The Experience and Memory of Youth in England c.1960-c.1969

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SHORT ABSTRACT

This thesis offers the first lived experience study of youth in 1960s England. Previous histories of post-war youth have tended to focus on representations of young people rather than their daily lives. This thesis therefore uses contemporary social surveys, Mass Observation directives and oral history interviews to examine the experiences, memories and meanings of youth for working- and lower middle-class young adults, born between approximately 1940 and 1955, across England. It analyses young adults' experiences in work, leisure and personal relationships. Popular memories of the 'swinging sixties' tend to present young adults in the period as hedonistic, permissive, promiscuous, subcultural rebels in constant generational conflict with their parents. However, this thesis shows that young adults' lived experiences were more 'mundane' or 'ordinary' than these images suggest – most did not experience a 'swinging sixties'. This thesis argues that age, gender, class, family, location and economics fractured and shaped the experiences of youth, meaning that there was no singular or homogenous youth culture. Young adults did have enough experiences in common, however, to be united by a shared sense of being part of a distinct generation at a distinct historical moment. Indeed, the socio-economic and cultural landscape of the 1960s necessarily shaped young adults' lives and what it meant to be a young adult in the 1960s. The thesis also examines the relationship between popular memories of the 'swinging sixties' and personal memories of life in the period to demonstrate that both act together to influence people's selfhoods and what it meant to be a young adult in 1960s England. Ultimately, this thesis shows that youth was as much about identity and a sense of belonging as it was about a set of common experiences.

LONG ABSTRACT

This thesis offers the first lived experience study of the daily lives, memories and meanings of youth for working- and lower middle-class young adults in 1960s England. The 1960s is often heralded as an iconic decade for youth culture both in and beyond England. Popular images of the 'swinging sixties' depict young adults as affluent, hedonistic, drug-fuelled, permissive, promiscuous, sub- and countercultural rebels in constant generational conflict with their parents. But these images focus on sensationalised stereotypes and subcultures when most young people in the 1960s did not live such a 'swinging' lifestyle. Their lives were, instead, more 'ordinary'.

Scholarship on post-war British youth culture is a growing field. These works tend to focus on the period between 1945 and the early 1960s, however, meaning that relatively little is known about the 1960s as a whole, particularly the latter years of the decade. Given that popular images of youth in the 1960s are so iconic a study of youth in the 1960s is therefore overdue. Additionally, scholars have so far given little attention to the lived experiences of 'ordinary' working- and lower middle-class young adults in the post-war period. No major studies have yet used personal testimonies to examine the lives of these 'ordinary' young adults. Existing studies have tended to focus on representations of young people, particularly on how exaggerated media coverage and responses by authorities such as the police created moral panics about youth that had little basis in reality. Others have examined the institutions – such as the home, the police and youth organisations – that attempted to regulate and discipline young adults. Significant work has also been done on youth subcultures in the post-war period. These studies take a semiotic approach to argue that subcultures are a form of working-class resistance to dominant middle-class norms. Others still have begun to explore the relationship between the market and youth cultures, debating how far commercialisation strips subcultures of their radical potential.

While these studies have uncovered much about the representations of youth and about important subcultural groups, they have not considered the daily experiences of the majority of young adults in the period. They have also often acknowledged that sub- and countercultures do not reflect the experiences of the majority, but without fully dispelling popular myths about 1960s youth culture. Moreover, previous studies have often focused on young men rather than young women and have not examined the effects of gender upon the experiences of youth. We still know relatively little about the daily lives of both young men and young women in 1960s England: what they did, who they did it with, what they felt about it, how they remember it, and what it meant to be a young adult at the time. This thesis therefore offers the first lived experience study of youth in 1960s England to address this gap by examining young adults' experiences in work, leisure and personal relationships.

This thesis argues that there was no singular or homogenous 'youth culture' or experience in 1960s England. Age, gender, class, family, location and economics all shaped and differentiated the experiences of youth. Despite this, however, young adults did share enough experiences to be united by a sense of being part of a distinct generation at a distinct historical moment. For them, youth was a period of fun, growing independence and preparation for adulthood. Moreover, the socio-economic and cultural landscape of the 1960s inherently shaped young adults' lives and the meanings of youth in the period, making youth a highly historically contingent life cycle stage and experience.

By analysing the relationship between popular and personal memories of youth in the 1960s, this thesis also shows that people do not necessarily passively accept popular discourses but critique them in light of lived experiences. Put simply, people do not accept popular images of a 'swinging sixties' because they did not experience a 'swinging sixties'. However, popular memories still shape how people understand both youth and the 1960s, and people recall their youth in particular ways to create a composed narrative about their life and self. Experience, memory and selfhood are therefore intricately entwined. People embody

both their experiences and popular and personal memories of youth, which together shape their sense of self and understanding of youth throughout the life cycle.

This thesis examines experiences, changes and continuities from the late 1950s to the early 1970s. In this way it seeks to analyse 'the 1960s' but acknowledges that people's lives do not neatly conform to decadal boundaries. It shows that there were important continuities in young adults' experiences across the period and that young adults in the 1960s also shared some important experiences with their predecessors in the interwar years and earlier. However, this thesis also shows that the experiences of youth changed across the 1960s in some arenas, particularly in sexual experience and some (albeit limited) shifts in gendered roles.

The young people this thesis examines were born between approximately 1940 and 1955 in a variety of locations across Britain, though mostly in England. They were predominantly working class though a few were from the lower middle class; indeed this thesis shows how many of the experiences and meanings of youth were common to both the working and lower middle classes. These young adults typically left school at or near to the statutory leaving age of 15 to enter paid employment and then married in their early twenties. As such, this thesis takes youth to mean the stage of life between school and marriage, which in the 1960s roughly spanned the ages between 15 and 22-24.

In taking a lived experience approach, this thesis draws upon the methodologies of historians of the interwar period and earlier. Their studies of youth and the working classes more broadly have used this lived experience approach to uncover the richness and diversity of everyday life and to show how gender, age, class and location shaped those experiences. This thesis also continues the trend of recent studies into the subjectivities of young people to provide a better picture of the lives, agency and identities of young adults in 1960s England.

To analyse the experiences and memories of youth in 1960s England this thesis uses contemporary social surveys and personal testimonies. It uses 30 contemporary social surveys and commentaries on youth, which cover a variety of topics from work and leisure to sexual behaviour, relationships with parents and future aspirations. All of these surveys are published with the exception of Norbert Elias' *Young Worker Project*, which was left unfinished and exists only as archived interview schedules. This is one of the first scholarly analyses of Elias' material. The surveys offer both national and local perspectives as well as a statistical and qualitative understanding of young adults' everyday lives and contemporary concerns about youth.

The thesis also uses over 400 responses to post-1981 Mass Observation directives on topics ranging from hairstyles to courtship, from spending money to images of the 1950s and 1960s. These personal testimonies are both autobiographical and social commentaries that give a valuable insight into what the world looks like to each Observer and allow analysis of how memory influences the way people recall their youthful experiences. It must be noted, however, that Mass Observers tend to be middle-class women from the South East and so their responses must be balanced against other sources to offer a more 'representative' perspective. This thesis also uses 75 oral history interviews. The majority of these come from Elizabeth Roberts' *Family Life in Barrow, Lancaster and Preston* project and Paul Thompson's *Families, Social Mobility and Ageing Study*. I also conducted oral history interviews with people who spent their youth in Birmingham in the 1960s. Together, these interviews offer a mixture of broad life histories and more focused discussions of youth that allow an understanding of everyday experience, memory, subjectivity and selfhood.

In chapter one, the thesis examines the relationship between popular and personal memories of youth in 1960s England to two ends. First, it highlights the gap between representations and experiences of youth, making the need for a lived experience analysis imperative. Second, it uncovers how people interact with popular memories to understand their youths. Chapters two and three examine young adults' lived experiences in work and leisure. They argue that age, gender, location and class fractured experiences and demonstrate that the division between work and leisure is arbitrary and requires nuance. These chapters also show how experiences in work and leisure contributed to giving youth meaning as a stage of both fun and growing independence. Young adults' relationships with friends and

family are analysed in chapter four. It argues that peers became increasingly important in youth and made it a period of both fun and growing independence. The chapter also challenges myths of generational conflict by showing that young adults usually had good relationships with parents and that any tensions were about gaining independence rather than rejecting the values of the older generation. Experiences of courtship and sex are examined in chapter five to challenge myths of a 'permissive' 1960s by demonstrating that an increasing incidence of pre-marital sex did not equate to a sexual revolution. The chapter also refines our understanding of courtship in the 1960s by examining the different types of relationships it encompassed and how these contributed to the meanings of youth. Finally, chapter six examines the meanings of 1960s youth in light of the memories and experiences analysed in the preceding chapters to argue that youth is a crucial component of the self throughout the lifecycle. It concludes that, in the 1960s, youth meant a period of fun, independence and preparation for adulthood, though the chapter also shows that the meanings of youth are historically contingent and subjective.

Overall, this thesis argues that the experiences of youth in 1960s England were historically contingent and diverse. Age, gender, class, location and economics all shaped young adults' daily lives, though young adults shared enough experiences to feel part of a distinct generation in a distinct historical moment even well into retirement. Moreover, while some aspects of their lives did accord with popular memories and myths of the period – particularly in terms of fashion and music – most young adults did not experience a 'swinging sixties'. More broadly, this thesis offers insights into several significant current debates within post-war British historiography. It adds to current reappraisals of the 1960s by demonstrating that affluence was relative and that there was no simple, permissive sexual revolution or intractable generational conflict. It offers new insights into emotion, the role of friendship and the role of the family. It challenges myths of subcultural rebellion, paving the way for a re-evaluation of other popular youth movements and their relationship to the experiences of the majority. Ultimately, this thesis re-centres the voices and experiences of young adults within the context of the post-war, and particularly 1960s, British moment. It shows that youth was as much about identity and a sense of belonging as it was about a common set of experiences. Historians can therefore benefit greatly from seeing these young adults as actors rather than subjects.

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CONTENTS

ABBREVIATIONS

CCCS	Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies
FSMA	Families, Social Mobility and Ageing: An Intergenerational Approach 1900-1988
LSD	Lysergic Acid Diethylamide
MOA	Mass Observation Archive
SFL	Social and Family Life in Preston, Lancaster & Barrow 1940-1970
YES	Youth Employment Service
YWP	Young Worker Project
Money	
s	Shillings
d	Pence

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INTRODUCTION

Mass Observation's (MOA) Spring 1993 directive on 'Growing Up' asked respondents to 'Think about what it means to grow up in Britain today. What was it like for you? What is it like for children today? How has it changed?' Alice, a teacher born in 1950, answered as follows:

> There is a temptation in comparing different generations to make judgements about one being better than another, but the truth is that every generation has its good side and its bad, its advantages and disadvantages. I'm firmly a child of the Sixties and I wouldn't want to be growing up today… but then today's generation wouldn't have wanted to live in my time either. In the end we have to conclude that every generation has its swings and roundabouts, but none is better than another; they are just different.[1]

Alice's comments touch upon many of the central themes of this thesis. She considered herself to have been part of a distinct generation at a distinct historical moment in her youth. The 1960s was 'her time'. Alice suggested her youth in the 1960s was very different to that experienced by young adults in the 1990s, meaning that generations are a product of their historical context. Alice's sense of self was also closely linked to her experience of the 1960s: she was a 'child' of that time. Moreover, Alice made the point – particularly salient for historians of youth – that generations are neither solely 'good' nor 'bad' despite the way they are represented or remembered. Examining the lives and memories of young adults in the 1960s from their own perspectives can therefore move beyond unrepresentative stereotypes and show how being young at a particular historical moment shaped not only people's experiences but also their sense of self throughout their lives.

This thesis examines the experiences, memories and meanings of youth for working- and lower middle-class young adults in 1960s England. Iconic images of 1960s youth culture do not accurately depict the lives of most young adults in the period. Popular memories of young adults as affluent, hedonistic, drug-fuelled, permissive, promiscuous, sub- and

[1] Mass Observation Archive, University of Sussex (MOA), SxMOA2/1/39/1, Replies to Spring 1993 Directive, W1813.

countercultural rebels in generational conflict with their parents are based on a glamorous, partially fictitious, middle-, upper middle-class or even celebrity minority. Instead, most people led 'ordinary' or 'mundane' lives in the 1960s.[2] However, the lived experiences of working- and lower middle-class young adults in the 1960s have attracted little attention from historians. This thesis therefore offers the first lived experience study of youth in 1960s England. To do this, it asks three central questions: what were the lived experiences of young adults in 1960s England? What did youth mean as an experience and a stage in the life cycle during the 1960s? How do personal memories of youth relate to popular memories of the 'swinging sixties'?

This thesis argues that age, gender, class, family, location and economics differentiated the experiences of youth. This challenges understandings of 'youth culture' as homogenous. 'Youth' is better understood as dissected and shaped by multiple factors; generation does not structure experience and meaning alone. Nevertheless, though their lived experiences often differed, young adults in 1960s England had enough experiences in common to be united by a shared sense of being part of a distinct generation at a distinct historical moment. They occupied a distinct, if slightly flexible, stage of life, which they understood as a period of fun, growing independence and preparation for adulthood. In this way a personal sense of selfhood, identity and belonging defines youth just as much as a broadly shared set of lived experiences does. In fact, those experiences shaped (and continue to shape throughout the life cycle) people's sense of self and what it meant to be a young adult in 1960s England. Moreover, this thesis demonstrates that while some aspects of their lives did match the youth culture depicted in popular images – particularly in fashion and music – most young adults did not experience a 'swinging sixties'. Instead, their youth was shaped by both older, conservative and newer, liberal attitudes and behaviours. This challenges popular stereotypes of young adults in the 1960s as subcultural, permissive, hedonistic and in generational conflict with their parents. This thesis also argues that the

[2] Trevor Harris and Monia O'Brien Castro, 'Introduction', in Trevor Harris and Monia O'Brien Castro (eds), *Preserving the Sixties: Britain and the 'Decade of Protest'*, (Basingstoke, 2014), p. 2.

experiences and meanings of youth in the 1960s were historically specific. The socio-economic and cultural landscape of the 1960s inherently shaped young adults' lives and what it meant to be young at that time.

