while growing-up could benefit from becoming a far more deliberate and well-informed process. I acknowledge that because of the size and non-random sample of my participants, my findings and conclusions cannot be considered to be representative of wider social groups beyond those very particular participants that I have studied. That is to say that my findings cannot be taken to represent all people who could be deemed by my criteria UAs, MA or HAs, nor even that my findings can be taken to represent Feltham’s Young Offenders (my UAs) or Oxford and Cambridge students (my HAs), because my sample groups were too small and too selectively acquired to be representative. Generalisations would simply not be valid.
All of my summaries and conclusions represent ideas in their infancy. This thesis has suggested that to some extent these relatively marginalised aspects of an individual's psycho-social life are amenable to social scientific inquiry: systematic, replicable, and refutable. It has also suggested to what extent they might warrant further research. By the very nature of cognitive inquiries, the 'truthfulness' of responses was impossible to gauge. Though I argue that such tentative exploratory stages are very necessary in preparation for a stronger, more experimental design, I acknowledge that only a longitudinal prospective study with a far larger random sample could hope to achieve a satisfactory level of hypothesis-testing that might begin to corroborate or refute my findings.

8.4 Afterword

It has always felt like a privilege for me to listen to or read an account of an individual's life. Painful though it is to hear of a life that has run into severe problems, it is equally wonderful to hear tell of those accomplished and distinguished lives of individuals who arguably stand at the forefront of their country's generation both educationally and professionally, and who so often exude their joy in doing so. For some time now, it has been my raison d'être to understand better the psycho-social dynamics that I felt so keenly may have wrought my own life and that of my closest friends and the young people with whom I worked. The hope of a better understanding of such things has proven to be an enduring passion.
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Denouement
Appendix A

Glossary of my Key Terms
A-Levels  End of school examinations taken at age 17 or 18; blind-graded by a central examinations board.

Career  a progression through a range of roles or jobs broadly relating to a specific profession or vocation.

Careers Education refers to learning generally about the panorama of the careers available and their broad characteristics.

Careers Guidance (synonymous with Careers Counselling) covers a range of specialist activities designed to enable individuals to make and implement informed decisions about their career development.

CRAC  The Careers Research and Advisory Centre which conducts applied research and development work. CRAC also sponsors NICEC (see below)

Day-to-day Problem Solving  - is mentally producing effective solutions to the every-day demands of real life.

Fantasy  is thinking about something which is very unlikely ever to happen in reality, with the intention of experiencing pleasure.

HA  High-Achievement group (defined in detail in Section 1.4)

Identity  self-representation (Erikson, 1980).

Imaginative Rehearsal  - is mentally rehearsing impending activities with the intention of being able to perform them better in reality.

MA  Moderate-Achievement group (defined in detail in Section 1.4)

Mentorship  Long-term, one-to-one, holistic life-guidance by a well-proven non-parental figure whose help is welcomed by the Mentee.
NICEC  The National Institute for Careers Education and Counselling which aims to develop theory, inform policy and enhance practice.

Occupational Identity: a ‘sense of self’ defined by one’s dominant work or activity role (which may be generic like ‘student’, or some specific vocational role such as ‘Royal Marine’.)

Oxbridge the generic term for Oxford and Cambridge Universities. These Universities comprise 35 and 31 Colleges respectively (which provide the home and some tutoring for the students) together with the lecturing departments, institutes, schools and faculties and those lecturers who work within them.

Personality an individual’s pervasive attitude and approach to life (Dowson and Grounds 1995).

Reality  Section 4.1 details the key theoretical features concerning the Anti- and also the Pro-Reality traits of the proposed ‘Relationship with Reality Personality Dimension.

‘Relationship with Reality’ Personality Dimension: in Section 4.1, a graphical model is suggested which combines a rudimentary assessment of an individual’s cognitive and behavioural traits so as to calculate her/his position on a single linear dimension (see figure 4C).

Step-by-step Planning - is thinking about the detailed steps required to effect a plan, with the intention of improving the likelihood of that plan’s accomplishment.

Syndrome a cluster of symptoms that point to one source.

Regret is feeling negative about one’s past while not actively attempting to learn lessons from that past.

Reminiscing - is thinking about past experiences with the intention of taking pleasure from recalling such.
Appendices

RMC  Royal Marine Commando. A highly prestigious corps of the Royal Navy who receive the longest basic-training of any combat-regiment in the world.

UA    Under-Achievement Group which in this study was wholly comprised of sentence-serving young offenders.

**Wishful Daydreaming** - is thinking about events that may happen in the future, with the intention of taking pleasure from anticipating their experience, but without making an attempt to plan a path to reach them.

**Worry**  is feeling negative about future possibilities while neglecting to attempt to produce possible solutions.

YOI  Young Offender Institution: high-security prison for 15 to 21 year olds serving sentences or awaiting trial.
Appendix B

Glossary of key authors cited in this thesis
H. Russell Bernard is Professor of Anthropology at the University of Florida.

Susan K. Boardman is Professor of Psychology at the University of New Haven.

Edward de Bono enjoys a preeminent international reputation in applied cognitive psychology.

Erik Homburger Erikson was a psychoanalytic clinical practitioner who was Professor of Human Development at Harvard University for many years.

Victor E. Frankl qualified as a psychiatrist and went on to found ‘Logotherapy’ which he describes as the 3rd Viennese School of Psychotherapy, in respect of his predecessors, Freud and Adler.

Howard Gardner is Professor of Education at the Harvard University Graduate School of Education.

Victor and Mildred Goertzel were practising Californian state psychiatrists who conducted reviews of biographies in their spare time.

Charles C. Harrington is Professor of Psychology and Education at Teachers College, Columbia University.

Michael J.A. Howe is Professor of Cognitive Psychology at Exeter University.

Michael Rutter is Professor of Child Psychiatry at the University of London’s Institute of Psychiatry. He holds the American Psychological Association Distinguished Scientific Contribution Award.

Jerome L. Singer was for many years Director of the Clinical Psychology programme at Yale University, and is now an Emeritus Professor. A key focus of his life’s work has been the nature and prevalence of daydreaming.

Dean Keith Simonton is Professor of Psychology at the University of California at Davis.
Robert J. Sternberg holds the IBM Chair in Psychology and Education at Yale University.

Robin Skynner is a British psychiatrist and founded the Institute of Group Analysis and also the Institute of Family Therapy in London; he is particularly noted for co-authoring 'popular psychology' paperbacks on these subjects with the actor John Cleese.

George E. Vaillant is Professor of Psychiatry at the Harvard University Medical School and Director of the Study of Adult Development which comprises three major longitudinal studies.

Donald J. West is Emeritus Professor of Clinical Criminology at the Institute of Criminology, University of Cambridge.
Appendix C

An inventory of the major studies of high-achievement and eminence: 1869 – 1999
The 18 researchers (or research partnerships) that comprise the inventory are presented in loose chronological order according to each author’s first publication of a major textbook in the field:

**Francis Galton**
Book title: *Hereditary Genius* (1869)
Method: reviews the life-history literature on eminent people.
Conclusions: genius is very largely biologically determined.

Book title: *English Men of Science* (1874)
Method: summarises the results from questionnaires sent out to 200 notable scientists who were Fellows of the Royal Society.
Conclusions: as above - that genius is very largely biologically determined.

**Lewis M. Terman**
Book title: *The Fulfilment of Promise* (Terman and Oden, 1956 - The fifth and final volume in the study).
Methodology: The Stanford Study of Genius was a 40 year longitudinal study of 1,500 Californian boys and girls who had IQs in the top 1% of their generation.
Conclusions: physically, emotionally and intellectually desirable traits tend to cluster together, but very high IQ is neither sufficient nor necessary for exceptional achievements.

**Catherine Cox**
Book: *The Early Mental Traits of Three Hundred Geniuses* (1926)
Method: a retrospective review of the literature on eminent creators and leaders throughout history (and before the 20th century), in search of the correlates of high eminence.
Conclusions: IQ is important for high eminence, and formal education very much less so.

**Anne Roe**
Book: *The Making of a Scientist* (1952)
Method: in order to determine why people became research scientists, Roe interviewed and tested 64 internationally eminent social, physical and life research scientists, many of whom were Nobel Prize winners.
Conclusions: Parenting-style might have affected the career choice of this sample; exceptional absorption in their work and effort strongly characterised her sample.

**Mildred and Victor Goertzel**
Book title: *Cradles of Eminence* (1962)
Method: Reviewed two or more biographies for each of 400 eminent individuals.
Conclusions: Developmental patterns characterised many of these individuals.

Method: Reviewed two or more biographies of 317 eminent individuals (up to 1978)
Conclusions: A consolidation of previous findings.

**David McClelland**
Chapter title: *Social Consequences of Achievement Motivation* (1955)
Method: Thematic Apperception Tests correlated to ‘high achievement motivation’
Conclusions: Societies and people with ‘high achievement motivation’ achieve more economically.

**Abraham H. Maslow**
Method: Studied biographical accounts of the lives of eminent individuals and used clinical case studies.
Conclusion: Developed an holistic model of psychological health based on ‘metaneeds’ and ‘self-actualisation’.

**George E. Vaillant**
Method: A 35 year longitudinal prospective study of 98 ex-Harvard men who had been selected as Sophomores in 1939-42 for their relatively good biopsychosocial health and their likelihood of leading ‘successful’ adult lives.
Conclusions: Proposed a four-tier hierarchical model of 18 ego-defence mechanisms, which Vaillant which strongly correspond with life-outcomes.
Also proposed a 10-stage model of the entire life-cycle of psycho-social development.

Method: The Study of Adult Development comprising three major and long-term prospective longitudinal studies.
Conclusions: a consolidation and elaboration of the empirically supported theories of the 1977 book.

**Edward de Bono**
Book title: *Tactics* (1986)
Method: Interviews with 50 people eminent in a wide variety of professional fields in the 1980s.
Conclusions: Ten 'lessons' which he views as strong underlying agreements between many of his respondents.

**Keith Dean Simonton**
Book title *Genius, creativity, and Leadership* (1984)
Method: histrionometric analysis of High-achievement
Conclusions: Identifies the 'transhistorical universals of human behaviour'.

Method: Biographical analysis of eminent individuals.
Conclusions: Proposes the Chance-Configuration Theory in which several circumstances must coincide if a theory is to be produced, communicated and taken up by the culture for which it is produced.

Book title: *Greatness* (1996)
Method: a qualitative meta-analysis of literature in the field of eminence and high-achievement.
Conclusions: numerous but identifiable correlations of high-achievement.