The 1960s was a period of both change and continuity, and this is particularly evident in the lives of the period's young adults. Perhaps most obviously, the 1960s witnessed changes in both sexual attitudes and practices, as demonstrated in chapter five. Young adults increasingly participated in, accepted and enjoyed pre-marital sex in a broader cultural climate of slowly increasing liberalism. As chapter five also shows, the average age of marriage declined across the period, facilitated by a socio-economic landscape that promoted marriage and made setting up home easier at an early age, and this truncated youth as a stage in the life cycle. As chapter four demonstrates, the emotional worlds of young adults were also changing due to cultural and socio-economic shifts, meaning that friendship increasingly became imbued with love, siblings could be friends and romantic love also took on new meanings. Chapter two shows that young adults' role in the family economy also shifted across the 1960s as paying board became more common than tipping up wages, signalling the increasing socio-economic independence that young adults both sought and gained. It was becoming increasingly normalised for young women to pursue careers as higher numbers of married women entered the workforce and young women also gained greater agency in courtship. Young adults increasingly took jobs in administrative, clerical and engineering trades while agricultural and domestic service occupations continued to decline, though this was largely a continuation of interwar trends. Commercialised leisure, television, pop music, access to transport and relative affluence widened young adults' horizons in leisure across the period, as chapter three examines.

Much, however, also remained the same for young adults between the late 1950s and the early 1970s. Many of their experiences were also not wholly dissimilar to those of their predecessors in the interwar period and earlier. Despite more young adults having pre-marital sex there was no sexual revolution, as chapter five demonstrates, and older, conservative cultural norms also persisted. Though career opportunities opened up for many women,

marriage often remained their primary goal and significant gendered double standards endured in sex, courtship and the exercise of parental control. Chapter three also demonstrates that while commercial leisure expanded and activities like the monkey parade (a practice where young adults would promenade on the streets to socialise and meet the opposite sex) had disappeared by the 1960s, young adults often pursued similar kinds of leisure for similar reasons throughout the 1960s. They also enjoyed many of the same leisure activities young adults had experienced in the interwar years and earlier. The 1960s was, ultimately, a period of flux as old and new, continuity and change shaped young adults' lived experiences in conjunction.

By analysing the relationship between popular and personal memories of 1960s youth, this thesis also demonstrates that though people are critical of popular images in light of their lived experiences, those popular discourses still structure their understanding of youth and the 1960s more broadly. Moreover, people recall their youth in particular ways to create composed narratives of their life and self, meaning that a person's 1960s youth is central to their present selfhood. Certainly, the meanings people who were young in the 1960s attach to their youth are as much shaped by present concerns and experiences as by those of the past. Experience, memory and selfhood are thus intricately entwined. People embody the experiences and memories of youth throughout the lifecycle and these constantly shape the self.

Overall, this thesis offers important findings and analysis for social and cultural historians of Britain, youth and the twentieth century. It re-centres the everyday and the voices of 'ordinary' people in a field that has often analysed the more spectacular and mythical elements of the 1960s. It deepens our understanding of the life cycle, gender and class in post-war Britain. It offers new explorations of the relationship between discourse, memory, selfhood and experience. Most importantly, it suggests that youth in any historical period is an experience, an identity and a life cycle stage; that it is historically contingent and, crucially, shaped by other factors such as gender, class and age.

THE HISTORY OF YOUTH

Since the 1980s historians have recognised that age and generation – in a similar way to class, gender, and race – structure society, culture and politics. Several historians have explored the pre-twentieth-century roots of youth as a distinct life cycle stage and experience.[3] John Gillis' work helpfully demonstrates how historical context shapes the 'traditions' of youth.[4] David Fowler has argued that a distinctive teenage culture based on affluence and commercial leisure arose in interwar Britain.[5] Andrew Davies and Claire Langhamer have also shown how young people were recognised as a distinct group in the interwar years and that their relatively smooth ride through interwar economic problems allowed them to benefit most from the increasing commercialisation of leisure.[6]

However, interwar and earlier precedents are pale compared to how visible, institutionalised, affluent and iconic youth culture became after World War Two.[7] John Springhall has argued that while 'youth' has earlier roots, it 'came of age' in the 1950s and 1960s to become the distinctive youth culture we recognise today.[8] Moreover, as Langhamer has demonstrated, between the 1920s and 1950s there was considerable continuity in the experiences of young adults, making the 1960s (rather than the post-war period more generally) particularly interesting.[9] The 1960s, more than any other decade, has also attracted the most iconic and lasting popular images of youth, again making this a particularly interesting period to study.

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[3] John Gillis, *Youth and History: Tradition and Change in European Age Relations 1770 - Present*, (New York & London, 1981); John Davis, *Youth and the Condition of Britain: Images of Adolescent Conflict*, (London, 1990); Jon Savage, *Teenage: The Creation of Youth 1875-1945*, (London, 2007); Andrew Davies, *Leisure, Gender and Poverty: Working-Class Culture in Salford and Manchester 1900-1939*, (Buckingham, 1992); John Springhall, *Coming of Age: Adolescence in Britain 1860-1960*, (Dublin, 1986).
[4] Gillis, *Youth and History*, pp. x–xi, 219.
[5] David Fowler, *The First Teenagers: The Lifestyle of Young Wage-Earners in Interwar Britain*, (London, 1995).
[6] Fowler, *The First Teenagers*, pp. 3–4; Davies, *Leisure, Gender and Poverty*; Claire Langhamer, *Women's Leisure in England 1920-60*, (Manchester, 2000).
[7] Bill Osgerby, *Youth in Britain Since 1945*, (Oxford, 1998), pp. 17–28; Selina Todd, 'Flappers and Factory Lads: Youth and Youth Culture in Interwar Britain', *History Compass*, 4.4 (2006), p. 719.
[8] Springhall, *Coming of Age*, pp. 28–29.
[9] Langhamer, *Women's Leisure*.

Several factors made youth more distinct during the 1960s.[10] First, the post-war 'baby boom' made youth as a stage in the life cycle more visible. In 1951 Britain had just over three million people under the age of 20 and just over four million by 1966.[11] The 1944 Butler Act raised the school leaving age to 15, meaning that many working- and middle-class young adults left school at this age and entered the labour market. The average age of marriage declined post-war; between 1946 and 1950 it had been 27 for men and 24.5 for women, between 1966 and 1970 it was 24.6 for men and 22.5 for women.[12] In the 1960s youth therefore became a short and distinct period between leaving school and marriage. This was enhanced by the 1960 abolition of National Service, which meant that young men no longer experienced a fractured youth.

Economically, though young adults in the interwar period and the 1950s had been relatively affluent this affluence was enhanced in the 1960s. The post-war move from heavy to light industry intensified the de-skilling of the workforce, which resulted in a buoyant youth labour market as employers sought cheap, unskilled workers.[13] Young adults enjoyed rising real wages and lacked financial responsibility since they predominantly lived with their parents until marriage and their wages were less crucial to the family economy than earlier in the century.[14] Consequently, the market increasingly aimed products and services at young adults who became conspicuous consumers of fashion, music and commercial leisure from the late 1950s.[15]

Young adults were also more visible post-war because they increasingly featured in public discourses. Young adults were seen as both positive harbingers of modernity and

[10] Davis, *Youth and the Condition of Britain*, p. 86.
[11] Bill Osgerby, 'Youth Culture', in Paul Addison and Harriet Jones (eds), *A Companion to Contemporary Britain 1939-2000*, (Oxford, 2005), pp. 128–129; John Street, 'Youth Culture', in Paul Johnson (ed.), *Twentieth Century Britain: Economic, Social and Cultural Change*, (London, 1994), pp. 463–464.
[12] Jeffrey Weeks, *Sex, Politics and Society: The Regulation of Sexuality Since 1800*, (Harlow, 1985), p. 252.
[13] Osgerby, *Youth in Britain Since 1945*, pp. 20–24.
[14] Selina Todd, 'Breadwinners and Dependents: Working-Class Young People in England 1918-1955', *International Review of Social History*, 52.1 (2007).
[15] Osgerby, *Youth in Britain Since 1945*, pp. 33–41.

affluence, and as symbols of social malaise.[16] Young people were seen to be both a risk and at risk due to wartime absent fathers, working mothers, and educational and psychological disruption, which fed into post-war anxieties over juvenile delinquency and moral decline.[17] Additionally, as discourses of classlessness accompanied rising affluence, generation became seen as more important than class (though class never completely disappeared as a stratifying factor).[18] Young adults were also central to post-war discussions about reconstruction, which sparked expansion of the youth service and created further anxieties over delinquency.[19]

In the 1960s, therefore, demographic, economic and social factors alongside contemporary cultural and political discourses made youth a more distinct grouping than ever before. Youth in the 1960s was, moreover, experienced in a very particular historical moment. Historiography on post-war, and in particular 1960s, youth is a growing field. So far, however, scholars have not examined the lived experiences of young adults. Instead, histories of post-war youth have predominantly taken one of four perspectives: how youth has been imagined and represented; how youth has been regulated and disciplined; how minority groups such as sub- and countercultures function; or how youth culture relates to the market.

Several scholars have analysed representations of youth in post-war Britain. John Davis and Bill Osgerby have examined how post-war youth became a touchstone for the hopes and fears of society.[20] These images were exaggerated stereotypes and tell us little about young people's everyday lives.[21] Scholars have particularly analysed how young adults were associated with moral panic, though this focus extends further back than the post-war period.[22] Stanley Cohen has examined how the media hyperbolised the 1964 bank holiday

[16] Davis, *Youth and the Condition of Britain*, p. 90; Osgerby, *Youth in Britain Since 1945*; Bill Osgerby, 'The Good, The Bad and the Ugly: Postwar Media Representations of Youth', in Adam Briggs and Paul Cobley (eds), *The Media: An Introduction*, (Harlow, 1997).
[17] Davis, *Youth and the Condition of Britain*, p. 89.
[18] John Clarke, Stuart Hall, Tony Jefferson and Brian Roberts , 'Subcultures, Cultures and Class: A Theoretical Overview', in Stuart Hall and Tony Jefferson (eds), *Resistance Through Rituals: Youth Subcultures in Post-War Britain*, (London, 1996), pp. 21–25.
[19] Davis, *Youth and the Condition of Britain*, pp. 91–92; Osgerby, *Youth in Britain Since 1945*, p. 19.
[20] Davis, *Youth and the Condition of Britain*; Osgerby, *Youth in Britain Since 1945*.
[21] Osgerby, 'Postwar Media Representations of Youth', pp. 323–329.
[22] John Springhall, *Youth, Popular Culture and Moral Panics: Penny Gaffs to Gangsta Rap 1830-1996*, (Basingstoke, 1998); Eileen Yeo, '"The Boy is the Father of the Man": Moral Panic Over Working-Class Youth 1850 to the Present', *Labour History Review*, 69.2 (2004).

seaside clashes between Mods and Rockers, which sparked moral panic about young adults, delinquency, subculture and drugs.[23] Angela Bartie has shown that concerns over mid-1960s Glasgow gangs and youth violence were often unsupported by empirical evidence.[24] Richard Grayson, Catherine Ellis and Nick Bentley have examined how political groups represented and reacted to young adults in the 1960s.[25] Together, these studies have shown how post-war youth was conceived and reacted to, but they reveal more about politics and the media than they do about 'ordinary' young adults.

Extensive research has also been conducted on the discipline and regulation of young adults. Louise Jackson and Angela Bartie have analysed how the police, courts, family and community regulated and disciplined young adults in Scotland and England across the post-war period.[26] Jackson's work on Manchester coffee bars has examined police strategies towards the moral regulation of young adults.[27] Abigail Wills has explored conceptions of male youth and citizenship within the juvenile justice system between 1950 and 1970.[28] Georgina Brewis has examined how the 1960s volunteering service was seen as a palliative to delinquency and 'unattached' young adults who did not use youth services.[29] These studies have highlighted the link between the discipline of young adults and national anxieties as well

[23] Stanley Cohen, *Folk Devils and Moral Panics: The Creation of the Mods and Rockers*, (London, 1972).
[24] Angela Bartie, 'Moral Panics and Glasgow Gangs: Exploring "the New Wave of Glasgow Hooliganism", 1965-1970', *Contemporary British History*, 24.5 (2010).
[25] Richard Grayson, 'Mods, Rockers and Juvenile Delinquency in 1964: The Government Response', *Contemporary British History*, 12.1 (1998); Catherine Ellis, 'The Younger Generation: The Labour Party and the 1959 Youth Commission', *Journal of British Studies*, 41.2 (2002); Catherine Ellis, 'No Hammock for the Idle: The Conservative Party, "Youth" and the Welfare State in the 1960s', *Twentieth Century British History*, 16.4 (2005); Nick Bentley, 'The Young Ones: A Reassessment of the British New Left's Representation of 1950s Youth Subcultures', *European Journal of Cultural Studies*, 8.1 (2005).
[26] Louise Jackson and Angela Bartie, *Policing Youth: Britain 1945-70*, (Manchester, 2014); Angela Bartie and Louise Jackson, 'Youth Crime and Preventative Policing in Post-War Scotland (c.1945-71)', *Twentieth Century British History*, 22.1 (2011).
[27] Louise Jackson, 'The Coffee Club Menace: Policing Youth, Leisure and Sexuality in Post-War Manchester', *Cultural and Social History*, 5.3 (2008).
[28] Abigail Wills, 'Delinquency, Masculinity and Citizenship in England 1950-1970', *Past & Present*, 187 (2005).
[29] Georgina Brewis, 'Youth in Action? British Young People and Voluntary Service 1958-1970', in Melanie Oppenheimer and Nicholas Deakin (eds), *Beveridge and Voluntary Action in Britain and the Wider British World*, (Manchester, 2011).

as augmenting our understanding of institutions that dealt with young adults. However, they focus on representation and treatment rather than lived experiences.

Histories of post-war youth have also often focused on unrepresentative minority groups. In particular, cultural theorists, sociologists and historians have explored sub- and countercultures such as Teddy Boys, Mods, Rockers and Hippies; seeing them as collective, rebellious solutions to young people's shared problem with the dominant (middle-class) culture.[30] During the 1970s and 1980s the Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies (CCCS) argued that youth subcultures were a manifestation of class struggle.[31] More recently, Colin Campbell has examined mid-1960s counterculture, arguing that it arose from a blend of middle-class political radicalism and beat culture, while Celia Hughes has explored the everyday lives of young 1960s far-left activists.[32] Keith Gildart has argued that pop music was central to young adults' lives in the 1960s but focuses on stars and pop bands.[33] Even Fowler and Osgerby have focused on sub- or countercultural groups in their work despite arguing for the increasing importance and visibility of youth as a whole in the post-war period.[34] These studies reveal much about minority groups but little about the majority.

Many existing studies have also focused predominantly on young men. Osgerby confines discussion of young women to one chapter and never fully explores how gender structured everyday experience.[35] Langhamer's excellent work on young women unfortunately only goes up to the very early 1960s.[36] Angela McRobbie sought to redress the

[30] Michael Brake, *Comparative Youth Culture: The Sociology of Youth Culture and Youth Subcultures in America, Britain and Canada*, (London, 1985), pp. 6–8.
[31] Stuart Hall and Tony Jefferson (eds), *Resistance Through Rituals: Youth Subcultures in Post-War Britain*, (London, 1996).
[32] Colin Campbell, 'Beatniks, Moral Crusaders, Delinquent Teenagers and Hippies: Accounting for the Counter Culture', in Marcus Collins (ed.), *The Permissive Society and its Enemies*, (London, 2007); Celia Hughes, 'Young Socialist Men in 1960s Britain: Subjectivity and Sociability', *History Workshop Journal*, 73.1 (2012); Celia Hughes, *Young Lives on the Left: Sixties Activism and the Liberation of the Self*, (Manchester, 2015).
[33] Keith Gildart, *Images of England Through Popular Music: Class, Youth and Rock 'n' Roll 1955-1976*, (Basingstoke, 2013).
[34] David Fowler, *Youth Culture in Modern Britain c.1920-c.1970*, (Basingstoke and New York, 2008); Osgerby, *Youth in Britain Since 1945*.
[35] Osgerby, *Youth in Britain Since 1945*, pp. 50–63.
[36] Langhamer, *Women's Leisure*; Claire Langhamer, 'Leisure, Pleasure and Courtship: Young Women in England 1920-1960', in Mary Jo Maynes, Birgitte Søland, and Christina Benninghaus (eds), *Secret Gardens, Satanic Mills: Placing Girls in European History, 1750-1960*, (Bloomington, 2005).

male focus in subcultural studies by arguing that post-war young women occupied different spaces to young men, such as the home and bedroom.[37] Her work, however, still fitted girls into subcultural theory rather than offering alternative analyses. Pamela Church Gibson has shown how the market subordinated young women in the 1960s through the image of the 'Dolly Bird', but this is again a study of representation not experience.[38] Post-war young women have not been considered fully alongside young men, their experiences outside narrow subcultures have not been centred, and gender has not been explored in the experiences of either young men or young women.

There has also been some attention to post-war youth as consumers and to the relationship between youth culture and the market. Osgerby, Christian Bugge, Axel Schildt and Detleft Siegfried have debated how far consumerism and the market created youth subcultures in the 1960s and whether this stripped subcultures of their radical potential.[39] While the debate remains unresolved, these studies have nuanced our understanding of subculture, affluence, and the market. However, they also focus on subculture rather than on how the majority of young adults interacted with the market.

Overall, scholarship on post-war youth in Britain has deepened our understanding of the representations of youth, regulation and discipline, minority groups, and the relationship between consumerism and cultural authenticity. However, this work has done little to dispel popular myths about 1960s youth culture. Indeed, while historians have argued that contemporary images of youth in the 1960s are unrepresentative of the majority of young adults, there has been no comprehensive research into the lived experience of that majority.[40] Davis contended that this gap between 'image' and 'reality' exists because youth has been

[37] Angela McRobbie, *Feminism and Youth Culture*, (Basingstoke, 2000).
[38] Pamela Church Gibson, 'The Deification of the Dolly Bird: Selling Swinging London, Fuelling Feminism', *Journal for the Study of British Cultures*, 14.2 (2007).
[39] Bill Osgerby, '"Well it's Saturday night an' I just got paid": Youth, Consumerism and Hegemony in Post-War Britain', *Contemporary Record*, 6.2 (1992); Christian Bugge, '"Selling Youth in the Age of Affluence": Marketing to Youth in Britain Since 1959', in Lawrence Black and Hugh Pemberton (eds), *An Affluent Society? Britain's Post-War Golden Age Revisited*, (Aldershot, 2004); Axel Schildt and Detleft Siegfried, 'Youth, Consumption, and Politics in the Age of Radical Change', in Axel Schildt and Detleft Siegfried (eds), *Between Marx and Coca-Cola: Youth Cultures in Changing European Societies 1960-1980*, (London, 2006).
[40] Davis, *Youth and the Condition of Britain*, p. 11.

over-theorised, the problematic or spectacular (such as subcultures) have been over-emphasised, and because youth has been used as a metaphor for the hopes and fears of society.[41] This thesis addresses this problem by examining the lives of 'ordinary' working- and lower middle-class young adults in the 1960s from their own perspectives, by seeing them as historical actors rather than a metaphor for the state of society, and by interrogating the relationship between lived experience and popular discourse.

THE LIVED EXPERIENCE OF YOUTH

As Selina Todd argues, the importance of studying experience lies not simply in elucidating 'daily life' but in the fact that material experience is what shapes people's understanding of both themselves and the world around them.[42] For many of the historians who came of age after the 1990s cultural turn – of which I am one – social and cultural history are neither truly distinct nor in conflict with each other.[43] A lived experience approach to the history of youth in 1960s England is therefore important for two reasons. First, it does offer an older-style social history of daily life that is long overdue. Second, it combines the social and the cultural to examine how those lived experiences shaped people's sense of self, what it meant to be a young adult in the 1960s, and how people understand both the 1960s and youth as a stage in the life cycle. As this thesis demonstrates, retrospective personal testimonies are invaluable for understanding the relationship between experience, memory and selfhood. Moreover, those who came of age in the 1960s very consciously use their past experiences to make sense of their youth and the wider world.

Only a few historians have begun to examine the lived experience of youth in the 1960s. These historians have challenged stereotypes of the period as characterised by generational conflict.[44] Todd and Hilary Young have found widespread inter-generational co-

[41] Davis, *Youth and the Condition of Britain*, pp. 12–23.
[42] Selina Todd, 'Class, Experience and Britain's Twentieth Century', *Social History*, 39.4 (2014), p. 495.
[43] Todd, 'Class, Experience and Britain's Twentieth Century', p. 490.
[44] Gillis, *Youth and History*, p. 205.

operation due to economic security in the 1950s and 1960s.[45] Gillian Mitchell has argued that parents could be tolerant of pop music and cultural change.[46] Adrian Horn has examined youth culture between 1945 and 1960 in Britain, using some oral histories, but he focuses on assessing the impact of 'Americanisation', does not offer a fine-grained social history and, unfortunately, does not extend his analysis into the 1960s.[47] Horn does, however, also challenge ideas of generational conflict. By looking beyond the press, police, subculture and political discourse, these studies begin to explore how class, affluence and the family structured young adults' lived experiences. These are important starting points but much remains to be done to uncover the wider lived experience of young adults in the 1960s, and particularly during the late 1960s which few existing studies have examined.

This lived experience approach has, however, been used extensively in histories of youth in the interwar years and earlier. It has re-centred the voices of 'ordinary' people and demonstrated the diversity of working-class life, both of which this thesis aims to develop in studying 1960s youth. Fowler has used lived experience to examine young adults' work and leisure in interwar Britain.[48] Using a thick description approach Jerry White has studied young adults in interwar Campbell Bunk in East London, while Elizabeth Roberts has used oral history to understand the lives of the working classes in Lancaster, Preston and Barrow between 1890 and 1940.[49] Davies has explored young adults' leisure in pre-Second World War Manchester and Salford, while Langhamer has analysed young women's leisure in Manchester between 1920 and 1960.[50] Todd has examined young women's work and leisure between 1918 and 1950.[51]

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[45] Selina Todd and Hilary Young, 'Baby-Boomers to "Beanstalkers": Making the Modern Teenager in Post-War Britain', *Cultural and Social History*, 9.3 (2012).
[46] Gillian Mitchell, 'Reassessing "the Generation Gap": Bill Haley's 1957 Tour of Britain, Inter-Generational Relations and Attitudes to Rock "n" Roll in the Late 1950s', *Twentieth Century British History*, 24.4 (2013).
[47] Adrian Horn, *Juke Box Britain: Americanisation and Youth Culture 1945-1960*, (Manchester, 2009).
[48] Fowler, *The First Teenagers*.
[49] Jerry White, *The Worst Street in North London: Campbell Bunk, Islington Between the Wars*, (London, 1986); Elizabeth Roberts, *A Woman's Place: An Oral History of Working Class Women 1890-1940*, (Oxford, 1984).
[50] Davies, *Leisure, Gender and Poverty*; Langhamer, *Women's Leisure*.
[51] Selina Todd, *Young Women, Work and Family in England 1918-1950*, (Oxford, 2005); Selina Todd, 'Young Women, Work and Leisure in Interwar England', *The Historical Journal*, 48.3 (2005).

These studies demonstrate how class, gender, poverty, family and locality interact with age and generation to produce young adults' heterogeneous lived experiences.[52] By analysing these factors in the lived experiences of young adults in the 1960s, this thesis deepens our understanding of everyday life and challenges assumptions of a homogenous 1960s youth culture by uncovering the diversity and individuality of experience. Indeed, Todd has called for historians of post-war youth to take this approach:

> This literature [on pre-1945 youth] presents two challenges for current students and historians of modern Britain. One is to write more comprehensive histories of youth after 1945… to explore youth beyond conspicuous subcultures. The second is to find ways of analysing youthful experience within the life-cycle, rather than simply focusing on accepting the representation of youth as a separate interest group by the press and by political discourse.[53]

This thesis answers Todd's call by taking a lived experience approach and by assessing the similarities and differences between young adults in the 1960s and their predecessors. It also analyses the relationship between popular and personal memories of 1960s youth, and examines the meanings of youth as a stage in the life cycle, an experience and a memory.

Several historians have recently investigated the selfhood and subjectivity of youth. Melanie Tebbutt has explored how interwar boys negotiated discourse and experience to produce masculine selves.[54] Hughes has used oral history to examine how far-left activists in the 1960s created a radical self by negotiating new and old models of social, political and gendered identities.[55] Penny Tinkler has explored how young women's magazines in the 1960s promoted new ideas of selfhood based on freedom and opportunity, and how these clashed with older ideas of femininity centred on marriage and motherhood.[56] These studies show that young adults' identities are produced by negotiations between experience and discourse and are shaped by gender, generation, class and the contemporary socio-economic

[52] Todd, 'Flappers and Factory Lads', p. 720.
[53] Todd, 'Flappers and Factory Lads', p. 726.
[54] Melanie Tebbutt, *Being Boys: Youth, Leisure and Identity in the Inter-War Years*, (Manchester, 2012).
[55] Hughes, *Young Lives on the Left*.
[56] Penny Tinkler, '"Are you really living?" if not "Get with it!" The Teenage Self and Lifestyle in Young Women's Magazines, Britain 1957-1970', *Cultural and Social History*, 11.4 (2014).

landscape. This thesis follows their example to examine the lives and identities of young adults in 1960s England.

UNDERSTANDING THE 1960s AND THE POST-WAR PERIOD

Recently, historians have reappraised and nuanced their understandings of the 1960s. In particular historians have reconsidered whether the 1960s was as affluent and permissive as previous studies and popular images of the period suggest. By uncovering young adults' everyday experiences and challenging stereotypes of youth this thesis continues this historiographical trend and deepens our understanding of post-war social, economic and political change.

This thesis challenges ideas of post-war affluence by showing that affluence was relative among young adults in the 1960s. Lawrence Black and Hugh Pemberton have argued that narratives of affluence better account for rising popular consumerism and improved living standards in the post-war period than narratives of relative economic decline.[57] Indeed, living standards, real wages and consumer choice grew in the post-war years, particularly in the 1960s, boosted by full employment and a growing welfare state. Between 1950 and 1973 the British economy grew at an average of three per cent and the purchasing power of incomes doubled.[58] Consumer spending rose 45 per cent between 1952 and 1964 alone.[59] Working- and lower middle-class people, for the first time, could purchase fridges, washing machines, vacuum cleaners and cars; they could go on holiday and shop at the new supermarkets.[60] Many (working-class) young adults particularly benefitted due to their position in the labour market and lack of financial responsibilities.

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[57] Lawrence Black and Hugh Pemberton, 'The Uses (and Abuses) of Affluence', in Lawrence Black and Hugh Pemberton (eds), *An Affluent Society? Britain's Post-War Golden Age Revisited*, (Aldershot, 2004), pp. 1–2, 4.
[58] Paul Addison, *No Turning Back: The Peacetime Revolutions of Post-War Britain*, (Oxford, 2010), p. 168.
[59] Peter Clarke, *Hope and Glory: Britain 1900-2000*, (London, 2004), p. 254.
[60] Addison, *No Turning Back*, pp. 171–173; Clarke, *Hope and Glory*, p. 254.

However, historians have now shown that affluence was relative and unevenly distributed.[61] Many consumer goods were bought on Hire Purchase, meaning affluence was partly based on debt.[62] Even at the time social researchers Brian Abel Smith and Peter Townsend questioned 'affluence' when they 'rediscovered' poverty in 1965.[63] Timothy Hatton and Roy Bailey have argued that poverty was obscured rather than eliminated in the post-war period.[64] In a study of 1960s Crown Street in Liverpool, Todd found that poverty still shaped working-class life as approximately 12 per cent of residents were in poverty despite generally rising living standards.[65] Shinobu Majima and Mike Savage have argued that affluence is a fragile and contested term, made into a zeitgeist by post-war sociologists.[66] Historians of the 1960s, therefore, must remain aware that rising living standards and increasing consumerism existed alongside poverty for some working-class people.