**Howard Gardner**
Method: case studies of high-achievers in a panorama of endeavours.
Conclusions: a model of seven (latterly extended to eight) domains of intelligence, the potential of which is never fulfilled.
Appendices

Method: Biographical study of eleven eminent leaders of the 20th century.
Conclusions: several factors are necessary for a leader to achieve success; these skills can potentially be taught.

Method: biographic analysis of Mozart, Freud, Woolf and Gandhi
Conclusions: there are four distinct varieties of extraordinary minds: the Master; the Maker, the Introspector, and the Leader; and there are three features that characterise a range of extraordinary individuals: Reflecting, Leveraging, Framing.

**Author: Benjamin Bloom**
Book title: *Developing Talent in Young People* (1985)
Method: 5-year longitudinal qualitative and quantitative study of 120 talented individuals in a range of fine art, sporting and intellectual pursuits.
Conclusions: Cross-domain correlates were: Supportive home environment; parental and teacher support specific to the arena; and intensive and extensive practice.

**Michael J.A. Howe**
Method: Examined the biographies of eminent individuals.
Conclusions: Even expert levels of achievement reflect intensity and duration of practice and an appropriate learning environment rather than inherited abilities.

Book title: *The Development of Exceptional Abilities and Talents* (1990)
Method: a collection of chapters by various researchers
Conclusions: As the editor, Howe writes “Although we cannot map out lives in advance, much can be done to make desirable outcomes more likely. Acquiring an exceptional ability is one such outcome. We can and we should act to make it happen more often” (1990:240).

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1 It is notable that in the UK, Professor Howe of Exeter University is the only well-published researcher dedicated to the field of High-Achievement.
Robin Skynner
Method: eclectic literature review of the clinical studies of exceptionally good mental health and good corporate functioning.
Conclusions: the strongest determinants of mental health are being ‘realistic and practical’ and taking an inclusive, eclectic perspective.

Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi
Method: a 5 year study involving 200 teenagers between the ages of 13 and 17. Used long-interviews, questionnaires, and the Experience Sampling Method that uses an electronic ‘pager’ and self-report booklet to record the immediate thoughts and feelings of the youngster.
Conclusions: No factor is a ‘sine qua non’, but motivation is the single most important factor.

Book title: *Creativity* (1996)
Conclusions: Describes a state of intensely satisfying and focused consciousness called ‘Flow’ which characterises creative high-achievement in a variety of fields.

Robert J. Sternberg
Book title: *Successful Intelligence* (1996)
Method: a literature review of studies of high-achievement in a range of endeavours.
Conclusion: Proposes a three-component model of ‘successful intelligence’ incorporating analytical, creative and practical intelligence. Lists 20 characteristics of successful intelligence.

Frank, J. Sulloway
Book title: *Born to Rebel* (1996)
Method: Biographies of eminent individuals.
Conclusions: the laterborn child is motivated to be 'inventive' so as to compete with earlier born children by creating a niche for him or herself within the family. This inventiveness becomes a pervasive style.

Charles C. Harrington and Susan K. Boardman
Book: Paths to Success: Beating the Odds in American Society (1997)
Method: 4 hour interviews (with two interviewers at once) with 60 eminent individuals from high-risk backgrounds compared with 40 eminent individuals from privileged backgrounds.
Conclusions: a strong sense of Internal Locus of Control was the strongest distinguishing feature of those from high-risk backgrounds.

NOTE
A notable omission from my inventory is the 1,000 page text of Martyn Lewis, a pre-eminent British news journalist who is editor of Reflections on Success (1997), in which he presents near-verbatim the long-interviews with 67 contemporary eminent international personalities. Regrettably, Lewis makes no attempt to synthesise the emergent themes, and makes no reference whatsoever to other literature in the field. An analysis of this large text could be a thesis in itself!
Appendix D

The Long-Interview Question Inventory

(This was known as the Coping-With-Life questionnaire.)
What age are you?
Are you....

A young woman       A young man

Which part of the country (or of the world) were you brought up in
(e.g. North East, Home Counties, Central London or wherever.)

From what ethnic background would you describe yourself?
(i.e. the colour of your skin and the culture in which you were
raised.)

**YOUR PRESENT OCCUPATION**
(You may, of course, have more than one)

If you are Employed, what is your occupation (in non-technical
words)

At what institution

What stage are you at, or what position do you hold?

Full or Part-time?

-------------------------------------------------------------

If you are a student, what qualification are you studying for

At what institution

What stage are you at, or what position do you hold?

Full or Part-time?

-------------------------------------------------------------

If you are unemployed at the moment, please say for how long you
have been unemployed.

-------------------------------------------------------------

If you are imprisoned or on probation, please say how long your
sentence is.

At what institution?
How long have you served?
The offence you were sentenced for:

**ANYTHING TO ADD TO ANY OF THE ABOVE?**
A SUMMARY OF THE THINGS YOU MAY HAVE ACHIEVED SO FAR
(Please don’t be modest. This is science!)

A) What are the highest WORKING or PROFESSIONAL qualifications you have? (e.g. Chartered Psychologist; Builder’s Diploma etc.)

B) What are....
Your _approximate_ grades at O level/GCSE or equivalent (for example: 3Bs and 1C) PLEASE DON’T BOTHER TELLING ME THE SUBJECTS.

Your exact grades at A level and S level or any similar or equivalent ‘end of school exams or gradings (aimed at 17/18 year olds) DO PLEASE TELL ME THE SUBJECTS YOU STUDIED.

Your level and class and subject of college/university degree; and at which institution it was awarded to you.

Do you have any Higher Degrees? (Masters, doctorate etc.) What in and where from?

Your most major educational scholarships? (i.e. any that were highly competitive from age 16 onwards. Just the ones you are most proud of.)

c) Please list any other really major awards, honours or achievements in other interests or activities from age 16 and upward (such as first-team sports or competition-level performances in chess or music and the like. Just the ones that you are most proud of.)

If it’s not going to be obvious to me, please do explain as briefly as possible why any of the above were so good/or so prestigious/or famous. i.e. I know an Olympic Team is impressive, but I may not realise the significance of the Tetley Youth Science Squad.

DO YOU HAVE ANY EXPERIENCE OF VOLUNTARY WORK (or WORK EXPERIENCE) THAT HAS PLAYED A BIG PART IN HELPING YOU GET ON LIFE. (Perhaps it was relevant to a future career or path, perhaps you made contacts or learnt useful skills, or it simply gave you confidence.)

What did MUM and Dad or your main Carers do in terms of paid or voluntary employment.
How high an educational standard had they reached. (GCSE’s etc.) How successful had they been. educationally and professionally?
YOUR GROWING-UP YEARS

Please tick which one or more of the following describes your growing-up years (i.e. up until and including your being 18 years of age)

1) Single-parent home (who brought you up?)
2) Broken home (from what age?)
3) You lost a parent through death (what age were you?)
4) Your parent’s marriage though unbroken was a very unhappy one.
5) A parent’s second marriage or partnership proved very unhappy for you
6) As a teenager, you personally had a very poor relationship with one of your parents
7) As a teenager, you personally had a very poor relationship with both of your parents.
8) One of your parents was away on business (or with illness) a great deal of the time. (Please explain)
10) One or both of your parents was mentally ill, or substance-dependent or seriously abusive in some way.
11) You were brought up by relatives
12) You were brought up in care for some period.
13) You were brought up in a home that had considerably less money than the average homes of children at the school you went to.
14) There were four or more children in the family home.
15) You were brought up in an inner city area (i.e. highly urbanised)
16) You were new immigrants to the country.
17) OTHER DIFFICULT/STRESSFUL HOME CIRCUMSTANCES FOR A LARGE PART OF YOUR GROWING UP YEARS? (please explain....)

Was money tight ever i.e. a worry for your parents or you? (please circle your answer) Very reasonably not very not at all
If you have circled ‘reasonably’ or ‘very’, please give a descriptive example of the circumstances in which you lived.
THE CORE INTERVIEW

I’m interested to know what you think are the most important ingredients in your past life that have enabled you to achieve all that you have in your personal relationships, and your educational and professional life.

There are 18 major questions and, bearing in mind the stuff you’ve already told me in the opening 4 pages, I’ve now allowed 90 minutes in total: which means on average 5 minutes per answer....so distil things down to the core as best you can!

1) When did you have your earliest experience of being really good at something (i.e. experiencing the role of expert or of winner.)

2) What were the key ingredients of your home atmosphere when growing up?

   a) How much did you suffer from shyness? (Why do think that was?)

   b) How much were ever bullied or a bully? (and why?)

3) On average, approximately how many hours of TV did you watch in a 7 day week? (Include videos, and include in the total your weekend viewing as well as your weekday viewing.)

   a) During your early childhood up until the age of 10 =........................per 7 day week

   b) During your teenage years (i.e. at senior school: 11-18) =........................per 7 day week

   c) at College/University =.......................per 7 day week

   d) How much do you watch now =.......................per 7 day week
On average per month, how many books did you read in your teenage years (age 13-19) including ‘set books’ you may have read for school.

What films or books or other works of fiction or even fact (i.e. documentary or true-life) have changed your attitude to life in some key way. (Please name and explain.)
1 How
2 How
3 How

How much were you involved in after-school activities (such as drama, music, sport, computer clubs or otherwise) Please give examples?

4) Please summarise the ‘secrets of your success’ in school exams (GCSE and A LEVEL) .....and then at University/Professional exams? (e.g.: did you use any revision strategies/work schedules/rules of thumb in the pre-exam year or months.

How old were you when you first ever (under your own motivation) worked all night through on a project, or near enough?

5) When and how did you identify your major career direction? Please include in your answer a) the role played by professional careers advisers;
b) How much was it a methodological search, and how much accidental? c) the role played by role-models, mentors and other sources of inspiration such as books, film, other people’s parents, chance acquaintances.
6) Please summarise the three best things...........and three worst things, about your present job/career. (e.g. such things as hours, status, money, lifestyle, location, colleagues etc.)

7 ) When it comes to professional success in your line, what particular ingredients are more important than intelligence?
(e.g. Networking; Interpersonal and Communication skills; self-projection; good Organisation, prioritising and time management; very hard work; knowing what’s expected; making an original & specialist contribution; things happening by accident that you simply couldn’t have arranged; exceptionally strong motivation and sense of purpose.
And have your hobbies/past-times, your health and your sense of humour....played a key role in your successes, either personal or professional. If yes, please summarise of course.)