This thesis also challenges ideas of the 'permissive' 1960s. Until the mid 2000s, histories often depicted the 1960s as a period of progress and permissiveness. Arthur Marwick contended that a 'cultural revolution' took place in Western Europe and America between 1958 and 1974 that transformed society, culture, material conditions, relationships and personal freedoms for 'ordinary' people.[67] In Paul Addison's words, the 1960s has often been seen as a 'Liberal Hour' of permissiveness and sexual revolution, which loosened the social constraints of the 1940s and 1950s.[68] Callum Brown and Hera Cook have both argued that the 1960s witnessed a radical upheaval in sexual practice, though they disagree on why.[69]

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[61] Black and Pemberton, 'The Uses (and Abuses) of Affluence', p. 4; Selina Todd, *The People: The Rise and Fall of the Working Class 1910-2010*, (London, 2014), pp. 199–212.
[62] Addison, *No Turning Back*, p. 57; Selina Todd, 'Affluence, Class and Crown Street: Reinvestigating the Post-War Working Class', *Contemporary British History*, 22.4 (2008), p. 506.
[63] Ian Gazeley, *Poverty in Britain 1900-1965*, (Basingstoke, 2003), pp. 178–179.
[64] Timothy Hatton and Roy Bailey, 'Seebohm Rowntree and the Postwar Poverty Puzzle', *Economic History Review*, 53.3 (2000).
[65] Todd, 'Affluence, Class and Crown Street', pp. 505–506.
[66] Shinobu Majima and Mike Savage, 'Contesting Affluence: An Introduction', *Contemporary British History*, 22.4 (2008), pp. 447–448.
[67] Arthur Marwick, *The Sixties: Cultural Revolution in Britain, France, Italy and the United States, c.1958-c.1974*, (Oxford, 1998), pp. 14–15.
[68] Addison, *No Turning Back*, p. 196.
[69] Callum Brown, *The Death of Christian Britain: Understanding Secularisation 1800-2000*, (London, 2009); Callum Brown, 'Sex, Religion and the Single Woman c.1950-75: The Importance of a "Short" Sexual Revolution to the English Crisis of the Sixties', *Twentieth Century British History*, 22.2 (2011); Hera Cook, 'The English Sexual Revolution: Technology and Social Change', *History Workshop*

Others have suggested liberalising legislation in the 1960s, around censorship, divorce, abortion and homosexuality, gave the 1960s a permissive flavour at the time.[70]

More recently, historians have challenged this idea of a 'permissive' 1960s. John Davis has argued that not all legislation was permissive in the period and that drug legislation actually became tighter, while Nick Thomas has dispelled myths of a widespread radical student body.[71] Seemingly permissive legislation such as the legalisation of abortion never enjoyed intra- let alone cross-party support and there is a strong argument that legislation was enacted to prevent worse situations, such as backstreet abortions, rather than through moral conviction that abortion was right.[72] Jeffrey Weeks has argued that there was no revolution and significantly less permissiveness and promiscuity than is often assumed.[73] Lesley Hall, Trevor Fisher, Marcus Collins and Frank Mort have all argued that the social changes of the 1960s had earlier roots, particularly in the 1950s and often from the late nineteenth century, suggesting that the 1960s was not a period of isolated revolution.[74] Harris and O'Brien Castro have argued that only a minority experienced the 'swinging sixties' and that, for most, it was a period of mundane daily reality.[75]

So what was the 1960s that these young adults lived in? Youth had become a more distinct and visible stage of life at a time when the modern life cycle – leaving school, finding a job, marrying young, having a family and then living long enough to retire at 65 – was becoming normal due to the declining age of marriage, advances in welfare and rising living

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Journal, 59.1 (2005); Hera Cook, *The Long Sexual Revolution: English Women, Sex and Contraception 1800-1975*, (Oxford, 2005).

[70] Mark Donnelly, *Sixties Britain: Culture, Society and Politics*, (Harlow, 2005), pp. 108–123.

[71] John Davis, 'The London Drug Scene and the Making of Drug Policy 1965-73', *Twentieth Century British History*, 17.1 (2006); Nick Thomas, 'Challenging Myths of the 1960s: The Case of Student Protest in Britain', *Twentieth Century British History*, 13.3 (2002).

[72] Christie Davies, *Permissive Britain: Social Change in the Sixties and Seventies*, (London, 1975).

[73] Weeks, *Sex, Politics and Society*, pp. 253–254.

[74] Lesley Hall, *Sex, Gender and Social Change in Britain Since 1880*, (Basingstoke, 2000); Trevor Fisher, 'Permissiveness and the Politics of Morality', *Contemporary Record*, 7.1 (1993); Marcus Collins, 'Introduction: The Permissive Society and its Enemies', in Marcus Collins (ed.), *The Permissive Society and its Enemies*, (London, 2007); Frank Mort, *Capital Affairs: London and the Making of the Permissive Society*, (New Haven and London, 2010); Frank Mort, 'The Permissive Society Revisited', *Twentieth Century British History*, 22.2 (2011).

[75] Harris and O'Brien Castro, 'Introduction'.

standards.[76] The changing structures of economics and the labour market benefitted young adults and increased their spending power in a period of general, though relative, affluence. There were some moves towards a more permissive and progressive society, particularly in sexual experiences, though these were tempered by the persistence of older, more conservative ideas. Family and gender roles began to shift, particularly as married women entered the workforce, though these were moderated by the continuation of older gendered ideals.[77] Ultimately, young adults in the 1960s experienced their youth at a point of both change and continuity, at a time of new opportunities but also a time when those opportunities were not necessarily easy to realise. This thesis asks how this landscape of the 1960s affected the experiences of youth and how it gave meaning to youth both as an experience and a stage in the life cycle.

Importantly, as Brian Harrison noted, most people were not aware that it was 'the sixties' at the time.[78] As Mark Donnelly has suggested, 'the sixties' has become a myth, used as a motif for cultural and social movements that were, in reality, London-centric and experienced by a very small minority.[79] Recent histories of the 1960s have acknowledged this and deepened our understanding of society, culture and politics in the decade. This thesis examines the lived experience of youth in the 1960s within this context of reappraisal. It challenges stereotypes about young adults in the 1960s – their permissiveness, promiscuity, affluence, rebelliousness and freedom – to show that new ideas and practices conflicted with older values and behaviours. Far from being evidence of the 'swinging sixties' *par excellence*, young adults in the 1960s are evidence of the tussle between continuity and change in the period. The thesis also examines how people who were young adults in the 1960s interact

[76] Michael Anderson, 'The Emergence of the Modern Life Cycle in Britain', *Social History*, 10.1 (1985).
[77] Lynn Abrams, 'Mothers and Daughters: Negotiating the Discourse on the "Good Woman" in 1950s and 1960s Britain', in Nancy Christie and Michael Gauvreau (eds), *The Sixties and Beyond: Dechristianization in North America and Western Europe 1945-2000*, (Toronto, 2013); Dolly Smith Wilson, 'A New Look at the Affluent Worker: The Good Working Mother in Post-War Britain', *Twentieth Century British History*, 17.2 (2006).
[78] Brian Harrison, *Seeking a Role: The United Kingdom 1951-1970*, (Oxford, 2009), p. 473.
[79] Donnelly, *Sixties Britain*.

with these mythical ideas of the 'swinging sixties', when their own experiences were far more 'ordinary', to better understand the relationship between memory, experience and selfhood.

METHODOLOGY

This thesis takes a 'long view' of the 1960s to examine experiences, changes and continuity from the late 1950s to the early 1970s. This is because people's lives and historical phenomena do not neatly obey decadal boundaries. However, this is not based on Marwick's 'long 1960s' of 'cultural revolution' between 1958 and 1974 because it is questionable whether such a revolution happened.

Several terms are used in contemporary writings and subsequent histories to define twentieth-century youth. The term 'teenager' was coined in 1940s America and imported to Britain in the 1950s.[80] Unhelpfully, it has consumerist connotations and suggests a truncated group between the ages of 13 and 19. 'Adolescent' was often favoured in the earlier twentieth century and unhelpfully assumes youth is an inherently problematic period of life.[81] The term 'youth', when used to describe an individual in the post-war period, usually referred to young men under the age of 21 (often with implications of deviancy and delinquency), whereas young women were referred to as 'girls'. Both of these terms are unhelpful because of their aged, gendered and delinquent connotations. In this thesis, 'youth' is taken to mean the period between leaving school and marriage, which in the 1960s was usually between 15 and 22-24, as this best covers the stage of life that young people understood as their youth. Individuals are referred to as young adults. 'Youth culture' is taken to mean the patterns of activity and values that young adults experienced in the 1960s, though it does not include sub- and countercultures, and acknowledges variance in experiences and attitudes.

This thesis examines the lives of young adults in a variety of locations across Britain, though predominantly in England. They were born between approximately 1940 and 1955. The thesis studies primarily working-class young adults (though some were lower middle

[80] Savage, *Teenage*, p. xiii.
[81] Springhall, *Coming of Age*, pp. 28–34.

class), as defined by having parents who predominantly worked in manual or non-professional, white-collar jobs. They usually conformed to the typical youth pattern of economic freedom and a relative lack of responsibility between starting work near to 15 and marriage in their early twenties. Most worked during their youth; a few undertook some further education but higher education is not explored as this was a predominantly middle-class experience. I strongly suspect that all the young adults in this thesis are white, though anonymous archived histories and personal testimonies make certainty impossible. This lack of diversity is due to the difficulty in obtaining and wider general lack of material exploring the experiences of people of diverse ethnicities in the 1960s, despite this being a significant period of immigration to Britain. As such, and unfortunately, this thesis is unable to explore race despite a substantial project on this certainly being needed.

SOURCES

To explore the lived experiences and memories of young adults in the 1960s this thesis uses contemporary social surveys, MOA responses and oral history interviews. All names used for respondents and interviewees are pseudonyms. This thesis uses 30 contemporary social surveys and commentaries on youth. These are all published, with the exception of Norbert Elias' *Young Worker Project* (YWP), which was left unfinished and exists as archived interview schedules.[82] This is one of the first scholarly analyses of Elias' material.[83] The surveys offer both national and local accounts and provide rich insights into young adults' daily lives and contemporary concerns surrounding youth.

A few of the surveys take a comprehensive ethnographic approach, studying young adults' employment, leisure and relationships. Michael Carter wrote two studies from research conducted in Sheffield in 1959 that examined the work, home and leisure lives of

[82] Young Worker Project, University of Leicester (YWP).
[83] John Goodwin and Henrietta O'Connor at the University of Leicester are also working with the YWP. See John Goodwin and Henrietta O'Connor, 'Norbert Elias and the Lost Young Worker Project', *Journal of Youth Studies*, 9.2 (2006).

200 secondary modern school leavers for a year after they left school.[84] Peter Willmott's 1959 study examined the daily lives of 246 young men aged 14-20 in Bethnal Green, while between 1964 and 1966 Pearl Jephcott surveyed approximately 3000 15-19-year-olds in Scotland, though she focused more upon leisure than work.[85] The 1963 YWP focused more on work, but also surveyed leisure and home life, for 15-19-year-olds in Leicester who had left school in 1960 or 1962. This thesis draws on 125 of the original 4160 YWP interviews.

Other ethnographic surveys focused on one aspect of young adults' lives. Peter Mann's 1963 survey of young men aged 16-21 in Sheffield examined their working lives while Noirin Ni Bhroin investigated the experiences of young women aged 14-21 in a factory near Dublin in 1969.[86] Jalna Hanmer's 1962 survey examined the leisure habits of 430 young women in Greater London.[87] Mark Abrams and Pearl & Dean examined the national earning, spending and saving habits of young adults from leaving school to their mid-twenties in 1959 and 1971 respectively.[88] Several studies surveyed young adults' sexual behaviour. The British Medical Association compiled statistics from a 1961 government report on rates of venereal disease, pregnancy and sexual practice among young adults nationally.[89] Michael Schofield conducted a national survey into courtship and sex among nearly 2000 15-19-year-olds in the early 1960s and re-interviewed 376 respondents aged 24-26 in the late 1960s.[90] Geoffrey Gorer interviewed 156 16-21-year-olds in 1969 as part of his wider survey on sex in Britain.[91]

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[84] Michael Carter, *Home, School and Work: A Study of the Education and Employment of Young People in Britain*, (Oxford, 1962); Michael Carter, *Education, Employment and Leisure: A Study of 'Ordinary' Young People*, (Oxford, 1963).
[85] Peter Willmott, *Adolescent Boys of East London*, (London, 1966); Pearl Jephcott, *A Time of One's Own: Leisure and Young People*, (Edinburgh and London, 1967).
[86] Peter Mann, *Young Men and Work: A Sociological Enquiry*, (Sheffield, 1966); Noirin Ni Bhroin, *The Motivation and Productivity of Young Women Workers*, (Dublin, 1969).
[87] Jalna Hanmer, *Girls at Leisure*, (London, 1964).
[88] Mark Abrams, *The Teenage Consumer*, (London, 1959); Pearl & Dean Ltd., *The Young Market 1971: A Definitive Report and Analysis of the Teenagers in Great Britain*, (London, 1971).
[89] British Medical Association, *Venereal Disease and Young People*, (London, 1964).
[90] Michael Schofield, *The Sexual Behaviour of Young People*, (London, 1965); Michael Schofield, *The Sexual Behaviour of Young Adults: A Follow Up Study to the Sexual Behaviour of Young People*, (London, 1973).
[91] Geoffrey Gorer, *Sex and Marriage in England Today: A Study of the Views and Experiences of the Under-45s*, (London, 1971).

Alexia McWhinnie surveyed 166 unmarried mothers in Scotland in 1967.[92] Historians have often used these ethnographic surveys, particularly those by Carter, Jephcott, Willmott and Abrams. This thesis re-uses them because of their valuable and detailed material, but offers fresh understandings of 1960s youth in England by combining them with lesser used surveys and personal testimonies.

A number of studies used here surveyed youth clubs over the 1960s.[93] Their findings tended to focus on 'unattached' young people who did not use the youth service and on projects set up by youth workers, rather than on the lived experiences of young adults, and so are used less here than the ethnographic studies. Two surveys – one by Roma Morton-Williams and Stewart Finch conducted nationally in the mid-1960s, the other by Thelma Veness conducted in the West and Home Counties in 1956 – examined the attitudes of school leavers to work and future life. [94] These provide insight into young adults' ambitions and the transition to work, but respondents were often still at school and the surveys offered little detail on daily life. Finally, a number of the studies were more commentaries on youth and society in the 1960s than social surveys, which often highlighted perceived 'problems' young adults had with authority, adults and morality.[95] However, they still offer useful perspectives on the contemporary issues and lifestyles of young adults.

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[92] Alexia McWhinnie, *Unmarried Mothers: Are the Social Services Adequate? A Report of a Survey of Casework Facilities in Scotland for Unmarried Mothers and Women with Extra-Marital Pregnancies*, (Edinburgh, 1970).

[93] John Bazalgette, *Freedom, Authority and the Young Adult: A Report to the Department of Education and Science on the Young Adult Resource Project*, (London, 1971); Derek Cox, *A Community Approach to Youth Work in East London: 'Avenues Unlimited' (The Tower Hamlets Youth Project)*, (London, 1970); George Goetschius, *Working With Unattached Youth: Problem, Approach, Method. The Report of an Enquiry into the Ways and Means of Contacting and Working with Unattached Young People in an Inner London Borough*, (London, 1998); Mary Morse, *The Unattached: A Report of the Three Year Project Carried Out by the National Association of Youth Clubs*, (Middlesex, 1965).

[94] Roma Morton-Williams and Stewart Finch, *Young School Leavers: Report of a Survey Among Young People, Parents and Teachers*, (London, 1968); Thelma Veness, *School Leavers: Their Aspirations and Expectations*, (London, 1962).

[95] Eustace Chesser, Charles Davey, Geoffrey Gorer, Stuart Maclure, John Nichols, and William Watson, *Teenage Morals*, (London, 1961); John Barron Mays, *The Young Pretenders: A Study of Teenage Culture in Contemporary Society*, (London, 1965); Peter Laurie, *The Teenage Revolution*, (London, 1965); Gordon Stewart Prince, *Teenagers Today*, (London, 1968).

Angela Davis has noted that post-war surveys on motherhood are tied to contemporary anxieties and often try to influence policy.[96] Many of the studies used here were concerned with 'unattached' youth, juvenile delinquency, permissiveness and moral decline; sex, pregnancy and venereal disease; affluence and consumption; and with the young adult as a future citizen. Consequently, contemporary social surveys often pathologised young adults, created stereotypes and assumed young adults were a problem requiring solution. This undoubtedly coloured their methodologies, findings and analysis. This thesis unfortunately does not have the space to explore this fully, but it would be an important topic for future research. Nevertheless, as long as their subjectivities are handled with care, these studies provide important statistical evidence over a wide geographical area and offer an ethnographic approach to groups that personal testimonies cannot. As Savage has shown, in the post-war period the social sciences, particularly sociology, became increasingly concerned with sampling the ordinary, everyday world and so offer in-depth accounts of lived experience.[97]

The thesis also uses 407 responses from 177 people to 11 post-1981 MOA directives covering a range of topics. Mass Observation was founded in 1937 as an 'anthropology of ourselves' at the University of Sussex to collect information through surveys, diaries and directives.[98] It was revived in 1981 after a twenty-year hiatus and now issues directives several times a year. It emphasises obtaining responses from 'ordinary' people and asks respondents to be both autobiographers and social commentators.[99] As of 2013, Mass Observation had had 4500 volunteers since 1981, with approximately 500 active respondents.[100] There are more female Observers than male and they tend to be older, from

[96] Angela Davis, 'A Critical Perspective on British Social Surveys and Community Studies and Their Accounts of Married Life c.1945-70', *Cultural and Social History*, 6.1 (2009).
[97] Mike Savage, *Identities and Social Change in Britain Since 1940: The Politics of Method*, (Oxford, 2010), p. 7.
[98] Annebella Pollen, 'Research Methodology in Mass Observation Past and Present: "Scientifically about as valuable as a chimpanzee's tea party at the zoo"?', *History Workshop Journal*, 75.1 (2013), p. 213.
[99] Dorothy Sheridan, Brian Street, and David Bloome, *Writing Ourselves: Mass Observation and Literacy Practices*, (New Jersey, 2000), pp. 48–49.
[100] Pollen, 'Research Methodology in Mass Observation', p. 218.

the South East and middle class. The project particularly attracts people interested in writing about themselves, the past and contemporary events.[101] Moreover, the directive topics are not necessarily 'normal' biographical subjects and respondents sometimes try to give the answer they think the archive wants.[102] Yet, as Langhamer has noted, responses are a valuable insight into what the world looks like to each Observer and can be balanced by using them alongside other sources.[103] Langhamer also argues that respondents write about their pasts from a recent perspective, which can reveal the interplay of both popular and personal memory – something crucial to this thesis.[104]

This thesis uses 75 oral history interviews. Most of these (24 and 42 respectively) are drawn from Elizabeth Roberts' *Social Life in Barrow, Lancaster and Preston* project and from Paul Thompson's *Families, Social Mobility and Ageing* study, both conducted in the late 1980s.[105] These interviews exist as archived transcripts and take a life history approach following reasonably structured questions. Roberts' project captures the daily lives and relationships of working-class people in over 500 tapes and transcripts, while Thompson's project comprises 170 interviews across three generations with people from a variety of classes and locations across Britain. Archived interviews can be inferior to original recordings and are not always closely aligned to the topic being studied.[106] They are, however, not completely dissimilar to first-hand interviews, can provide access to the life histories of a group larger than one researcher can reach, and can yield new findings when interrogated

[101] Pollen, 'Research Methodology in Mass Observation', pp. 219–220.
[102] Pollen, 'Research Methodology in Mass Observation', pp. 228–229.
[103] Claire Langhamer, *The English in Love: The Intimate Story of Emotional Revolution*, (Oxford, 2013), pp. xvi–xvii.
[104] Langhamer, *The English in Love*, p. xviii.
[105] Social and Family Life in Preston, Lancaster & Barrow 1940-1970, University of Lancaster (SFL); Paul Thompson and Harold Newby, Families, Social Mobility and Ageing: An Intergenerational Approach 1900-1988 (FSMA) [computer file], Colchester, Essex: UK Data Archive [distributor], July 2005, SN4938.
[106] Joanna Bornat, Parvati Raghyram, and Leroi Henry, 'Revisiting the Archives: A Case Study from the History of Geriatric Medicine', *Sociological Research Online*, 17.2 (2012), doi: 10.5153/sro.2590; April Gallwey, 'The Rewards of Using Archived Oral Histories in Research: The Case of the Millennium Memory Bank', *Oral History*, 41.1 (2013); Ronald Grele, 'On Using Oral History Collections: An Introduction', *The Journal of American History*, 74.2 (1987), p. 577.

from new perspectives.[107] Moreover, both Roberts' and Thompson's interviews contain substantial and insightful discussions of youth in the 1960s.

I also conducted nine interviews with people who spent at least some of their youth in Birmingham in the 1960s and had been working or lower middle class at the time (though some experienced later upwards social mobility). I found these interviewees through the online Birmingham History Forum.[108] I chose Birmingham because it was a large and vibrant city in the 1960s, and has not been studied in the way places such as Manchester and London have; though this thesis does not offer any in-depth analysis of Birmingham itself due to the small sample size of interviews. These interviews are important because they focus more closely on youth rather than taking a comprehensive life history. They offer detail in areas in which other sources are less developed such as relationships with family and popular images of the 1960s. They also allowed me to better understand the processes of memory and composure by talking with participants first hand. By analysing tone and body language I can better understand an interviewee's response and can better evaluate my impact on the interview. These interviews were semi-structured to cover necessary topics while also prioritising the interviewees' voices. Quotations from oral histories used here retain the pauses, hesitations, repetitions, ungrammatical phrases and contractions present in the original transcripts and recordings. This is to preserve the voices and identities of the interviewees as faithfully as possible and because it allows deeper interrogation of meaning through looking at syntax, word choice, expression and silences.

Alessandro Portelli made the often quoted but salient point that oral histories 'tell us not just what people did, but what they wanted to do, what they believed they were doing, what they now think they did.'[109] Since the advent of oral history in the 1970s critics have seen it as subjective and unable to access the 'truth'. However, all sources are distorted to some extent and historians can still get some 'data' about the past from interviews,

[107] Gallwey, 'Archived Oral Histories', pp. 38–44; Bornat, Raghyram, and Henry, 'Revisiting the Archives', p. 2.
[108] http://birminghamhistory.co.uk/forum/index.php (21 December 2016).
[109] Alessandro Portelli, 'The Peculiarities of Oral History', *History Workshop*, 12 (1981), pp. 99–100.

particularly about individual experience.[110] Moreover, as Alistair Thomson and Paul Thompson have argued, the subjectivity of oral histories is inherently useful.[111] It allows the historian to explore emotions, identities and perceptions as well as material experience. Since oral histories are retrospective they also facilitate an analysis of memory, selfhood and how subsequent life experiences and popular discourses shape the interviewee's responses, as Michael Roper and Lynn Abrams have shown.[112] Overall, oral history provides an unparalleled source to access the experiences, memories and identities of young adults in the 1960s.

Social surveys and personal testimonies have been used together successfully by many historians of lived experience, particularly Davis, Langhamer, Todd and Laura King.[113] These works show that the richness and subjectivity of personal testimonies can be used alongside wider-reaching social surveys and contemporary commentaries to reveal the complexity of lived experience and selfhood in both local and national contexts, in particular historical moments and over longer periods. This thesis borrows from and complements their methodologies.

STRUCTURE

This thesis argues that there was no singular, homogenous 'youth culture' in 1960s England because age, gender, class, location, family and economics differentiated the lived experiences of working- and lower middle-class young adults. However, working- and lower middle-class young adults in 1960s England were united by a shared sense of being part of a

[110] Portelli, 'The Peculiarities of Oral History', pp. 100–101; Grele, 'On Using Oral History Collections', p. 570.
[111] Alistair Thomson, 'Making the Most of Memories: The Empirical and Subjective Value of Oral History', *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*, 9 (1999); Paul Thompson, *Voice of the Past: Oral History*, (Oxford, 2000).
[112] Michael Roper, 'Re-Remembering the Soldier Hero: The Psychic and Social Construction of Memory in Personal Narratives of the Great War', *History Workshop Journal*, 50 (2000); Lynn Abrams, 'Liberating the Female Self: Epiphanies, Conflict and Coherence in the Life Stories of Post-War British Women', *Social History*, 39.1 (2014).
[113] Angela Davis, *Modern Motherhood: Women and Family in England 1945-2000*, (Manchester, 2012); Langhamer, *Women's Leisure*; Langhamer, *The English in Love*; Todd, *Young Women, Work and Family*; Laura King, *Family Men: Fatherhood and Masculinity in Britain 1914-1960*, (Oxford, 2015).

distinct generation at a distinct historical moment in a stage of life that was neither childhood nor adulthood but a period of fun, growing independence and preparation for adult roles. Indeed, this thesis shows how the experiences and meanings of youth were conditioned by the particular historical moment of the 1960s as newer, liberal attitudes and behaviours co-existed alongside older, more conservative mores and practices. It demonstrates that popular images of the 1960s and its youth culture do not accurately depict the lived experiences of young adults in the period, but that they do shape the memories and meanings of youth. Lastly, the thesis shows that lived experiences and the memories of them are central to both selfhood and the meanings of youth.

Chapter one analyses the relationship between popular and personal memories of the 1960s and its youth culture. It shows that people's personal memories of their youth often deviate from popular memories of youth culture in the 1960s. This reveals a gap between the representation and experiences of youth and makes imperative the need for an examination of young adults' daily lives in the 1960s. The chapter also shows that people interact with popular memories to produce a composed life narrative and self, and that popular memories frame their understandings of youth and the 1960s even where they reject those images. This shows that an examination of how the meanings of youth are created – through an interaction of experience, personal memory and popular discourse – is also needed.

Chapters two and three, respectively, examine the lived experiences of young adults in paid employment and leisure. They argue that age, gender, location and class fractured experiences, and that the distinction between work and leisure was blurred and shifting. These chapters refine definitions of work and leisure by examining how they were understood and experienced by young adults. Chapters two and three also demonstrate how work and leisure played key roles in shaping the meanings of 1960s youth. They offered young adults increasing socio-economic independence, status and a sense of belonging to a particular generational group with a particular lifestyle. The home is not explored in a separate chapter within this thesis. Instead, young adults' experiences of home and the relationships and identities forged within it are explored throughout all the chapters as those experiences are

better analysed as work, leisure and relationships rather than being arbitrarily strung together because of the physical space they occupied.

In chapter four young adults' relationships with friends and family are examined. The chapter uncovers how peers became increasingly central to young adults' experiences (particularly in leisure) and identities during youth. It challenges popular myths of 1960s generational conflict, arguing that young adults' tensions with parents were symptoms of a desire to gain independence rather than a product of irreconcilable differences. In this way, young adults' changing relationships with friends and family helped to give youth meaning as a stage of life premised on having fun and gaining independence.

Chapter five examines courtship in the 1960s, again showing that it was central to both young adults' experiences and identities. It considers how courtship was not a single universal experience but a series of differing kinds of heterosexual relationships structured by age and gender and often containing elements of both work and leisure. The chapter also analyses young adults' sexual behaviour in the 1960s, challenging myths of a permissive and 'swinging' 1960s because, while sexual practices and attitudes were changing, older traditions and behaviours had not been completely abandoned. The chapter also shows that courtship was crucial in giving youth meaning as a preparatory stage before adulthood.

Finally, chapter six examines the meaning of 1960s youth in light of the memories and lived experiences analysed in the previous chapters. It asks what youth meant as a stage in the life cycle and an experience during the 1960s, and what it means at the point of retrospective recollection. It demonstrates that common meanings of youth exist, but that these are flexible, subjective and sometimes contradictory. The chapter shows that the meanings of youth are historically contingent, affected by the socio-economic and cultural landscapes of both the 1960s and the present as well as by the processes of memory. The chapter also argues that youth is a crucial component of the self throughout the life cycle. Overall, this thesis uncovers and analyses the hitherto under-explored lived experiences of young adults in the 1960s, probes their identities and subjectivities, and examines the relationship between popular and personal memories of youth. It explores what experiences

and memories define young adults in the 1960s as a particular generation living in a particular historical moment.

CHAPTER ONE

POPULAR AND PERSONAL MEMORIES OF 1960s YOUTH

The 1960s, perhaps more so than any other period, are the subject of iconic popular imagination. At the centre of these images is 1960s youth culture. Young adults in the 1960s were (and often still are) depicted as leisure-oriented, affluent, free, permissive, promiscuous, delinquent, drug-fuelled, fashionable, Beatles mad and in deep generational conflict with their parents. They were, supposedly, sub- or countercultural rebels in an age of Mods, Rockers and Hippies.[1] These ideas about the 1960s have been circulated widely throughout society from the 1960s to the present day by political discourse and the media. They have become the collective understanding of what youth culture in 1960s England was 'all about', making these images a popular memory.

However, while the history of young adults' lived experiences in the 1960s is under-developed, existing works have begun to show that few were members of sub- or countercultures, few were sexually permissive or promiscuous, and little real generational conflict existed.[2] The popular memory of 1960s youth does not accurately describe the lived experiences of the young adults upon whom it is based. This chapter therefore examines how people who were young adults in the 1960s negotiate potentially conflicting personal and popular memories of youth in the period and, in doing so, makes two arguments that shape the rest of this thesis.

First, people who were young adults in the 1960s do not passively accept popular memories of the period, but can critique and reject them where they do not match lived experiences. Even examining the personal testimonies of those who thought a 'swinging

[1] See the following for discussion of popular images of 1960s youth: Osgerby, *Youth in Britain Since 1945*; Osgerby, 'Postwar Media Representations of Youth'; Bartie, 'Moral Panics and Glasgow Gangs'; Church Gibson, 'The Deification of the Dolly Bird'; Davis, *Youth and the Condition of Britain*; Hall and Jefferson (eds), *Resistance Through Rituals*.
[2] See, for example, Clarke, Hall, Jefferson and Roberts, 'Subcultures, Cultures and Class'; Gorer, *Sex and Marriage*; Hall, *Sex, Gender and Social Change*; McRobbie, *Feminism and Youth Culture*; Mitchell, 'Reassessing "the Generation Gap"'; Schofield, *The Sexual Behaviour of Young People*; Todd and Young, 'Baby-Boomers to "Beanstalkers"'; Weeks, *Sex, Politics and Society*.

sixties' did exist shows that their lives were not always as 'swinging' as they first suggested. This reinforces the idea that the daily lives of young adults in the 1960s were unlike popular images of the 'swinging sixties' and makes all the more pressing the need for a thorough examination of their lived experiences. Chapters two to five of this thesis therefore offer this analysis of young adults' lived experiences in 1960s England.