8) Here I suggest some Rules of Thumb/Guiding Principles that you might live by. Please tick or cross and add a comment beside each one:-
   You regard 'Excellence' as a goal in itself;
   You strive for self-realisation through constant self-development; i.e. you continually and proactively develop your skills and experience and qualifications
   You strive to live your daydreams; (i.e. to make your aspirations real)
   If you make the goal attractive enough, finding the energy and self-discipline to achieve it, is much easier.
   You have to be daring in thought and argument and action.
   You have to assume complete responsibility for your own reconnaissance of possible routes ahead (i.e. scout ahead by doing research) because information and advice is so often disinformation or inadequate advice, however well meant it might be.
   Be highly critical yet also extremely proactive and enthusiastic.
Be absolutely honest with yourself about what you want in life and then work out how to overcome the problems of getting there, rather than take the seemingly easier route on offer but in the less appropriate direction.

Carve out a niche for yourself because it pays to be different, rare and original - and thus very likely valuable.

Dogged determination and persistence

Be your own most critical critic (but constructively, of course).

You have to learn to actively control and even create your emotions (e.g. drum up enthusiasm in yourself) rather than be a ‘passive recipient’ of whatever emotions turn up inside you. (i.e. learn to engineer and channel your emotions)

You have to be able to generate multiple-perspectives and solutions for problems that needs solving.

You have to be good at just ‘getting the job done’ as efficiently as possible (and not getting bogged down in theory or perfectionism.)

Also being practical about things, you have to be able to manage several irons in the fire at once (i.e. several projects on the go at the same time)

What have I missed in terms of guiding principles you bring to any challenge or goal.? (Were such things explicitly taught to you or were they stumbled upon accidentally?)

9) As regards how you spend your mental energy and time, how much do you invest heavily in improving your real life rather than compensating for a disappointing or uncomfortable reality by resorting to pure fantasy about very unlikely things. (i.e. successes in personal, educational or professional life that were almost ‘impossibilities’.)

(Has it always been that way? Did you ever resort heavily to fantasies about completely unrealistic lives? Why is that?)

How much do you deliberately limit and control your fantasising and unconstructive thoughts (to drive out worry, doubt and distraction so you can focus on your priorities.)
10) What drives you? (What's the secret ingredient in the rocket fuel?)
(e.g. Success as revenge on some source of emotional pain? Sense of joy? Sense of wanting to understand/to master? Wanting some respect and a sense of pride? The sense of identity? The sense of self-improvement? Success as a form of self-expression?

Would it be fair to say you could in theory just as easily have channelled your drive into becoming a successful bank robber or computer hacker had your window of opportunity been different?

11) Did things ever go seriously wrong for you and your life? Why.......and how, were they put right?

d) In what ways have you rebelled? (and also why didn't you ever rebel by doing hard drugs, booze, dropping out of school and doing crime?

12) a) How true is it to say that you have had ample opportunity to commit serious financial crimes that could have resulted in imprisonment?

b) Assuming you didn’t take advantage of the opportunity, why not?
(e.g. You had too much to lose......? and too little to gain etc.)

c) Do you know anyone in your close circle of friends or immediate family who has committed a serious (i.e. imprisonable) crime, whether or not it was discovered.

13) When it comes to success in relationships (personal and professional), what ingredients have you found most important in making them work?

14) FEATURES COMMON TO YOUR SUCCESSFUL ENDEAVOURS
Thinking for a moment about your own greatest landmarks of recognised achievement in your life, how much do you agree there are certain factors common to all achievements of excellence no matter the particular field of endeavour?

Please name up to five of the most important factors that most or all successful enterprises have in common, in your experience/your view.
1)
2)
3)
4)
5)

How true is it to say that Friends and Lovers are supporting but rarely if ever a guiding light, a key factor in your chosen direction and its outcome. (i.e. you have always held the keys to "compass and the rocket fuel" when it came to your life.)

15) I now want to talk about why and how you might fail at something. Can you name a couple of goals that seemed very important to you at the time, but that you nonetheless failed to achieve. (personal or professional)
1)
2)

Are there any patterns in terms of what went wrong. i.e. What differentiates the lead up to the unsuccessful directions than from your successful directions.
(Do your failures have any likely causes in common?)

What do you/did you do about your failures. (How did you cope with them?)

16) What things have brought you greatest regret in your personal and academic/workings life? (e.g. a profound sense of lost-opportunity; or a wrong direction?) Please explain WHY you regret....
Are there any factors or circumstances that are common to these events?
e.g. a lack of honesty with yourself and others; poor advice; no
reconnaissance of what was out there; shy and nervous to ask for
help; no guiding principles; didn’t realise the possibilities?
What part has been played by serious personal problems or events,
such as illness or disability or traumatic experience.

17) What things in your life or particular periods have
brought you the greatest amount of HAPPINESS,
SATISFACTION, PRIDE AND JOY? Please explain WHY.
Are there any ingredients or circumstances that all or many of
these things have in common?

Finally....

Your height
Your weight

(Please tick whichever of these is true of you:-)
You have low body-fat and so are either noticeably slim or
muscular.
You sweat easily (e.g. palms of your hands, upper lip)
You’re prone to stomach-aches or an acid stomach
You’re often quite restless (needing little sleep)
You probably urinate more frequently than most people
You blush easily
You sleep lightly
What is your pulse rate per minute when at rest and unstressed
(Simply count how many pulse-beats in your wrist over a period of
60 seconds using a watch or clock)

Your speech is often noticeably more rapid than other people’s.
You often have racing thoughts
You often have bouts of very excitable enthusiasm

Has anyone ever sat down with you before and, in some
considerable detail, really gone through your life and your
personal characteristics and your daydreams and
ambitions and tried to makes sense of it so as to help you
plan your future....personal, educational and professional?

(circle your answer)
several times once or twice probably never absolutely Never

If YES, please explain who, when; if NO, why not do you
think?
Appendix E

The 2nd Questionnaire
In most of the following questions you are asked to circle the number between 0 and 6 which best describes you.

This is what the numbers mean:

6 = Extremely True of you (i.e. more than 90% true of you)
5 = Very True of you (i.e. more than 75% true of you)
4 = Quite True of you (i.e. more than 50% true of you)
3 = Half true of you (i.e. 50% true of you)
2 = Not particularly true of you (i.e. less than 50% true of you)
1 = Only a little true of you (i.e. less than 25% true of you)
0 = Very UNtrue of you (i.e. less than 10% true of you)

Please circle one of the numbers between 0 and 6 by each question. Like this:

0  1  2  3  4  5  6

Finally - if you don’t fill in a question at some point, please scribble a line saying why, rather than just leaving it blank.
This particular questionnaire has several sections.

The first section, and by far the longest (20 minutes), is:-

ALL ABOUT YOUR PLANS, DAYDREAMS AND FANTASIES
Naturally we all have these thoughts, but different people use the words Planning and Daydreaming and Fantasy to mean different things. So please make a mental note of what I mean here, so that you and I will be talking about the same things.

PURE FANTASY is when you don’t really think it will actually happen, you’re imagining it purely for pleasure.
Example of a Pure Fantasy: Fantasising about dating a favourite film star, or being a famous astronaut.

HOPEFUL DAYDREAMING is when you’re fairly hopeful something will really happen, and you’re simply imagining how good it’s going to feel if it does.
An example of Hopeful Daydreaming: Thinking how good it’s going to feel to drive the particular type of car you intend to have one day.

STEP-BY-STEP PLANNING is when you’re taking the trouble to work out all the details necessary to give something a really good chance of actually happening for real.
For example: you might plan carefully how you will earn enough money to afford that car of your daydreams!

Okay - now onto the questions!....

1) How true is it of your own thinking that there is a difference between what I call Pure Fantasy, Hopeful Daydreaming and Step-by-step Planning?

0 1 2 3 4 5 6
2) From your own experience do the descriptions above give an accurate picture of the difference between these three types of thinking?

0 1 2 3 4 5 6

---

THIS SECTION ASKS HOW MUCH OF SOME DIFFERENT TYPES OF THINKING YOU DO IN A DAY FROM WHEN YOU WAKE-UP FIRST THING TO FALLING ASLEEP LAST THING AT NIGHT.)
(For instance, your answer might be 8 Hours, or might be 15 Minutes.)

**THIS SECTION IS INTERESTED IN NOWADAYS ONLY.**

3) **PURE FANTASY** (about things that you know will never happen).
In a *typical* day, how much Pure Fantasy will you do in total in terms of hours or minutes? ..........Hours...........Minutes

   The least you would do in a day? ..........Hours...........Minutes

   The most you would do in a day? ..........Hours...........Minutes

4) **HOPEFUL DAYDREAMING** (about good things you *think* will probably happen, but you’re daydreaming about them as opposed to step-by-step planning them.)
In a *typical* day, how much Hopeful Daydreaming will you do in total in terms of hours & minutes?. ..........Hours...........Minutes

   The least you would do in a day? ..........Hours...........Minutes

   The most you would do in a day? ..........Hours...........Minutes

5) **STEP-BY-STEP PLANNING** ( - working out step by step just how to reach goals that are important to you: like getting the right job, or getting something done, or arranging where to live).
In a typical day, how much Planning will you do in total in terms of hours & minutes? ..........Hours..........Minutes

The least you would do in a day? ..........Hours.........Minutes

The most you would do in a day? ..........Hours.........Minutes

6) UNHELPFUL WORRIES & REGRETS (i.e. when you simply worry about things in the future or regret things in your past, rather than coming up with any useful answers or remedies.)

In a typical day, how much worrying & regretting will you do in total in terms of hours & minutes? ..........Hours..........Minutes

The least you would do in a day? ..........Hours.........Minutes

The most you would do in a day? ..........Hours.........Minutes

7) There is one more type of thinking I’d like you to consider. It’s called PLEASURABLE MEMORIES - i.e. memories about anything that you personally did in the past and still like to remember. It can be anything, just as long as it's good to remember.

One example of a Pleasurable Memory is remembering in detail the enjoyable times you spent with someone special to you.

In a typical day, how much ‘pleasurable remembering’ will you do in total in terms of hours & minutes? ..........Hours..........Minutes

The least you would do in a day? ..........Hours.........Minutes

The most you would do in a day? ..........Hours.........Minutes

-------------------------------------------------------------------

8) How true is it that you were able to achieve a reasonable level of accuracy with your answers on these ‘Hours and Minutes’ questions?
9) Thinking about nowadays, could you please put 1st 2nd or 3rd etc in the left-hand column beside each item on the following list to show which you do most of, and which you do least of, in your typical day. 1st will be the thing you do the most, and 8th will be the one you do the least. Take your time on this one, it may need some extra consideration.

   Pleasurable Remembering of your past
   Unhelpful Worrying about the future
   Step-by-step Long-term Planning about important things
   Pure Fantasy
   General day-to-day Problem Solving and getting on with what you’re doing at the time.
   Hopeful Daydreaming about the Future
   Regretting things in the Past
   Rehearsing Things In Your Head: which is practising things in your imagination so that you can do them better in real-life.
   For instance, practising in your head how you’re going to do some important task. It's very often a part of ‘planning’ really.