Second, the way people who were young adults in the 1960s interact with popular memories of the period is necessarily shaped by their attempt to create a composed life narrative and self. Moreover, popular memories are powerful frameworks that shape people's memories and knowledge of a period, meaning that many can reject the idea of the 'swinging sixties' but still understand their youth in relation to that idea to some extent. Analysing how individuals interact with popular memory therefore suggests that memory, both personal and popular, is crucial to the understanding and meaning of youth throughout the life cycle, as chapter six examines in depth.

This chapter begins by outlining what the popular memory of the 1960s is before defining the relationship between popular and personal memory. It then examines how and why people critique or accept popular memories to show that a history of the lived experience of youth in the 1960s is long overdue and that an analysis of memory and the meanings of youth are crucial to providing a comprehensive understanding of lived experience, selfhood and youth as a stage in the life cycle.

THE POPULAR MEMORY OF THE 1960s

In 1966 *Time* magazine coined the phrase 'swinging London', suggesting that areas of 1960s London had witnessed socio-cultural shifts in art, culture and morality.[3] Via media transmission, this concept came to describe more than just London; it was the 'swinging sixties' more generally and youth culture was at the centre of this.[4] This collective memory of 1960s youth germinated from a fertile bed of contemporary media attention devoted to

[3] Donnelly, *Sixties Britain*, p. 92; Davis, *Youth and the Condition of Britain*, p. 194.
[4] Davis, *Youth and the Condition of Britain*, p. 194; Addison, *No Turning Back*, p. 215; Donnelly, *Sixties Britain*, p. 95.

young people as those born in the post-war 'baby boom' came of age and were more affluent than their predecessors.[5] During the 1960s, academics, politicians, commerce and the media sought to understand, analyse and market to young adults in a time of social change, and in doing so they necessarily stereotyped those young adults and their lifestyles.[6] Harold Wilson gave the Beatles MBEs in 1964 in an attempt to gain political capital from what was seen as exciting and modern youth culture.[7] Newspaper reports and sociological surveys investigated and lamented perceived (though often misguided) assumptions of rises in juvenile delinquency, promiscuity, drug-taking, generational conflict and subcultural rebellion. Popular television shows, magazines and films developed and disseminated stylised images of affluent, fashionable, permissive and hedonistic young adults, as well as marketing products and services to them that emphasised these stereotypes. Together, these contemporary depictions presented young adults in the 1960s either as 'fun' or 'trouble', making them a metaphor for both the perceived hopes and fears of society.[8] This, in turn, led to even more exaggerated stereotypes and put these images of youth high on the public agenda.

These popular images of young adults in the 1960s continue to be widely circulated to the present day and so have become memory rather than just contemporary representation. Donnelly has even argued that historians have played a significant role in creating the idea of 'the sixties' according to their political and moral contexts and principles.[9] Films like *Quadrophenia* (1979) and *The Boat That Rocked* (2009), popular histories such as Jon Savage's 2015 book *1966: The Year the Decade Exploded*, and even BBC documentaries and dramas have all contributed to the idea that 1960s youth was rebellious, subcultural, permissive, hedonistic, free and 'swinging'. Even 1980s anti-permissive, Thatcherite denigrations of the 1960s presented the decade as a period of moral revolution and

[5] Davis, *Youth and the Condition of Britain*, pp. 1–2; Osgerby, 'Postwar Media Representations of Youth'.
[6] Davis, *Youth and the Condition of Britain*, pp. 1–11; Bartie, 'Moral Panics and Glasgow Gangs'; Church Gibson, 'The Deification of the Dolly Bird'.
[7] Osgerby, 'Postwar Media Representations of Youth', p. 326.
[8] Osgerby, 'Postwar Media Representations of Youth', p. 323.
[9] Mark Donnelly, 'Sixties Britain: The Cultural Politics of Historiography', in Trevor Harris and Monia O'Brien Castro (eds), *Preserving the Sixties: Britain and the 'Decade of Protest'*, (Basingstoke, 2014).

permissiveness.[10] Given their sustained circulation and the reach and appeal of the media disseminating them, these stylised images have become the collective, popular 'knowledge' about 1960s youth.

Throughout this thesis, the terms popular memory, images, idea, narrative and discourse are used interchangeably to address the same concept. Of course, however, popular memory is necessarily stylised, simplified and often divergent from the lived experience of many 1960s young adults. As Donnelly has argued, it was largely a 'myth'.[11] Since there is, therefore, a gap between memory and experience, looking only at collective memory or representation is not sufficient to understand young adults' lived experiences in the 1960s. Instead we must look at individual people's daily lives and personal memories and how these interact with the popular memory.

POPULAR MEMORY AND THE INDIVIDUAL

Underlying the idea of popular memory is the assertion that social groups and socio-cultural discourses condition the recollection of and 'knowledge' about the past. Maurice Halbwachs' *The Collective Memory* is seminal to this concept. Halbwachs argued that memories are only possible through the social groups to which a person belongs as 'the individual memory could not function without words and ideas, instruments the individual has not himself invented but appropriated from his milieu.'[12] In other words, social groups construct a shared knowledge of the past, which conditions how people within the group remember that past.[13] Their memories are, therefore, collective. Aleida Assman has outlined three types of collective memory: political, cultural and social. She argues that political and cultural collective memories are created and disseminated by those in authority to create homogenous political

[10] Matthew Grimley, 'Thatcherism, Morality and Religion', in Ben Jackson and Robert Saunders (eds), *Making Thatcher's Britain*, (Cambridge, 2012).
[11] Donnelly, *Sixties Britain*, pp. 196–197.
[12] Maurice Halbwachs, *The Collective Memory*, (New York, 1980), p. 51.
[13] Halbwachs, *The Collective Memory*, pp. 31–33.

identities and to preserve a group's culture across multiple generations.[14] Social memory is how the past is experienced and communicated within a given society. This is often generational, with each generation seeing itself as different from those preceding and following.[15]

The collective memory of the 1960s and its youth culture contains elements of both cultural and social memory. On the one hand, ideas about 1960s youth are shared by a generational social group who were young adults during the 1960s and who experienced the period in a particular way due to their generation. This social group's concepts and 'knowledge' of both the 1960s and youth condition how its members remember their own youths. But the collective 'knowledge' about the 1960s is also public and trans-generational and has been created and disseminated by those in authority as well as by those who lived through the 1960s. Certain elements of 1960s youth have been seen as worthy of preservation into the present day and are shared by a group wider than just those who were young adults in the 1960s. Ultimately, the collective memory of the 1960s is not narrowly top-down, but also shared and shaped by 'ordinary' people, making it a popular memory.

However, the concepts of collective and popular memory minimise and obscure the role and nature of personal memories and individual experience by assuming that collective memories are the only possible type of recollection. They leave little room to acknowledge, let alone examine, how and why people remember things in a way that deviates from popular narratives. While acknowledging that groups construct collective images of the past, James Fentress and Chris Wickham have critiqued Halbwachs' theory for making the person 'a sort of automaton, passively obeying the interiorized collective will.'[16] Anna Green also disagrees that people always conform to cultural scripts. As she argues,

> surely the interesting issue is not that individuals draw upon contemporary cultural discourses to make sense of their lives, but *which* ones, and *why*… Oral historians need to re-assert the value of individual remembering and the capacity of the

[14] Aleida Assmann, 'Re-framing Memory. Between Individual and Collective Forms of Constructing the Past', in Karin Tilmans, Frank van Vree, and Jay Winter (eds), *Performing the Past: Memory, History, and Identity in Modern Europe*, (Amsterdam, 2010), pp. 42–44.
[15] Assmann, 'Re-framing Memory', pp. 41–42.
[16] James Fentress and Chris Wickham, *Social Memory*, (Oxford, 1992), p. ix.

> conscious self to contest and critique cultural scripts or discourses. Rather than seeking to fit oral narratives to pre-existing cultural representations or psychoanalytic templates, would it not be more fruitful for oral historians to explore those points of conflict and rupture in people's lives that create confrontations with discourses of power?[17]

Joseph Maslen has explored how, in their auto/biographies, Carolyn Steedman and Luisa Passerini negotiate their personal narratives with what he calls the master narratives of the '1968 generation' – another term for the set of popular discourses and memories linked to images of the 'swinging sixties' but also containing distinct political connotations. He concludes that,

> These people can use auto/biographical narrative to escape from, or add nuance to, the social master narratives about 'their' generation. Perhaps it is this process of negotiation between personal and social narratives of generational belonging that is most worthy of study.[18]

Maslen's work goes some way to uncovering the nature of the relationship between personal and popular memory for the 1960s, but he focuses on only two women known for their scholarship on selfhood, personal testimony and reflexivity. This chapter expands Maslen and Green's analyses to investigate how 'ordinary' people negotiate personal memories of youth in the 1960s with the popular memory of youth culture. It shows that people are highly capable of critiquing popular memories where they do not reflect lived experience, making the need for a lived experience study of 1960s youth imperative. It also shows that how people negotiate popular and personal memories gives insight into memory, subjectivity and the meaning of youth.

Certainly, the way a person recalls the past and negotiates between popular and personal memories is subject to change over time, as Roper, Thomson and Fred Allison have demonstrated.[19] Cultural discourses, subsequent life events, the expectations of the audience and the need to address feelings dating from the original event all shape how the past is

[17] Anna Green, 'Individual Remembering and "Collective Memory": Theoretical Presuppositions and Contemporary Debates', *Oral History*, 32.2 (2004), pp. 42–43. Emphasis in original.
[18] Joseph Maslen, 'Autobiographies of a Generation? Carolyn Steedman, Luisa Passerini and the Memory of 1968', *Memory Studies*, 6.1 (2013), p. 25.
[19] Roper, 'Re-Remembering the Soldier Hero'; Thomson, 'Unreliable Memories', pp. 28–33; Fred H. Allison, 'Remembering a Vietnam War Firefight: Changing Perspectives Over Time', in Robert Perks and Alistair Thomson (eds), *The Oral History Reader*, (Abingdon, 2006).

remembered. The memories this chapter explores are, therefore, not raw or unmediated versions of the experiences of youth. They are the recollection of youthful experience seen though a lens of popular discourse and subsequent life. Personal and popular memory are therefore distinct but inextricably linked; each informs and shapes the other. Exploring this deepens our understanding of the under-researched lived experience of 1960s youth by revealing why certain elements of the popular memory frame people's narratives and why some elements were not experienced – usually due to gender, location, money, parental authority and the persistence of older, more conservative attitudes and behaviours. It also allows historians to understand the meanings and importance of youth in the 1960s by analysing why people remember their youth in particular ways.

Indeed, how each person engages with popular memory in his or her personal testimony is shaped by the desire to produce composure. When telling their life story, a narrator seeks composure by creating both a coherent narrative about their life and a psychologically comfortable version of the self.[20] This involves sifting, selection and omission of both experience and public discourses to create a composed narrative.[21] People use popular and personal memories in a way that best fits with how they want to appear in the present. In some cases people therefore reject the popular memory of 1960s youth and in others they align their own experiences with it. Yet however 'true' a person thinks the popular memory is as a description of 1960s youth, it still provides a powerful framework that shapes their understanding of youth and the 1960s more generally. By interrogating this, as chapter six does in greater depth, we can understand how and why people interact with cultural discourses on a deeply individual basis due to both the power of those discourses and their own desires for composure. This in turn facilitates a deeper understanding of what youth meant for those who were young adults in the 1960s in England.

[20] Graham Dawson, *Soldier Heroes: British Adventure, Empire and the Imagining of Masculinities*, (London, 1994), pp. 22–23.
[21] Abrams, 'Liberating the Female Self'.

MASS OBSERVATION AND CRITIQUES OF THE POPULAR MEMORY

Many of the people whose personal testimonies are examined in this thesis thought that popular images of the 1960s did not accurately represent their own lived experiences as young adults in the period. They often directly stated that their lives had not been like the 'swinging sixties' – using this as shorthand for the popular memory of the period – but had instead been more restricted or mundane. Penny Summerfield has argued that when women's personal narratives do not conform to public discourses they have difficulty articulating their experiences.[22] However, as this chapter shows, both men and women are able to easily and confidently assert that the 'swinging sixties' passed them by for a variety of reasons, meaning that people can exercise considerable agency when appraising popular discourses. Exploring how and why people denied that there was a 'swinging sixties' reveals that gender, location, parental authority and prevailing conservative attitudes affected how far the lifestyle depicted in popular images was experienced in reality. Revealing this reinforces the need for an examination of the lived experience of young adults in 1960s England from their own perspectives.

Interestingly, most of those who directly critiqued the 'swinging sixties' were Mass Observation respondents. This is explained by Anne-Marie Kramer's argument that the 'dual vision' of Mass Observers as both the observed and the observer makes them particularly reflexive about comparing their experience to the 'typical' case.[23] Moreover, many directives called for both personal experiences and a generalised view of the 1960s. The directives never prompted respondents to comment on the 'swinging sixties' explicitly, but did, particularly in the 2003 'Images of the 50s and 60s' directive, ask what respondents' dominant memories of the period were, where they thought images of the period stemmed from, and whether or not

[22] Penny Summerfield, *Reconstructing Women's Wartime Lives: Discourse and Subjectivity in Oral Histories of the Second World War*, (Manchester, 1998), pp. 11–18; Penny Summerfield, 'Culture and Composure: Creating Narratives of the Gendered Self in Oral History Interviews', *Cultural and Social History*, 1.1 (2004), p. 74.
[23] Anne-Marie Kramer, 'The Observers and the Observed: The "Dual Vision" of the Mass Observation Project', *Sociological Research Online*, 19.4 (2014), doi: 10.5153/sro.3455.

they felt nostalgic for that period.[24] As such, the directives actively encouraged the evaluation of both popular and personal memory

Mass Observers most often critiqued the popular memory based on its depiction of permissive sex and sexual freedom for young people, with several people commenting that older, more conservative moral standards prevailed in the 1960s. These critiques often came from the Summer 2001 and Autumn 2005 Mass Observation directives, which asked, respectively, about courtship and sex.[25] These directives encouraged respondents to offer personal experiences and to think about moral standards during their youth, creating perhaps an artificially developed critique on the topic. Nevertheless, their responses are useful in exploring how people engage with popular memory and why it does not necessarily reflect lived experience.