10) Looking at the above list, is there a type of thinking missing that you personally do a lot of. (Please circle Y or N)
Yes: It is
No

11) How true is it you were able to achieve quite a good level of accuracy in ordering these 8 types of thinking?
0 1 2 3 4 5 6
WHAT ABOUT IN YOUR LAST TWO YEARS OF SCHOOL OR COLLEGE (when you were probably between 16 and 18 years old)......

12) How true is it that you used to fantasise (about things that could never happen) more than 60 minutes per day
0 1 2 3 4 5 6

13) You used to daydream (about things that might happen) more than 60 minutes per day
0 1 2 3 4 5 6

14) You used to do step-by-step long-term planning (about things a year or more into the future) more than 30 minutes per day.
0 1 2 3 4 5 6

15) And how would you have ranked your different types of thinking back then? 1st will mean the thing you did the most. 8th = the least.

- Pleasurable Remembering of your Past
- Unhelpful Worrying about the Future
- Step-by-step Long-term Planning about important things
- Pure Fantasy
- General day-to-day Problem Solving and getting on with what you're doing at the time.
- Hopeful Daydreaming about the Future
- Regretting things in your Past
- Rehearsing Things in your Head: which is practising things in your imagination so that you can do them better in real-life.

16) How true is it you were able to achieve quite a good level of accuracy in ordering these 8 types of thinking?
0 1 2 3 4 5 6
17) And finally, please rank the following 3 activities in order of the energy they require of you (i.e. Which is the most tiring activity? 1st will be the hardest, 3rd will be the easiest).

- Fantasising and Daydreaming
- Step-by-step planning and Problem Solving.
- Watching TV and listening to your favourite music

**NOW SOME QUICK-FIRE QUESTIONS**

You'll see that many questions have an A and B part.

**Your answer to A should be about what you do nowadays.**

**Your answer to B should be about what you remember you used to do in those last two years of school or college - very probably when you were somewhere between 16 and 18 years old working for your A-levels of similar exams. Please think back and try to remember what you typically thought about.**

---

18) How true is it that your worrying about the future sometimes gets in the way of your real life.

A: How true nowadays) 0 1 2 3 4 5 6

B: How true during last 2 years of school) 0 1 2 3 4 5 6

19) How true is it that your remembering pleasurable things from your past sometimes gets in the way of your real life.

A: How true nowadays) 0 1 2 3 4 5 6

B: How true during last 2 years of school) 0 1 2 3 4 5 6

20) How true is it that your regretting the past sometimes gets in the way of your real life.

A: How true nowadays) 0 1 2 3 4 5 6
### Appendices

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<td>21</td>
<td>How true is it that your daydreaming about things that you would like to happen (but might not) sometimes gets in the way of your real life.</td>
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<td>How true is it that your fantasising about things that can never happen sometimes gets in the way of your real life.</td>
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<td>When you're worn out you you tend to daydream or fantasise more.</td>
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<td>24</td>
<td>You feel <em>addicted</em> to at least some particular Daydream &amp; Fantasy themes or scenes? (By ‘addicted’, I mean a strong desire or almost irresistible urge to fantasise or daydream about something).</td>
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<td>You sometimes don’t need or bother to do things in real-life because you can fantasise about them so satisfyingly.</td>
<td>0</td>
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26) You very rarely talk to anyone about your daydreams and fantasies.
A: How true nowadays)

B: How true during last 2 years of school)

WE SOMETIMES USE ONE OR MORE OF THE FOLLOWING TO ESCAPE REAL-LIFE FOR A WHILE (PERHAPS BECAUSE OUR REAL LIFE FEELS TOO UNCOMFORTABLE OR TOO TIRING).
(Put a line through the activity if you rarely if ever do the activity.)

How true is it to say that:-

27) Your watching tv or videos is to escape real-life?
A: How true nowadays)

B: How true during last 2 years of school)

28) Your listening to music is to escape real-life?
A: How true nowadays)

B: How true during last 2 years of school)

29) Your reading fiction (i.e. novels or comics) is to escape real life
A: How true nowadays)

B: How true during last 2 years of school)

30) Your doing computer games or the internet is to escape real-life
A: How true nowadays)

B: How true during last 2 years of school)
31) Your drinking alcoholic drinks is to escape real life?
A: How true nowadays) 0 1 2 3 4 5 6
B: How true during last 2 years of school) 0 1 2 3 4 5 6

32) Your taking drugs (perhaps marijuana, heroin or LSD) is to escape real life?
A: How true nowadays) 0 1 2 3 4 5 6
B: How true during last 2 years of school) 0 1 2 3 4 5 6

33) Your doing some other activity is to escape real life?
(please name that other activity:.........................)
A: How true nowadays) 0 1 2 3 4 5 6
B: How true during last 2 years of school) 0 1 2 3 4 5 6

34) You feel addicted to at least one of the following (i.e. you find it very hard to resist them): television, films and videos, music, computers or internet, novels, pornography. Please circle the activity (s) in this list to which you feel rather addicted.
A: How true nowadays) 0 1 2 3 4 5 6
B: How true during last 2 years of school) 0 1 2 3 4 5 6

35) Has your avoiding real life (perhaps with some of the above things) held you back in some parts of your life?
A: How true nowadays) 0 1 2 3 4 5 6
B: How true during last 2 years of school) 0 1 2 3 4 5 6
36) Which parts of your life in particular have been affected (For example: your school work, your working life, sex life, sporting life, friendships?) And write a line to explain what you mean by ‘held you back’.
A: Nowadays)

B: In your last two years of school).
C: What do you mean by held you back?

37) How true of you is it that the vast majority of the time you deliberately use things like music, books, videos, TV and films to inspire and encourage you in your real life activities (in the same way perhaps that people use music to motivate themselves through aerobics sessions or sports training).
A: How true nowadays) 0 1 2 3 4 5 6

B: How true during last 2 years of school) 0 1 2 3 4 5 6

38) What you think and do is very often deliberately intended to improve your future life as well as to improve your present life. i.e. you don’t just live for now, you actually invest heavily in improving your future.
A: How true nowadays) 0 1 2 3 4 5 6

B: How true during last 2 years of school) 0 1 2 3 4 5 6

39) You deliberately stop yourself from daydreaming about things that may not happen.
A: How true nowadays) 0 1 2 3 4 5 6

B: How true during last 2 years of school) 0 1 2 3 4 5 6
40) You often do step-by-step long-term planning of things that are a year or more into the future.
A: How true nowadays) 0 1 2 3 4 5 6
B: How true during last 2 years of school) 0 1 2 3 4 5 6

41) You are very self-controlled and self-disciplined in what you do/how you behave.(i.e. you very rarely act impulsively).
A: How true nowadays) 0 1 2 3 4 5 6
B: How true during last 2 years of school) 0 1 2 3 4 5 6

42) You are very self-controlled and self-disciplined in what you think about (i.e. you don’t allow your mind to wander.)
A: How true nowadays) 0 1 2 3 4 5 6
B: How true during last 2 years of school) 0 1 2 3 4 5 6

43) You deliberately stop yourself from fantasising about things that can never happen.
A: How true nowadays) 0 1 2 3 4 5 6
B: How true during last 2 years of school) 0 1 2 3 4 5 6

44) For you personally, your real-life can’t feel as good as the feelings you get from fantasy.
A: How true nowadays) 0 1 2 3 4 5 6
B: How true during last 2 years of school) 0 1 2 3 4 5 6

45) You deliberately control how much daydreaming and fantasising you do.
A: How true nowadays) 0 1 2 3 4 5 6
B: How true during last 2 years of school) 0 1 2 3 4 5 6

46) You deliberately control how much worrying and regretting you do.
A: How true nowadays) 0 1 2 3 4 5 6

B: How true during last 2 years of school) 0 1 2 3 4 5 6

47) You feel in control of your real life and personally able to improve it by effort and planning.
A: How true nowadays) 0 1 2 3 4 5 6

B: How true during last 2 years of school) 0 1 2 3 4 5 6

48) You have dreamt so high, imagined so much that real life seems quite a let down.
A: How true nowadays) 0 1 2 3 4 5 6

B: How true during last 2 years of school) 0 1 2 3 4 5 6

49) Your Long-Term Plans and Hopeful Daydreams nearly always work out for real (rather than turning out to be just too ambitious to work in reality.)
A: How true nowadays) 0 1 2 3 4 5 6

B: How true during last 2 years of school) 0 1 2 3 4 5 6

50) You have never before been asked about how much of the different types of thinking you do.
0 1 2 3 4 5 6

51) You think it would make very good sense to openly discuss with children and teenagers the possible benefits or problems of spending their time doing different types of thinking such as daydreaming and fantasising and planning and worrying and so on).
0 1 2 3 4 5 6
52) You think it would be useful for young people to learn at school how to take more deliberate control over what type of thinking they do (in the same way that we might learn about a balanced food diet so as to maintain good health).

0 1 2 3 4 5 6

53) You had detailed discussions about this sort of thing with adults when you were younger or in those last two years of school.

0 1 2 3 4 5 6

54) In a line or so, any comments you want to make in answer to these last two questions?

END OF SECTION ONE - THANK YOU!

The next few sections take 3 or 4 minutes each.
SECTION 2

In this section, I’m only interested in your last two years at school or 6th form college or their equivalent i.e. very probably when you were somewhere between 16 and 18 years old working for your A-levels or similar exams. Please think about that year and try to remember how you felt.

_This section is about_

**YOUR SENSE OF WHO YOU WERE AND WHERE YOU WERE GOING**

55) You were keen to work well and stay out of trouble because you had a clear idea of where you wanted your life to go after A levels, and you didn’t want to mess-up those plans.

0 1 2 3 4 5 6

56) You felt that you already knew which profession or trade you wanted to go into eventually, and you were really looking forward to it.

0 1 2 3 4 5 6

57) You felt there was something you were _really_ good at, something you could be proud of because it earnt you a lot of respect.

(It could have been a sport, a hobby, a college subject, or some responsibility for something - but whatever it was it would be something that most people would respect you for being good at.)

0 1 2 3 4 5 6
58) You felt that you already had a role in life or a part to play in life that you felt was worthwhile and important? It might have been a job of some sort, or taking care of someone, or some position of responsibility.

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58) You felt unconfident or unsure of yourself?

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59) You felt ashamed of yourself for some reason?

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60) You felt awkward or uncomfortable around most people

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61) You suspected that people looked down on you

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62) You sometimes deliberately fantasised or daydreamed about yourself being much more impressive and capable than you were in real life. (Perhaps better looking, or more successful or more heroic).