Andrew, born in 1945, commented that 'I am very envious of young people and their sex lives, probably because I missed mine. I was there in the swinging sixties but it swung straight passed [sic] me.'[26] This implies that Andrew believed the popular memory of the 1960s as a period of youthful sexual freedom had some basis in reality, but not in his own lived experience. It also implies that the popular memory conditioned his view of youth so that he saw it as a time for sexual indulgence, experimentation and freedom. Susanne, born in 1947, also challenged the idea of 1960s sexual liberation because she did not have pre-marital sex. She asserted that, 'I don't think we were so unusual in this, despite the reputation of the Swinging Sixties. We both grew up in conventional families with conventional attitudes, formed during the 50s.' [27] Indeed, Susanne even commented that she and her friends 'looked down' on girls who did have pre-marital sex. The popular image of 1960s sexual freedom for young adults was therefore critiqued, as by Susanne and Andrew, when it did not match the lived experience of people whose behaviour remained in line with older and more

[24] Mass Observation Archive, University of Sussex (MOA), SxMOA2/1/69/1, Replies to Spring 2003 Directive.
[25] Mass Observation Archive, University of Sussex (MOA), SxMOA2/1/63/1, Replies to Summer 2001 Directive; Mass Observation Archive, University of Sussex (MOA), SxMOA2/1/76/1, Replies to Autumn 2005 Directive.
[26] MOA, Autumn 2005 Directive, B3252.
[27] MOA, Autumn 2005 Directive, F3409.

conservative moral attitudes and practices. Susanne's comments also suggest that access to sexual freedom was condition by gender in the 1960s because pre-marital sex was seen as less acceptable for young women than young men.

Alice, born in 1950, also refuted the idea of the 1960s as permissive: 'This was, of course, the Swinging Sixties which, we are all told in documentaries these days, was an age of sexual freedom and rampant drug-taking. Well, not in the circles I was moving in.'[28] Like Susanne, Alice noted that pre-marital sex and pregnancy were taboo among her peers and that 'My generation was brought up with a set of rules about life and behaviour that we were expected to follow'.[29] Despite this, Alice *did* have pre-marital sex as a teenager, suggesting that though moral codes remained conservative in the 1960s behavioural practice was changing among some young adults, potentially bringing their experiences more in line with the popular memory. Similarly, Angela, who was born in 1950 in a small Northern industrial town also experienced pre-marital sex but still suggested that this conflicted with an enduring moral conservatism: 'This pressure not to challenge old social ideals created a twilight zone, forcing a kind of silent complicity, a hypocrisy which was at odds with the image of sexual enlightenment associated with this era.'[30] For Alice and Angela the 'swinging sixties' did not happen even though they had pre-marital sex because this more liberal behaviour remained constrained by conservative attitudes. This suggests that there was no neat handover from old to new values and practices, but that the two existed simultaneously.

As Pat Thane has highlighted, pre-marital sex was not uncommon in twentieth-century working-class communities, and, as Langhamer has shown, attitudes to pre-marital sex were softening in the post-war years.[31] In particular, in the 1960s it was becoming less controversial to have sex with a fiancé, though sex with more casual acquaintances remained somewhat taboo.[32] That Alice and Angela had pre-marital sex is, therefore, not surprising. Yet

[28] MOA, Summer 2001 Directive, W1813.
[29] MOA, Summer 2001 Directive, W1813.
[30] MOA, Summer 2001 Directive, G2883.
[31] Pat Thane, 'Unmarried Motherhood in Twentieth-Century England', *Women's History Review*, 20.1 (2011), pp. 12–14; Claire Langhamer, *The English in Love*, pp. 198–199.
[32] Langhamer, *The English in Love*, p. 159; Schofield, *The Sexual Behaviour of Young People*, p. 164.

they still critiqued the idea of the sexually permissive 1960s because they felt that prevailing moral attitudes were neither permissive nor liberal. This mismatch between behaviour and moral attitudes could result in feeling as though some aspects of the 'swinging sixties' were experienced in reality and some were not. Moreover, some young adults, such as Andrew and Susanne, did not have pre-marital sex, which suggests that behaviours were not changing for everyone. Ultimately, the imagined sexual freedom of the 1960s was, on an attitudinal if not behavioural basis, unsupported by the everyday lives of young adults. The simple 'sexual revolution' implied by the popular memory masks what was in reality a complex overlapping of conservative and liberal values and behaviours. This is examined in depth in chapter five.

In addition to critiques of 1960s sexual liberation, others criticised the idea of the 'swinging sixties' because they were unable to access other aspects of this imagined lifestyle due to parental control and authority. For example, Linda, born in 1950, understood the popular memory of 1960s youth culture to be about music, dancing and fashion rather than sex. She commented that, aged roughly 13 to 16 in the mid-1960s, 'By then the Beatles had arrived & so had the Swinging Sixties. I wanted to go out & have fun, go to dances with my friends and wear make-up. My parents didn't approve.'[33] Susanne's reflection on her 'conventional family' similarly implied that the conservatism preventing a 'swinging sixties' lifestyle was communicated in and enforced by the family.[34] Linda put on make-up in secret and washed it off before her father collected her from dances, something he insisted upon and that Linda found very embarrassing. Linda felt that the 'swinging sixties' was a reality centred on music, make-up and boyfriends, but she could not freely access it because her parents still wielded significant authority over her. This relationship with parents and its impact on young adults' experiences is examined throughout the thesis and particularly in chapter four.

Linda's account also shows how age and gender shaped how parental authority affected the experiences of young adults in the 1960s. Linda's relatively young age (13-16)

[33] MOA, Spring 1993 Directive, C1768.
[34] MOA, Autumn 2005 Directive, F3409.

perhaps elicited tighter parental control, as did the fact that she was female. Young men often had more freedom than their sisters, and as both young men and young women reached the later stages of youth parental control often began to relax at least a little — though for young women this was usually premised on having a boyfriend who assumed the father's supervisory role. Young men and older young women might, therefore, have more access to lifestyles similar to the popular memory based on fashion, music, socialising and sex, meaning that the gap between popular and personal memories of 1960s youth is sized according to age and gender as well as parental authority. The effects of age and gender on young adults' lived experiences are analysed throughout the thesis.

Some also critiqued the 'swinging sixties' by suggesting that it happened only in certain localities. Angela felt that 'the so-called "swinging sixties" did not include places such as these [small Northern] towns where prevailing attitudes were more repressed fifties.'[35] Michael, born in 1950, reacted similarly in his late 1980s oral history interview when asked about 'the swinging sixties, or the youth revolution in the sixties and things like that. Was there much evidence of that in Barrow?' He responded, 'No… There was nothing like that here that I remember.'[36] Jane, born in 1952, took the opposite view, however: 'I grew up in the swinging sixties in Liverpool. The atmosphere was pretty free and easy then. When I speak to contemporaries who have grown up in this area [Yorkshire, where she lived at the time of writing] they seem to have led a far more sheltered existence.'[37] Of course, other factors such as class and family may have contributed to Jane's more 'swinging' experience, while even being slightly younger than Angela and Michael perhaps meant Jane reached her youth later in the 1960s when progressive ideas had gained a stronger hold. Unfortunately, Jane's single Mass Observation response limits how far this can be explored. These accounts do suggest, however, that the lifestyles of young adults varied across the country, with perhaps more urban and metropolitan areas such as Liverpool offering opportunities closer to

[35] MOA, Summer 2001 Directive, G2883.
[36] SFL, Interview with Mr P5B.
[37] MOA, Summer 2001 Directive, N1552.

those the popular memory describes in comparison to quieter and more conservative lifestyles lived in smaller towns or rural areas.

A few people also critiqued the popular memory of the 'swinging sixties' by acknowledging its artificiality and *post hoc* construction by the media. As noted above, Alice thought the idea of the 'swinging sixties' was constructed and communicated through documentaries.[38] She also suggested that the 'free love and drugs' concept of the 1960s was not based on contemporary events but was created by 'today's media [which] distort reality by concentrating on a few wayward folk rather than on the boring majority.'[39] Similarly, David, born in 1940 in Birmingham to a working-class family, thought the popular memory of the 1960s was artificially constructed. When asked in his 2015 oral history interview what he thought the defining characteristics were of his generation in the 1960s, David responded that 'it was just a case of you just got on with the day to day and you weren't aware that it was the swinging sixties… and people say if you can remember the sixties you weren't there! And you think "it didn't apply to me."'[40] When probed, David then added that there were attitudinal and behavioural changes in the period, commenting that 'the Pill was a liberating factor… changed girls' attitude to sex… I knew people who were experimenting with drugs… um… I knew people who were homosexual and that wasn't something you were aware of before.'[41] David was aware that attitudes and behaviours did change in the 1960s, but felt that the memory of the 'swinging sixties' did not reflect his own experience. He also felt that these changes only became a coherent popular memory of the period *post hoc*: there was no sense of it being 'the sixties' at the time.

Overall, responses to Mass Observation directives show that people who were young adults during the 1960s are highly capable of critiquing and rejecting the popular image of the 'swinging sixties' where it does not match their lived experiences. Gender, age, location and parental authority played a significant part in structuring young adults' experiences and often

[38] MOA, Summer 2001 Directive, W1813.
[39] MOA, Spring 1993 Directive, W1813.
[40] Interview with David Canning, conducted by Helena Mills, 26 May 2015.
[41] Interview with David Canning.

meant those experiences were unlike the popular memory. Moreover, though behaviours and attitudes were beginning to change in the 1960s, few young adults were permissive, promiscuous, enjoyed complete freedom from parents or even felt like it was 'the sixties' at the time. Since the popular memory of the 1960s does not accurately describe young adults' lived experiences, a study into their daily lives and the factors that shaped them is much needed.

ORAL HISTORIES AND CRITIQUES OF THE POPULAR MEMORY

Oral history interviews can also provoke critiques of popular images of the 1960s and its youth culture, though their more in-depth testimonies also reveal some areas of life where the popular memory does more accurately match lived experiences. The people I interviewed were particularly capable of assessing these popular images because I asked them to sum up what they thought the 1960s had been about and then whether they felt their own experiences matched up to this. In this way, I asked them to compare the images and experiences of the 1960s but tried to avoid informing their answers by using phrases such as the 'swinging sixties'. Examining how interviewees rejected the popular memory of 1960s youth culture in light of their own experiences provides further imperative for a lived experience history of youth in the 1960s. It also shows that the desire for composure drives a person's negotiation between popular and personal memory and that, despite being critiqued, the popular memory structures people's understanding of youth and the 1960s more generally. Understanding the relationship between personal and popular memory is therefore central to understanding both the experiences and meanings of youth.

Marilyn, a retired administrative worker, was born into a working-class family in 1946 and grew up in Hockley, Birmingham before moving to a council maisonette in Edgbaston in her late teens.[42] I asked Marilyn if she thought her youth had been like the popular images of 1960s youth. She suggested it had not, based on her understanding of the 'swinging sixties' as centred on metropolitan drug culture:

[42] Interview with Marilyn Shaw, conducted by Helena Mills, 20 May 2015.

> I couldn't say I was in the swingin' sixties because I never did drugs, I never smoked, I never did anythin' like that… I suppose it was the swingin' sixties to some, 'praps more in London or 'praps certain parts of Birmingham. 'Praps if there was more money about to the swingin' sixties and you were in the scene… I didn't know that scene… Y'know, I was like in a little house with me mum and dad and we kept away from it.[43]

Marilyn's critique is similar to those above. She suggested that the popular memory does describe the experiences of some, but this was determined by a locality and affluence inaccessible to her and by partaking in certain activities that she did not do. Moreover, Marilyn married aged 20 as she had become pregnant and, while her parents were sensitive and pragmatic, she noted that this was generally considered taboo, suggesting that Marilyn thought older, more conservative values rather than sexual liberalisation characterised the mid-1960s. Instead, Marilyn saw her youth as centred on home and family, a theme that permeated her interview as part of her desire to compose a narrative and self centred on home and family.

Indeed, when I asked Marilyn to sum up the 1960s and her teenage years, she quickly asserted that they were characterised by 'a lovely family life'.[44] This impulsive response reinforces the fact that Marilyn associated her youth with family rather than the 'swinging sixties'. She later added that, compared to her present-day experiences with her grandson, as young adults she and her peers had more discipline and fewer material goods.[45] Marilyn therefore also rejected popular images of 1960s youth because money, discipline and parental authority conditioned her behaviour and attitudes more than her grandson's. This shows that subsequent experiences encourage a re-evaluation of past experiences: Marilyn's experience in the 2010s with her teenage grandson made her reflect back on the discipline and affluence of her own youth, potentially making her see them as, respectively, heightened and dampened in comparison. This hindsight undoubtedly influenced Marilyn's critique but does not render it inaccurate or false. First, given the experiences Marilyn related in her interview such as having strict curfews and relatively little spending money, she likely did experience less

[43] Interview with Marilyn Shaw.
[44] Interview with Marilyn Shaw.
[45] Interview with Marilyn Shaw.

affluence and more discipline in the 1960s, which limited her access to a 'swinging sixties' lifestyle.[46] Second, understanding what motivated Marilyn to reject the popular memory, even if that is a present concern, is crucial to untangling the relationship between discourse, experience and memory. It shows that evaluations of popular and public discourse, and an understanding of one's own youth, depend on both past and present experience.

However, despite her overall rejection of it, the experiences Marilyn related in her interview did align with some popular images of 1960s youth – albeit ones not centred on the drug culture Marilyn assumed characterised the 'swinging sixties'. In particular, Marilyn associated herself with subculture by actively labelling herself 'A Mod', though she later asserted this was based on the fashions and music she liked, not because she engaged in subcultural class politics.[47] Marilyn's leisure was also typical of most young adults in the 1960s and incorporated many activities that featured within popular images of 1960s youth culture. She regularly went dancing, kept up with the latest fashions and hairstyles, was an avid fan of pop music and programmes like *Ready, Steady, Go!*, and also had pre-marital sex without feeling guilty about this (though Marilyn did note she was apprehensive about telling her parents of her pre-marital pregnancy, showing that older taboos were not completely eradicated).[48] This shows that the popular memory does describe some elements of young adults' experiences in the 1960s, particularly in terms of their leisure activities and the fact that some were engaging in pre-marital sex. However, Marilyn considered these activities normal and ordinary and so does not associate herself and her activities with the 'swinging sixties'. Instead, Marilyn rejected the popular memory because she understood it as based on things she did not do (drugs), in places she did not live (London), and because popular notions of the rebelliousness, deviancy and hedonism of 1960s youth did not fit with her narrative of home and family or, indeed, with her actual experiences.