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63) Overall, you were enjoying your life. It was a pleasurable experience.

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64) You had a real sense of fulfillment in your life - i.e. you felt as if you were achieving what you most deeply wanted from life, or atleast felt as if you were working towards those things most important to you.

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65) It has been said of fictional television and film characters, that 'what they do for a living' is an important part of the image of their character. For instance, would the character played by Tom Cruise in TOP GUN be as impressive and attractive if he was the Sergeant in charge of the Foodstore rather than a Fast-Jet Pilot? Thinking about tv and film characters, how true is it to say that you think that 'what they do for a living' is important to their attractiveness and impressiveness to you personally.

66) Is the same true of real life? i.e. When it comes to your own attractiveness and impressiveness, do you think that what you do for a living (or what and where you study) is important?

67) Do you believe that in films and tv dramas, characters have to be really good at something to be admirable.

68) Is the same true of real life? i.e. When it comes to your own attractiveness and impressiveness, do you think that how good you are at something is important?

69) Please name one tv or film character that you admire or respect partly because of their job. (Please name them, their show and their job)

i)

70) You believe a sense of where you’re going in life (i.e. plans for the future) encourages you to pay attention to reality rather than escape it by some means.
71) You believe feeling good about yourself encourages you to pay attention to reality rather than escape it by some means.

0 1 2 3 4 5 6

SECTION 3

CAREER CHOICE AND CAREERS EDUCATION & GUIDANCE

Once again, I’m only interested in your last 2 years at school or 6th form college or their equivalent.

72) You went to weekly classes given by the School/College Careers Teacher

0 1 2 3 4 5 6

73) You felt these classes were useful to you.

0 1 2 3 4 5 6

74) You often had one to one time with someone you felt was really interested in talking about your future working-life (They might have been someone in your family or a schoolteacher or someone else. It was just you and the other person face to face.

0 1 2 3 4 5 6

75) You had some really useful work-experience which taught you a lot about what you probably did or didn’t want to do for a living.

0 1 2 3 4 5 6

76) Overall, which 2 people or experiences have most influenced your career decisions or work/study directions so far in your life? (Please circle and put 1st and 2nd to show their order of importance to you).
Some Work Experience

Schoolteacher (perhaps one doing some part time careers teaching)

Fulltime/Specialist Careers Adviser

Family or relatives or close family friends.

Your own friends

Something you saw on TV or you read about

Other? (please say who/What)

77) At the time you were pleased by the job options and possible careers that seemed available to you.

0 1 2 3 4 5 6

78) Looking back, you feel as if you received enough information and advice about the possibilities for future jobs or training or study courses or other options.

0 1 2 3 4 5 6

79) Looking back from your present situation, when it comes to working towards examinations and qualifications. you personally think it was or would have been very motivating and encouraging for you to have an idea of where you were headed in terms of jobs and careers.

0 1 2 3 4 5 6

80) In a line or two, is there something you’d like to add about your experience of Career-choice and Guidance and its effect on what you went on to achieve.

81) If all subjects were equally well taught at school, how useful do you think Career-Choice Advice and Guidance could be to teenagers compared to other school subjects. Put a number beside it to say where
it should come in this list of subjects i.e. 1st 2nd 3rd or 8th. There's no need to put places by all the other subjects. Just by Careers Advice.

Reading and Writing
Arithmetic
Foreign languages
Sport
Geography
History
Sciences
Career-Choice Advice & Guidance

82) What about now? Do you feel that in your present situation you receive enough information and advice about the possibilities for future jobs or training or study courses.

SECTION 4

HAVING A MENTOR

A Mentor is an older and much more experienced person than you who has been successful in their own life, someone who you feel you can freely discuss all of your problems with, no matter what. (For instance, personal problems or relationship troubles, work or study worries.) That person is around a lot, but they may or may not be your parent.

Once again, I'm only interested in your last 2 years at school or 6th form college or their equivalent

83) In your last 2 years of school, you had someone like a mentor in your life? (Perhaps they were a teacher or a parent or someone else).
84) There were several different people you could turn to for advice and help, depending on what the problem was. (i.e. one person to discuss one sort of problem, another person for another sort of problem).

85) You were embarrassed or shy or for some other reason didn’t want to ask for help from adults.

86) You felt as if you were badly guided by the people you discussed things with.

87) You felt bullied into making important choices that weren’t right for you.

88) The only people you could be reasonably open and honest with were people of your own age. (i.e. your friends)

89) You got in with the wrong crowd which led to bad things.

90) You believe that mentor-student relationships are very often an important part of film and television stories. (i.e. some younger person having an older wiser person to help them in life and look-out for them.)

91) Please give an example from film or TV of a mentor-apprentice relationship which you would have liked for yourself (For instance, in *Star Wars*: Obi Wan Kenobi is the mentor of Luke Skywalker, or in
Walt Disney’s version of *The Jungle Book*, the boy Moguli is mentored by Balloo the Bear and some other animals.

Your favourite example is:

Thinking back to when you were in your last two years of school, imagine you had someone who wrote to you each and every week to discuss in detail your interest in some profession. i.e. Someone wrote to you who was doing the job you had ambitions to do yourself.

They would send you relevant things to read: trade-magazines, books and such like.

Together you would agree on what ‘professional’ homework would be useful for you, and they would mark that homework and return it to you in the post.

They would put you in touch with other professionals in your field of interest so you could get a broader view of things.

They would arrange one day workshops for some hands-on practice, to be held at your school once per term.

They would discuss with you your personal life and other interests or hobbies, and they would help you think through any personal problems or worries that arose.

92) Do you think someone like that would have been very useful to you in those last two years of school.

   0   1   2   3   4   5   6

93) You think someone like that would be very useful to you NOW, in your present situation?

   0   1   2   3   4   5   6

94) Could you name one other thing that a Mentor could do that you would find really helpful?
95) In order of importance, what would be the most valuable things a Mentor could offer YOU personally.
   (i.e. most important) 1st

   2nd

   3rd

96) Would you like to add just a line or two something about how useful Mentoring would or would not have been in those last two years of school?

SECTION 5:

HOW LIVES WORK

97) You enjoy thinking back through your past life in an organised way so as to try to work out the hows and whys of what happened.

   0  1  2  3  4  5  6

98) You enjoy reading biographies or autobiographies or obituaries of people (i.e. their personal life stories)

   0  1  2  3  4  5  6

99) You enjoy thinking about what may be the major influences and motivations in other people’s lives.

   0  1  2  3  4  5  6

100) You think it would be helpful to deliberately study people’s lives and try to learn from such things as their successes, their mistakes,
their rules of thumb and their methods? (You could study famous and highly successful people and also more ordinary adults.)

Please read this *General Explanation of a Life*.

Your Life Experiences lead you to have Particularly Important Needs and Wants - which lead you to think up General Rules of thumb about how to satisfy these needs and wants - which lead you to invent Particular Methods to put the Rules of Thumb into action - which leads to action and Life Experiences which leads back around to creating more needs and wants.

i.e. Your life has four parts:-

Part 1) **Particularly Important Needs** (above and beyond physical needs like food and water) For instance such needs might be:-

Friendship
Beautiful things
Expressing yourself

Part 2) **General Rules of Thumb** about how to satisfy your needs and wants. For instance such rules might be:-

Always ask for as much advice as possible from experienced people.
Try to plan ahead.
Don’t dream it, do it!

Part 3) **Particular Methods** about how to put your rules of thumb into action. For instance such methods might be:-

Keep your things well organised.
At the beginning of everyday make a list of the most important things to do that day.
Build up your skills in something by taking evening classes if needs be.

Part 4) These particular methods lead to yet more **Life Experiences** (which lead back around to Important Needs and Wants).
101) You may not have thought of your life working in this way before, but how true of you is the above model of your life?
0 1 2 3 4 5 6

102) Is there a section missing from this picture of a person’s life...i.e. a 5th or 6th section? What would that section be?
NO

YES. It is:

103) How true is it to say that you’ve studied General Explanations of Life like this before now.
0 1 2 3 4 5 6

104) Where? (School, University classes or some private reading or study.)
105) Is there anything not mentioned in the 5 sections of this questionnaire which would have been the key to major improvements or achievements in your teenage life, or was indeed the key? (An incident, a strategy, some form of help?) Something might be very private to you, but even if you write just one line that hints at an explanation, this will help this research to design an educational project to help other young people growing-up. (Remember - your name isn't on this questionnaire.)

106) Why did you decide you wanted to be so successful in your A levels? What motivated you? Please give three brief explanations in order of importance with the most important reason coming first. (For instance: it might have been ‘to impress someone you fancied’..... or “to emulate an historical hero” .....or whatever.....).

1st

2nd

3rd

107) How did you know how exactly to go about being so successful at your school work. i.e. how did you know all the techniques for success. (For instance, a big sister might have shown you how to study well.....or perhaps you stumbled across good study methods by accident on your own.) Please give three sources of your ‘know-how’, with the most important one first.

1st

2nd

3rd
108) Which three specific strategies or techniques proved most effective in your achieving your A-level ambitions or their equivalent? (e.g. perhaps working 14 hours 7 days per week for 6 months; or perhaps asking the advice of the previous years candidates). Please put the most useful strategy first.

1st

2nd

3rd

109) Thinking of nowadays now:-

You very much like the idea of your committing a complex crime - perhaps a clever fraud or a very skillful jewel heist. Something that requires a great deal of step by step planning.

0 1 2 3 4 5 6

110) You would probably break the law in all sorts of very serious ways if you could be sure to get away with your crimes.

0 1 2 3 4 5 6
YOUR SENSE OF IDENTITY

In the following section, I describe your “sense of identity” as being your sense of who and what you are.

There are 6 types of identity listed below, and I'm interested to know how much you agree or disagree that these 6 identities together make up the bigger picture of who you feel you are.

i.e. Are these really the six slices of the identity cake?

Identity Part 1: Your Physical Identities - which could be such things as your sense of health and attractiveness, your sense of your gender, age, and all the implications of the accent of your speaking voice and skin colour, and your manner of dress.

Q111) How true is it that your sense of who you are includes a sense of your Physical Identity? (no matter whether it be strong, weak, positive, negative or a complex mixture.)

0 1 2 3 4 5 6

Identity Part 2: Your Private-life Identities - i.e. your private-life relationships which might divide into:

i) family relationships (where, for instance, you are not a soldier but rather a son or a brother).

ii) friendship relationships (where you are not a psychologist but rather a ‘best mate’).

iii) romantic and sexual relationships (where you are not a student, but rather a boyfriend or lover, or straight or gay).

Q112) How true is it that your sense of who you are includes a sense of your Private-Life Identities?

0 1 2 3 4 5 6
Identity Part 3: Attitude Identities - which could be called your ‘Personality’ or ‘Character’; - i.e. your dominant and general attitudes and approaches to life, the way you look at things, your moods and emotions, your styles of thinking.

Q 113) How true is it that your sense of who you are includes a sense of your Attitude Identities?

0 1 2 3 4 5 6

Identity Part 4: Your Occupational Identities (that can otherwise be known as Professional Identities or perhaps Vocational Identities) - i.e. your working-life roles, which for a young person might be largely that of schoolchild or college student.

Q 114) How true is it that your sense of who you are includes a sense of your Occupational Identities?

0 1 2 3 4 5 6

Identity Part 5: Your Extra-Curricular Identities - the things you do outside of your main job or role. For instance: being an amateur musician, athlete, actor and so on.

Q 115) How true is it that your sense of who you are includes a sense of your Extra-Curricular Identities?

0 1 2 3 4 5 6

Identity Part 6: Your Group Identities - your sense of affiliation with institutions, teams, clubs, fashions, movements, religions, class, and nationality.

Q 116) How true is it that your sense of who you are includes a sense of group identities?

0 1 2 3 4 5 6
Identity Part 3: Attitude Identities - which could be called your ‘Personality’ or ‘Character’; - i.e. your dominant and general attitudes and approaches to life, the way you look at things, your moods and emotions, your styles of thinking.

Q 113) How true is it that your sense of who you are includes a sense of your Attitude Identities?

0 1 2 3 4 5 6

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Identity Part 4: Your Occupational Identities (that can otherwise be known as Professional Identities or perhaps Vocational Identities) - i.e. your working-life roles, which for a young person might be largely that of schoolchild or college student.

Q 114) How true is it that your sense of who you are includes a sense of your Occupational Identities?

0 1 2 3 4 5 6

----------

Identity Part 5: Your Extra-Curricular Identities - the things you do outside of your main job or role. For instance: being an amateur musician, athlete, actor and so on.

Q 115) How true is it that your sense of who you are includes a sense of your Extra-Curricular Identities?

0 1 2 3 4 5 6

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Identity Part 6: Your Group Identities - your sense of affiliation with institutions, teams, clubs, fashions, movements, religions, class, and nationality.

Q 116) How true is it that your sense of who you are includes a sense of group identities?

0 1 2 3 4 5 6
This Model Of Identity Also Proposes That Our Sense Of Our Identity Is Comprised Of Four Chronological Dimensions: Past, Present, Future, and Fantasy.

Q117) A) the Past Dimension i.e. Your past identities are a permanent feature of who you are and to some extent effect your self-image. How true is it that your sense of who you are includes a Past Dimension? (no matter whether it be strong, weak, positive, negative or a complex mixture.)

0 1 2 3 4 5 6

Q118) B) the Present Dimension i.e. what we feel ourselves to be now, in the present day.

How true is it that your sense of who you are includes a Present Dimension?

0 1 2 3 4 5 6

Q119) C) the Future Dimension i.e. what we are striving for, or are likely to become.

How true is it that your sense of who you are includes a Future Dimension?

0 1 2 3 4 5 6

Q120) D) The FANTASY dimension

These are all those things I wanted to be, and often fantasised about being, but I knew I'd never be. (e.g. my conscious and deliberate fantasies about being a Secret Agent who is part of the SAS, great looking, confident, much loved and loving.....)

How true is it that your own sense of who you are includes some sort of deliberate Fantasy Dimension?

0 1 2 3 4 5 6

Q121) Bearing the above in mind, how true is it of you that your sense of who and what you are is made up of a collection of quite different identities.

0 1 2 3 4 5 6
Q122) How true is it that some of your identities can be very different from each other?
0    1    2    3    4    5    6

Q123) Are there any Main Parts or important corners of your own personal identity that are missing from this Model of Identity with its 6 Main Parts and 4 Time Dimensions?
Please briefly describe any parts or dimensions that you think are missing:

Q124) In your view, how good a representation of the structure/the skeleton of identity is the above model?
0    1    2    3    4    5    6

Q125) Is there anything you want to add generally about this model of identity?
TIME MANAGEMENT & PRIORITISING YOUR GOALS

Thinking back to your final A-level year (i.e. the year in which you did your pre-university exams...) please answer the following:-

ABOUT YOUR PRIORITY OBJECTIVES BACK THEN:-

Q126) What were your top 2 priorities during your A-level year (e.g. Play sport; spend time with a girlfriend; get two C grades.)
1st priority:
2nd priority:

Q127) You were very strongly committed to your top-priority goal
0 1 2 3 4 5 6

Q128) You had a strong ambition to achieve something very particular with your A-level results (such as to go to a particular university, or go on to a particular profession)
0 1 2 3 4 5 6

Q129) Looking back, you feel you would have done better had you found yourself something more motivating to aim for.
0 1 2 3 4 5 6

Q130) You made a deliberate decision not to invest too much of your time in A-level study. (i.e. not to put all your eggs in one basket)
0 1 2 3 4 5 6

Q131) Looking back, if you wish you had had different priorities in your A-level year, what would they have been?
1st priority:
2nd priority:
**Q132)** Looking back, you feel you received adequate teaching/training/help in selecting good priorities for that year.

0 1 2 3 4 5 6

(If you’ve scored yourself either 5 or 6 on the above question, who or what was it that taught you about priorities?):

---

**YOUR TIME MANAGEMENT BACK THEN** (i.e. during your final A-level year).

Time Management is all about how to use your time most effectively in achieving your priority goals.

During that final A-level year, how true were the following of you:-

**Q133** You took-on more than you could manage properly. (e.g. perhaps you played sport, did music, saw a boyfriend/girlfriend and were also trying to do well in your A-levels, all at the same time - and it was all a bit much and things suffered because of it).

0 1 2 3 4 5 6

**Q134** You found it hard to say “No” or to postpone demands upon your time and energy which conflicted with your priorities. (e.g. If the phone rang you’d would answer it; If you were invited out, you’d go; If something came on the tv you’d watch it).

0 1 2 3 4 5 6

How much did the following things get in the way of you pursuing your goals:-

**Q135** General minor distractions (friends, tv etc)

0 1 2 3 4 5 6

**Q136** Major emotional issues

0 1 2 3 4 5 6
Q137) Accidental over-commitment to too many things
0 1 2 3 4 5 6

Q138) You got in with the wrong crowd (e.g. a crowd that had other priorities from you and so distracted you from yours)
0 1 2 3 4 5 6

Q139) Something else?
0 1 2 3 4 5 6

(Please say what exactly: ........................................................................................................)

Q140) You were good at setting yourself mini-goals e.g. dividing your major priorities into smaller tasks achievable by the hour and by the day.
0 1 2 3 4 5 6

Q141) Your A-level grades were a reflection of your specific time-management skills more than your general eagerness to do well.
0 1 2 3 4 5 6

Q142) You feel that you received adequate teaching/training/help in how to effectively manage your time.
0 1 2 3 4 5 6

(If you’ve scored 5 or 6, who was that teaching from?):

ANY BRIEF COMMENTS ON THE ROLE PLAYED BY YOUR PRIORITISING AND TIME-MANAGEMENT DURING YOUR A-LEVEL YEAR?
GENERAL QUESTIONS

Still thinking back to your final A-level year (i.e. the year in which you did your pre-university exams...) please answer the following:-

Q143) You very much enjoyed most or all of the subjects you were studying.
0 1 2 3 4 5 6

Q144) You felt you were studying because you personally wanted to, (rather than you'd been told to or forced to)
0 1 2 3 4 5 6

Q145) You often lost yourself in intense and pleasurable study for two hours or more at a time.
0 1 2 3 4 5 6

Q146) You were good at studying alone
0 1 2 3 4 5 6

Q147) You had particular chores or a job that took up more than 10 hours per 7-day week (including travel time to and fro)
Yes
No

Q148) You felt that you personally could make a lot of difference to your A-level grades (as opposed to it being luck, or up to other people, or out of your control).
0 1 2 3 4 5 6

Q149) You felt that what you did and what you achieved in life was 100% up to you (rather than luck or up to other people, or out of your control).
0 1 2 3 4 5 6
Q150) You were good at taking responsibility for finding things out for yourself (e.g. you actively hunted down information on things such as past papers, universities, careers etc, rather than waiting to be encouraged to do things or be taught stuff.)

Q151) Doing your very best at something was a motto you tried to live by. (e.g. if a task was worth doing it was worth giving it 100%)

Q152) You tended to concentrate on what you did best and really developed those strengths. (i.e. you actively played to your strengths).

Q153) You regularly took time to look back and weigh-up the day’s or week’s work so as to see how you could improve upon your future efforts to achieve your goals.

Q154) You actively tried to turn every set back and disappointment to your advantage by very deliberately learning from your temporary failures and misfortunes.

Q155) You were constantly trying to improve yourself and/or your performance in things.
Q156) You were very realistic (i.e. honest with yourself and others) about what you did and didn’t know, could and couldn’t do.

0 1 2 3 4 5 6

Q157) You had a really good relationship with at least one teacher (or teacher-like figure) who was usefully supportive of your study-goals.

0 1 2 3 4 5 6

Q158) You talked to people who were in the know about examination techniques, what examiners look for and such like. (Perhaps teachers or older pupils)

0 1 2 3 4 5 6

Q159) You were not embarrassed to ask for help with things generally from adults.

0 1 2 3 4 5 6

Q160) You made a special effort to find the enjoyable side of the study you had to do (rather than just forcing yourself)

0 1 2 3 4 5 6

Q161) You tended to deal with problems and important issues as soon as possible rather than postpone them. (i.e. you tended to confront worrying things rather than delay or avoid them for any reason).

0 1 2 3 4 5 6

Q162) You were really tough about controlling your emotions so as not to let them get in the way of your objectives.

0 1 2 3 4 5 6
Q163) You were strict about postponing the things you wanted to do, and people you wanted to spend time with, until after your A-levels.

0 1 2 3 4 5 6

Q164) You were good at relaxing effectively so as to refresh yourself for new bouts of effort.

0 1 2 3 4 5 6

Q165) You very often studied during your evenings and your weekends

0 1 2 3 4 5 6

Q166) On average, how many hours study did you do per week, including the schooldays and weekends:-
(NB that 9am till 10pm with four hours off for travel, meals etc = 9 hours study per day)
circa 20 hours per 7 day week
30
40
50
60
70

Q167) How many weeks or months before the A levels did you start an intensive pre-exam revision routine.

Wanting to do well in your A levels was strongly motivated by a sense of:-

Q168) gratitude (e.g. to thank teachers/parents))

0 1 2 3 4 5 6

Q169) to please other people

0 1 2 3 4 5 6
Q170) revenge (on your difficult past, or on your enemies)
0   1   2   3   4   5   6

Q171) pride (to show what you were capable of)
0   1   2   3   4   5   6

Q172) wanting to escape (i.e. A-level grades were your ticket out/escape plan)
0   1   2   3   4   5   6

Q173) you threw yourself into your work to escape emotional problems.
0   1   2   3   4   5   6

Q174) wanting to be acknowledged (rather than feel invisible)
0   1   2   3   4   5   6

Q175) wanting to feel in the driving seat (rather than vulnerable)
0   1   2   3   4   5   6

Q176) wanting to be seen to be good at something.
0   1   2   3   4   5   6

Q177) You felt that your A-levels could buy the future you wanted for yourself.
0   1   2   3   4   5   6

Q178) How you did in your A-levels and where you went on to was strongly tied up with who you felt you were as a person (i.e. was a very important part of your identity)
0   1   2   3   4   5   6

Q 179) In the light of what yo know now, it feels worth the effort you put in to your A-levels back then.
0   1   2   3   4   5   6
IS THERE ANY IMPORTANT FEATURE YOU WOULD LIKE TO ADD REGARDING YOUR A-LEVEL YEAR?

A QUICK NOTE ABOUT YOURSELF

Since your 16th birthday, have you ever achieved a really major award or honour or excellent level of accomplishment in an activity outside of your school/college work? This achievement could be in sport, or music, or chess, or dancing or anything else. Please bear in mind that a 'major award' means such things as County or National level achievement. Please write a few lines to explain. For instance:-

I regularly played in the Hampshire under-21s youth orchestra between the age of 17 and 20.

or I was one of two people chosen to represent Bedford for an Adventure Scout Jamboree in Canada, when I was 17.

(please circle Not really or Yes, below:-)

Not really

Yes (please write a line or two in the space below:-

What grades did you score at A level?(no need to list the subjects)
How many points was this in total? ..................

E = 2
D = 4
C = 6
B = 8
A = 10

Thanks again for your thoughtful time and trouble!

THREE FINAL QUESTIONS ABOUT THIS QUESTIONNAIRE IN PARTICULAR

Thinking now about this particular 'Your Life and You' questionnaire.....please be as harsh and as frank as possible (this is no time to be polite!) and say....

1w) How many of the questions felt interesting to you?
Please give an approximate percentage (i.e. 100% or 30% or 10%? ):...........%

1x) How many of the questions felt deserving of a thoughtful answer?
Please give an approximate percentage (i.e. 100% or 30% or 10%? ):...........%

1y) How accurate an impression of those particular parts of your life being asked about do you think your answers give?
Please give an approximate percentage (i.e. 100% or 30% or 10%? ):...........%

1z) Do you have any final comments on the questionnaire that you can make in one or two lines?
Appendix F

Interview Inventory for Senior Professionals
Interview questions for those senior professionals who select or tutor young adult high-achievers
(would usually take a full hour)

Please answer from your own personal viewpoint that may not necessarily be the same as that of your institute.

1) What do you understand to be the reputation of your institution? What accolades is this reputation based upon?

2) a) What is the selection procedure for would-be entrants?
   b) What factors might you look for in their Curriculum Vitae, their references, their statement of purpose?
   c) What are you looking for in the interview/admissions process (and how many of you decide upon it?)
   d) Did you have any formal and specific training for this process?
   e) How many applicants are there per place?
   f) What are the approximate demographics of your intake:-
      i) the ratio of men to women
      ii) their age range.
      iii) their ethnic background
      iv) their educational background
      v) are there any other notable features

3) What do you believe to be the qualities which make someone suitable to thrive in:-
   a) this general arena of work?
   b) this particular centre of excellence?

4) What are the warning signs of ‘unsuitability’ or under achievement?

5) What qualities are you most pleased to see in an applicant/new arrival here?
   (e.g.: Energy, focus, seriousness of purpose, independent hunters and thinkers: originality, but also contributive and teamworkers when appropriate; daring, hungry to learn and to constantly reconsider.)

6) My study is particularly interested in young people who overcome adversity. Approximately what percentage do you think come from seriously disrupted and/or financially stressed home-backgrounds?

7) Can you suggest how such ‘unprivileged’ young entrants, may have developed suitable qualities?
8) In your view, which of the following most inspired their choice of direction e.g.
   a) Formal Careers Advice.
   b) First hand experience from someone they knew.
   c) Sheer inspiration from observing a third party at a distance.
      (i.e. a tv programme; an article in a newspaper?)
   d) other factors (what might they be?)

9) Which qualities in particular do you try to develop in the individual?

10) What strategies or regimes do you employ to these ends?

11) What are the written and unwritten codes or ethos of the institution as regards standards and ambitions?

12) What distinguishes ‘the best of the best’; and can you suggests the origins of such outstanding abilities?

13) If I define a mentor as someone who a) takes the newcomers ‘whole life into account’ when advising them, and b) works with them one to one - Do new entrants have a mentor here?

14a) What are the joys and trials of teaching at this level?

14b) What qualities make a successful tutor/manager of high-achievers.

14c) Can you venture any ideas about how the selection and training of students could be dramatically improved.

15) What are these entrants looking for from their careers?

16) How is the marketplace changing for young people with high-achievements in this arena of work?

17) Can you draw my attention to other possible clues that might illuminate the origins of exceptional abilities and achievements (particularly by those who have had to overcome extreme adversity). ......and help me to understand the institutions which promote and develop them.

18) Can you suggest papers or books that represent the most-up-to-date and convincing assessment of excellence in this arena.
Appendix G

- Trail-Blazers -
Introduction

The following is a brief outline of a £150,000 educational pilot-study called Trail-Blazers that I designed and then implemented, wholly inspired by the empirical work and philosophies of eminent researchers and practitioners. The project is intended to operationalise and embody the tenets of this thesis and to test them via a prospective longitudinal study with a more adequate sample size and a naturally occurring but reasonably matched control group. It aims to encourage healthy psycho-social development through promoting a positive Relationship with Reality, adequate Careers Education and Guidance, a satisfying Occupational Identity, and adequate Mentorship in Personal and Occupational matters - as well as incorporating and integrating all of the other positive initiatives (statutory and voluntary) that HMYOI Feltham already provides for the 1,000 young men in its care.

Feltham YOI And The Project

Situated beside Heathrow Airport, Feltham YOI is a high-security prison, the largest of its type in Europe, caring for 1,000 young men aged 14 to 21.

Relying wholly on volunteers from the general public, Trail-Blazers aims to deploy a constant flow of highly inspirational ‘Working Professionals’ talking on the Prison Radio so as to support the intensive levels of Careers Education & Guidance delivered both one-to-one and in group work by our two on-site Project Co-ordinators.

This foundation leads to one-to-one ‘Skills Coaching’ via a twice-weekly correspondence with someone who is an Occupational-Skills Penfriend cum

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1 Most notably: Prison Governor (retired) Jim Semple; Professor John Laub at Northwestern; Sir Stephen Tumim (former Chief Inspector of Prisons); HM Prison Service Director Ivor Ward who is also a former Feltham Governor.
Personal Mentor (from anywhere in the UK), who sets and marks homework, provides industry-relevant reading materials, and fosters the boys' interests. This Skills Coach also arranges for an occasional Hands-on Workshop in Feltham, and our wide network of volunteer coaches will also help arrange work and training placements post-release.

In brief, that ‘Skills Coach’ is someone competent to mentor a particular inmate on how to pursue his self-chosen career-interest step-by-step. The coach will be a man or woman aged 24 or over who can prove they have two or more years of successful employment in a skilled work arena. They may be a post-graduate or mature student on a job specific and professionally-recognised course, as long as they have already completed that two year requirement. They may, on the other hand, be a seasoned practitioner, a professional instructor, or a recently retired person with a successful career behind them. (They will all, nonetheless, have the usual Police checks and two references will be taken up.) A boy might have more than one Mentor, i.e. a raft of two or three correspondents to help guarantee continuity of support.

By these means, both during and after his sentence, Trail-Blazers aims to help a boy acquire the satisfying career prospects, positive life philosophies, day-to-day strategies and professional skills that can beat the lure of crime, drink and drugs. Each boy will join the project for the full duration of at least the last 6 months of his sentence, and he will continue being mentored-by-mail by at least one volunteer ‘Skills Coach’ during and beyond the crucial first year when he leaves Feltham.

Our two-year trial is attempting to transform the lives of at least 150 boys, an adequate number from which to draw illuminating conclusions as to cost-effectiveness. Per boy it costs circa £1,000, i.e. 5% of the cost of his coming back to prison for just one year. Independent evaluation will be regular and rigorous. The present reconviction rate for a young offender is a staggering 70% within 2 years of release from custody, but we aim to significantly reduce that figure and so save the individual and his community from a lifetime of self-limiting and socially destructive behaviour. Such immersion in Careers Inspiration and Guidance has never before been deployed in any setting in the UK, nor has complementary ‘Professional Skills Coaching & Personal Mentoring by mail’. The Dept. for Education and Employment regard this as a
testing-ground to provide the blueprint for mainstream Secondary Schools and Colleges throughout the UK.

The two macro-aims of the Trail-Blazers project

1. If the project can demonstrate that suitable volunteers from the adult workforce are willing and able to mentor youngsters one to one through the mail, it will have demonstrated how an enormous reservoir of personal motivation and practical work-skills can help invigorate the educational lives of schoolchildren and college students. Such a resource must be all the more welcome at a time when fewer and fewer youngsters have the support of a two-parent family, and when career-paths are less and less transparent.

2. If this project can demonstrate how highly intensive 'careers inspiration and guidance' can very powerfully motivate and focus a teenager’s educational and training ambitions, then there is call for a far greater impact than Careers Services are presently allowed in School and College settings.

The Testing-Ground

To the best of my knowledge and that of my colleagues, neither of these two strategies has ever been tried before in the UK or anywhere else. Feltham provides the harshest possible testing-ground for these schemes to have a shot at invigorating the relationship between the British public and British prisons, and making a dramatic contribution to the education and training of our nation’s young people.
The following are the project’s patrons and others who have formally vouched for us. Their good names undoubtedly helped raise our £150,000 budget, and I am very grateful for their moral support and expert advice:

His Honour Sir Stephen Tumim, the former Judge and HMS Chief Inspector of Prisons, is one of three Patrons and the Underwriter of our 1997 National Lottery Charities Board application.

General Sir David Ramsbotham, Her Majesty’s Chief Inspector of Prisons, personally wrote to the highly commend this project.

Wolfson Professor Anthony E. Bottoms, Director of the Cambridge University Institute of Criminology, and a prisons specialist, was Underwriter of this project’s 1st (1996) application to the NLCB.

Mr Adair Turner, The Director General of the CBI (Confederation of British Industry) is one of our three Patrons, in respect of our project’s unlimited potential for motivating ‘vocational awareness and skills development’.

Mr. John Harradence, Dept. for Education and Employment ‘Projects Manager’, based at Moorfoot in Sheffield, has given inspiring and expert support to the projects since their inception in 1996, and the Dept. for Education and Employment’s guarantee of £50,000 of financial investment shortly thenafter.

Mr Ivor Ward, Prison Service Area Manager, was an extremely inspiring force in the design of both projects while Governor of Feltham.

Mr Jim Semple, one-time founder and Governor of HMP Blantyre House, which was a custodial environment that epitomised vocational guidance, planning for the future, and the care and respect of the individual inmate.

General Sir Peter de la Billiere (Commanding Officer of British Forces in the Gulf War) kindly wrote: “It is one of the most constructive [projects] that I have heard about in this important area and it deserves to succeed not only locally, in the focused arena of Feltham, but also across the nation. If it does so, you will have made a tremendous contribution to our country’s future and the future of a large number of young people.”
Appendix H

My personal motivations
for exploring the elements of this thesis
Self-analysis can serve as a basis for raising legitimate questions that require more systematic research.
Jerome L. Singer (1975:16)

I disclose the following because my reader might appreciate the opportunity to judge whether any of the details below may have some bearing on the potential validity of this thesis.

An explanation for my interest in my proposed ‘Relationship with Reality’ personality dimension

At the age of 10, from one moment to the next, I began to stammer quite severely, having been a child who spoke all too fluently and eagerly up until then. No remedial action was taken by the adults around me, and within a matter of days I had learnt to conceal this bizarre malfunction - either by keeping quiet, or by swapping the words I wanted to say for the words I could say, or by avoiding speech-situations altogether.

I muddled through life this way and got by as best I could; but my mid-teenage years this speech impediment threatened to cripple all my plans to become a man. There were no men, no heroes, who stammered (or so I thought. What I did not know then, was that my stammer placed me in the good company of some life-long stammerers: Charles Darwin, Robert Donat, Sir Winston Churchill, Siegfried Sassoon, Somerset Maugham, Jonathan Miller, Rowan Atkinson, and many other men and women by whose lives I might have been much inspired.)

Teenage-life presented me with all the usual challenges, and the stammer was just another factor complicating things. Saddened and scared by my inability to do anything against this enemy, I constantly resorted to self-generated fantasy-world scenarios which offered victories and glories that reality denied me. At 18, the transition from a small town schoolboy to a student in a major University proved ‘a bridge too far’, and the frequency and intensity of my escapist strategy became quite disabling; in the seven years between the ages of 19 and 26, my participation in real-life became inadequate and, as a direct result, my interpersonal relationships stagnated, my psychology studies at Exeter University failed to develop, and I made no employment
arrangements to sustain myself after graduation. Though I felt desperate to achieve in some tangible terms, my vague goals were always unrealistically ambitious because they were being required to compensate for the humiliations and desperations of a 10 year stammer. My fantasy-proneness meant that I lacked the reality-oriented coping skills and step-by-step planning to make any headway; but at the time, I had little or no insight in to my fantasy life’s probable contribution to my real-life problems. Similarly, there was no acknowledgement of any need for specific help by family, friends, tutors or health professionals. I was never regarded as ill in any way, simply ‘unfocused’, a bit of a dreamer not a doer, and this laissez-faire attitude wholly underestimated the deeply debilitating nature of my fantasy-oriented state of consciousness, and the profound unhappiness to which it had inevitably led.

At the age of 25, and only in final desperation at my decaying reality, did I stop running and engage with the enemy. Intensive speech therapy and immersion-training very quickly impacted upon the stammer. This all helped occasion my falling in love with a young German woman who proved a crucial motivation in my recovery, as reality was so obviously the only place where she and I could communicate, and our communication offered pleasures even more potent than my fantasies. I realised that my life lived in fear and hiding, was a life half-lived. My only well-developed personal resource seemed to be my imagination, so I worked for 18 months as an advertising copywriter in London’s West End agencies. As my expressive confidence grew, I left the commercial world to complete the MA in Novel and Film Writing at the University of East Anglia, and then the Screenwriting course at the National Film and Television School. Imagination, once a poison to me, was providing my salvation, and writing allowed me the self-expression that my stammer had restrained.

To finance my education, I worked in a ‘secure school’ for emotionally and behaviourally disturbed adolescents. My enjoyment of this work, in stark relief with my ill-informed incompetence, encouraged me to embark upon the Open University Advanced Diploma in Criminology, and I set out to incorporate my creative media background into criminological theory and practice. I discovered little by little and only by accident, an occupational identity and sense of purpose that felt wholly worthwhile and satisfying. This fostered my investment in reality, and further curtailed my resort to escapist fantasy. In the first nine months of 1994, Channel 4 TV and Levi’s Jeans
agreed to help me work full-time as a scriptwriting tutor at Feltham Young Offenders Institution in west London. In the course of this work, I felt that I recognised a cognitive and behavioural syndrome in many of these young prisoners, that was comparable to my own experience: the fear, the shame and the wrong directions. By means of some informal long interviews, I also explored this concept of a ‘misuse of imagination leading to an atrophied social reality and a negative sense of identity’, and these informal investigations encouraged me to engage in the more systematic inquiry that my time at Cambridge provided.

Discover your difference – the asynchrony with which you have been blessed or cursed - and make the most it. Make your asynchronies fruitful, blissful. Take stock of your experiences – both those that you cherish and those that make you quake - and try to frame them in the most positive ways ... try to understand what has happened....
Howard Gardner (1997: 154)

An explanation of my interest in careers guidance and occupational identity

I fear that my Grammar School’s so-called Careers Teacher had taken the job for less than vocational reasons. The Careers Room was unlocked one lunchtime per week, but most of the material had already been stolen by previous generations. As for my parents - they didn’t know that they didn’t know how the working world was changing or had already changed from the one they grew up in. They didn’t know that their prejudices as to what was and wasn’t a worthy educational or professional ambition, were dangerously out of date.

At university, I felt that I didn’t need Careers Counselling because I already knew exactly what I wanted to be. I wanted to be a ‘Playboy’ as personified most endearingly by Tony Curtis and Roger Moore in the 1970’s television series, The Persuaders. Just like those tv heroes, I wanted a Lamborghini, tight leather-glove, and young, bikinied lovers. Failing that, I just hoped I would die before the working world got to me.
I didn’t - and it did.
I tried desperately to make a run for it, of course, into fantasy, but eventually I realised, not through any bravery but rather in desperation, that I would have to stand and make a fight of it.

Oh as I was young and easy in the mercy of his means,
Time held me green and dying
Though I sang in my chains like the sea.

_Fern Hill_ by Dylan Thomas

An explanation for my interest in the mentorship of a youngster's personal and occupational life

As a child and teenager, in the absence of my father, I sought instruction in 'manhood' from feature films and television series; but the trouble with these as learning tools is that screen-fiction misses out too many of life's important details, and the battles and the beauties are always won within two hours. This all meant that my end goals were clear enough, embodied as they were by Cary Grant, James Stewart, Errol Flynn, James T. Kirk and Hawkeye, but I lacked the detailed life-strategies and specific know-how to make even a first step in the right direction.

An explanation for my interest in 'coping with adversity'

My stammer was, I have latterly come to appreciate, not nearly so terrible an ordeal in comparison to the adversities faced by other boys and girls growing up. My trouble with and fear of speaking was a big, ugly cloud that loitered on the horizon of every day between the ages of 10 and 25, and occasionally rolled in and rained down on all my hopes and ambitions. What was, in retrospect, three times more limiting, was the negative relationship with reality that this problem invisibly fostered, the absence of an adult in whom I could usefully confide, and the absence of a sense of identity in which I could take pride and negotiate the challenges and opportunities of everyday life.

There is so little in the field of criminology we have not yet experienced.
The problem is access to ourselves. Access, and respect for what we find.
Professor Nils Christie (1997); the University of Oslo.
An explanation of my interest in ‘High-Achievement’

In the face of life’s slings and arrows, it seems to me that committing crime, making serious misjudgements, or becoming mentally ill, are very often understandable and all too imitable. On the other hand, consistent accomplishments and life-satisfaction are rarely so opaque and achievable, and so present a most intriguing problem.

An explanation for my undertaking this Doctorate

I have tried to better understand my own life and that of others, with a view to making the most of my time on the planet. I really can’t think of any endeavour more fundamental or more complex. I’m not sure that my experience of life is a particularly rare one. Simply trying to know the truth affords me a profound sense of satisfaction. I have tried to take courage from the words of Theodore Roosevelt:

Far better it is to dare mighty things, even though chequered by failure, than to dwell in that perpetual twilight that knows not victory or defeat.
Theodore Roosevelt (1910)

Dénouement

Thank you for reading

I would be most grateful of all correspondence regarding this thesis: please write via the Cambridge Institute of Criminology, 7 West Road, CB3 9DT.

Past, Present, Premonition

These past four years, I have had the privilege of hearing individuals trying to make sense of their lives, past and planned. I am still delighted and inspired
by what I have heard and read, and I cannot now imagine committing myself to anything other than exploring and recounting such essential and universal voyages. I feel as if I have been hunting in some wonderful mountain forest and have momentarily glimpsed some truth among the trees. I have seen how the workings of a single life are more simple and yet more beautiful than ever I imagined.

On a sadder note, my belated thanks and fondest respect for the gorgeous young woman who, prior to embarking on our very first and much-anticipated weekend of romance, discreetly audited my accounts, decided I was a poor investment, and went back to dating a Goldman Sachs diamonds and precious-metals dealer. I was left with the borrowed keys to a rusting Ford, a weekend’s supply of spam sandwiches, and a lot of spare time that long, hot summer. If this thesis comes across on occasion just a tad wistful and over-written, the wonderful she is why. (By some unfortunate oversight, girls and money were both left off the curriculum at St. Albans Boys School, and I’ve been struggling with these subjects ever since).

Finally, my tribute to all those boyhood heroes (in novels and films and sometimes even in real-life) from whom I have taken such heart-felt inspiration - my invisible mentors. They ‘do not go gentle in to that good night’, and I like to think I can hear them now:

We are the Dead. Short days ago  
We lived, felt dawn, saw sunset glow,  
Loved and were loved, and now we lie,  
In Flanders Fields.

Take up our quarrel with the foe:  
To you from failing hands we throw  
The torch; be yours to hold it high.  

(John McCrae, 1917)

N.V.K. Baylis