Additionally, at several points Marilyn described her youth and the 1960s as a time of freedom and independence in which she had little responsibility and relative latitude to please

[46] Interview with Marilyn Shaw.
[47] Interview with Marilyn Shaw.
[48] Interview with Marilyn Shaw.

herself as long as she was home by her curfew. Her account of her youth gives a strong impression of having fun and being on the sartorial fringe of Mod subculture. This language of subculture, enjoyment, freedom and a lack of responsibility is central to popular images of 1960s youth culture and it frames Marilyn's recollection of her youth even though she also talked about restriction to these because of limited spending money, parental authority and curfews. Therefore, despite claiming that her youth was unlike the popular memory of 1960s youth, Marilyn's understanding of both youth and the 1960s was framed by the language and images of that popular memory. Ultimately, Marilyn rejected the idea of the 'swinging sixties' as it did not accurately describe *everything* about her lifestyle and did not fit easily with her broader narrative of family life. Yet she still employed the language and concepts of this discourse as aspects of it did reflect some of her lived experiences and consequently shaped how she conceived of her youth and the 1960s more generally.

For Jacqueline, rejecting the popular memory of 1960s youth offered a way for her to understand her own youth in the context of her later separation and divorce from her husband.[49] Jacqueline was born in 1946 and lived near Blackpool in a lower middle-class family. She went to a secondary modern school and technical college before doing secretarial work at several companies.[50] Throughout her interview, conducted in the late 1980s, Jacqueline drew on the popular memory of 1960s youth as a way to understand the 1960s and youth as a stage in the life cycle, though she strongly suggested that popular images of the 'swinging sixties' did not accurately reflect her own experiences as a young woman.

Jacqueline married her first serious boyfriend aged 19 in 1965. At several points, Jacqueline implied that she married too young, though 19 was not an uncommonly young age for young women to marry in the mid-1960s. For example, when asked if she married the sort of person she expected, Jacqueline replied, 'That's difficult to say really, I don't know what I expected. It was too young.'[51] She frequently also referred to her divorce, the process of which began nine years before the interview, in 1977, and was still a raw issue for Jacqueline,

[49] FSMA, Interview 066.
[50] FSMA, Interview 066.
[51] FSMA, Interview 066.

demonstrating that current events and emotions strongly colour recollections in oral history interviews. Indeed, the narrative of Jacqueline's interview was centred on justifying and explaining her divorce.

Jacqueline's recollection of her youth was fitted into this narrative. She depicted herself as having 'Not a very interesting teenage life really', since she and her future husband were saving money to get married so could not afford to go out much.[52] In doing this, Jacqueline suggested that her experiences in the 1960s had been unlike the popular memory of hedonistic, leisure-oriented and fun-loving youth. However, Jacqueline's leisure activities as a young adult were similar to those enjoyed by the majority of young people at the time and, indeed, a large proportion of young women in the 1960s had their leisure curtailed while saving for weddings and mortgage deposits. Jacqueline was a member of the local Church youth club, went to the cinema, met friends in coffee bars and occasionally went dancing with her boyfriend. Unlike the majority of women whose leisure and spending was curtailed by saving for marriage, however, Jacqueline expressed regret at her past lifestyle. When asked what a good night out was as a young woman, she replied, 'I don't know, I think probably because we got married so young, we were conscious of saving up, which with hindsight now, is the wrong thing, I think, but, so we didn't really go out a lot.'[53]

This regret and feeling of missing out suggests that Jacqueline's concept of 1960s youth did not match how she perceived her experience of it. She implied that a more interesting teenage life could and should have been had. In other words, she measured, and found wanting, her own experiences against the popular memory of affluent, leisure-oriented youth. Interestingly, Jacqueline seemed to wish that her youth had been more 'normal' in how far it matched popular images of 1960s youth, rather than seeing those images as describing the lifestyles of a 'swinging' minority in the way that Marilyn did. She assumed that 1960s youth should have been about fun and freedom for everyone, not responsibility and asceticism, and in this way popular discourse shaped her understanding and articulation of

[52] FSMA, Interview 066.
[53] FSMA, Interview 066.

what youth more generally should entail and mean. This shows, however, that people do not necessarily interpret and understand the popular memory of 1960s youth in the same way, often due to the individualised ways in which they feel their own experiences do or do not match it. Marilyn saw the 'swinging sixties' as about drugs, Linda understood the 'swinging sixties' as based on music and fashion, while Andrew, Susanne and Alice conceived of it in terms of sexual permissiveness. For Jacqueline, the popular memory of 1960s youth meant simply a generalised freedom and fun, which she retrospectively felt isolated from given how her divorce shaped her recollections of youth. Of course, this isolation was partly artificial since Jacqueline's experiences had been like many other young women's and were not completely removed from the popular image of 1960s youth.

Indeed, her perceived boring and wasted youth was used by Jacqueline to present a composed life story that enabled the audience to understand why her marriage failed and allowed Jacqueline to feel comfortable with this. By framing her youth as preparation for marriage she justified why her experiences were not like the popular memory but also, given her divorce, justified her disappointment at having had such a supposedly unexciting youth. This exacerbated how far Jacqueline assumed her experiences deviated from popular images of 1960s youth, demonstrating the effect subsequent life experiences have on how people negotiate between both popular and personal memories and how they understand earlier stages of life. Ultimately, the popular memory of the 1960s still underpinned Jacqueline's concepts of youth. By describing her youth as boring, she implicitly drew on an alternative concept of youth based on fun, affluence and freedom and implied that she could have had this lifestyle had she had more money. Ultimately, as Jacqueline's interview shows, people's memories of youth are coloured by public discourse and also by their subsequent lives. Exploring the meaning of youth on both a collective and personal level therefore requires close examination of the life story and its construction.

Marilyn and Jacqueline's interviews again show that people who were young adults in the 1960s do not necessarily passively accept popular memories of the period. Instead, they actively critique these popular images where they do not accurately reflect their own lived

experiences. Oral histories also give historians a much fuller picture of a person's life, allowing us to see where some elements of the popular memory – particularly in terms of young adults' leisure in the 1960s – bear closer relation to lived experience than others. Oral history interviewees also actively negotiate popular and personal memories to create a composed narrative of their life and self. This suggests that people's memories and understandings of, as well as the meanings they attach to, youth can shift over time in response to subsequent life events and popular discourses. Moreover, even where they reject popular images of the 1960s, these images still shape people's understandings of youth and the 1960s more generally.

ACCEPTING THE POPULAR MEMORY

A small number of interviewees consciously asserted that their lives were like the popular memory of 1960s youth. Nothing particularly remarkable or unusual sets these people socially, culturally or economically apart from those who rejected the popular memory. Both people whose testimonies are used in this section did live away from home as young adults, which was not hugely common, but this is not the only reason for their memory of a 'swinging' youth as others who lived away from home rejected the popular memory and Ed actually associated his 'swinging' youth with the period before leaving home. As with those who rejected popular memories of 1960s youth, accepting those images was part of the interviewee's attempt to produce both narrative and psychological composure. This again shows that memory, both personal and popular, as well as subsequent life events are crucial to how people understand their own youth in the 1960s and the meanings they attach to it. Furthermore, even though accepting popular memories of 1960s youth suggests some elements of that memory do reflect lived experience, examining personal testimonies in detail shows that the lived experiences of those who accept popular images of the period do not always match up to those images.

Frances was born in 1945 in Preston into a working-class family. Educated at grammar school, she briefly lived away from the family home while doing nursing in

Nottingham before moving back home and becoming a radiographer.[54] Frances then moved into teaching in her mid-twenties after ill-health and a breakdown. At several points in her interview, conducted in 1988, Frances suggested that her young adult lifestyle was like that depicted in popular memories of the 1960s.

For example, Frances noted that she was 'in sort of amongst the swinging sixties social activities', particularly while she lived away from home in Nottingham.[55] Frances recalled that as a young woman she enjoyed the fashions of the period, socialised with friends by getting drunk, asserted her independence, went dancing regularly, stayed out all night with her boyfriend and saw herself as sexually free. As Frances put it when asked to elaborate what she meant by the activities of the 'swinging sixties': 'Well certainly enjoying clothes and hair styles and freedom, and sexual freedom. What else, that was the sixties really wasn't it?'[56] For Frances, her youth was about fashion, music, freedom, fun, sex and experimentation – though she did acknowledge the existence of a sexual double standard, which still rendered sex less acceptable for young women than young men. She consciously saw her experiences as in keeping with the popular memory of youth culture in the 1960s and considered this lifestyle a particularly 1960s phenomenon. Indeed, her activities match many of those depicted in the popular memory. This suggests that the 'swinging sixties' was experienced by some young adults, though Frances' living away from home likely gave her more opportunity and freedom to pursue this lifestyle compared to peers who lived in the family home until marriage. It also reinforces the fact that changes in behaviour and attitude were uneven across the country and the decade since while Frances happily engaged in pre-marital sex others, like Susanne and Andrew, did not.

However, Frances' interview was riven with contradictions to her assertion that she lived a 'swinging sixties' lifestyle. Indeed, her recollections suggested that this lifestyle cut across the grain of what was socially acceptable, which consequently made Frances' youth psychologically difficult. For example, Frances noted several times how her lifestyle had

[54] SFL, Interview with Mrs H9P.
[55] SFL, Interview with Mrs H9P.
[56] SFL, Interview with Mrs H9P.

conflicted with the conventional attitudes within which she had been brought up and particularly with her 'very conventional mum' who expressed 'cutting disapproval' at France's lifestyle.[57] Frances commented that the 1960s were

> A confusing period really, my impression of it is that it was very exciting, especially to look back on, but it was also confusing because there was a huge value conflict with what I'd grown up with right through teenage. And then suddenly at age twenty, twenty one all the values changed and all sorts of other things were encouraged and smiled on.[58]

This reinforces Frances' assertion that her youth was about fun and embracing a 'swinging sixties' lifestyle, particularly once she left home in her late teens and the 'swinging sixties' idea took hold around 1966 when Frances was in her early twenties. She possibly also enjoyed more latitude to experiment and live the lifestyle she wanted once she reached the age of majority at 21. Yet her statement also reveals limitations to how far the popular memory reflects reality: first, because older, more conservative ideals conflicted with Frances' lifestyle. Second, because the 1960s were not a homogenous period but one in which values and behaviours shifted over time, with the latter end of the 1960s perhaps being more 'swinging', and the 'swinging' lifestyle perhaps being more available to those in their late teens and twenties who lived away from home. Third, because Frances was aware that her assessment of the 1960s was, necessarily, retrospective.

Frances attributed her ill-health and breakdown in her early twenties to this conflict between her lifestyle as a young woman and prevailing social attitudes:

> Well you don't understand what is happening to you necessarily at the time, but if you would break the social convention often enough you become sort of alienated. I was staying out nights with my boyfriend, not going home until the next day. … I was drinking quite a lot. And then it got unhappy…[59]

Frances' conscious alignment with the popular memory of 1960s youth therefore became a way to offer a composed life story because it allowed her to explain her breakdown and her difficult relationship with her mother. By actively asserting that her 'swinging sixties' lifestyle deviated from social norms, Frances explained and justified the fact that she had a

[57] SFL, Interview with Mrs H9P.
[58] SFL, Interview with Mrs H9P.
[59] SFL, Interview with Mrs H9P.

breakdown. By often pointing to her mother's 'dogmatic', 'dominant' and 'strong-minded' nature and disapproval of Frances' young adult lifestyle, Frances also explained and justified her difficult relationship with her mother.[60]

Frances' use of the popular memory of 1960s youth shows that this memory does bear significant similarities to the lived experiences of some but that there were limits to this, not least because more conservative moral values persisted. This implies that the 1960s was, as Alice and Angela also suggested, a moment of uneven change and negotiation between old and new lifestyles and value systems. Furthermore, by consciously aligning herself with the popular memory of 1960s youth, Frances was able to create a coherent narrative of her life that accounted for her emotional and physical conflicts. The meanings Frances attached to her youth were shaped not only by what happened at the time, but by how she understood that subsequently.

Ed also consciously aligned his young adult experiences with the popular memory of 1960s youth to construct a composed narrative about his life and self.[61] Ed was born in 1945 to parents on the cusp between the working and lower middle classes. He grew up in Aldershot, attended a secondary modern school and then took up a career in journalism. He lived at home until he was 21 when he moved Bournemouth for work and lived in digs; though he associated his youth with the 'swinging sixties' more before he left home.[62]

On multiple occasions in his 1986 oral history interview, Ed noted that he was a rebel during his youth and linked himself to the popular memory of youth in the 1960s. In particular, he associated this with making a new group of friends in his late teens after which 'things got a bit wild and woolly.'[63] Ed remembered that 'we had some fairly lively teenage years and I was running around with a mob', and later recalled that 'it was in the days of the Mods – and we were all Mods, so we all had Vesper [sic] GS scooters and we all wore the

[60] SFL, Interview with Mrs H9P.
[61] FSMA, Interview 026.
[62] FSMA, Interview 026.
[63] FSMA, Interview 026.

parkas and all the uniform, and we used to meet regularly at a cafe…'[64] He clearly positioned himself as subcultural materially with his clothes and scooter, and behaviourally by implying a rebellion and aggressiveness commonly associated with Mods through his use of the terms 'wild' and 'mob' – these terms even suggested Ed was on the border of delinquency. This rebellion was most obvious in Ed's memories of receiving a three-month prison sentence aged 19. Ed's friend had fallen behind on Hire Purchase payments for a car, so their group staged the theft of the car to allow the friend to claim on his insurance. They were caught and convicted for conspiracy to defraud.

However, a close examination of Ed's activities as a young adult also reveals gaps between his lived experience and the popular memory, despite his assertion that it did describe his youth. Like Marilyn, Ed never associated himself with subcultural politics so his alignment with the subcultural element of the popular memory only goes so far. Ed's social life and his trajectory from school into work were also relatively normal rather than rebellious or subcultural. Ed spent his leisure playing sport, going to pubs and discos or watching TV and had no curfew, like many working young adult men in their late teens. His activities were similar to most young adults', which suggests that the popular memory accurately describes young adult leisure but undermines how rebellious or hedonistic Ed's experiences were outside of his brush with the law and Saturday all-nighters at West End clubs that were a product more of his proximity to London than his being particularly 'swinging'. Moreover, when talking about courtship in his youth Ed commented that there was 'no heavy scene' with his girlfriend, likely implying that they did not have pre-marital sex.[65] If this is so, Ed's experience further deviated from the popular memory since his youth was not characterised by sexual liberation and promiscuity. The popular memory, therefore, does not always accurately reflect lived experience even in cases where a person aligns their youth with that popular memory.

[64] FSMA, Interview 026.
[65] FSMA, Interview 026.

Ed's alignment of his experiences with the popular memory was part of his attempt to create a composed narrative about his life and self. His rebellious, independent and exciting youth became a way for Ed to reconcile himself with the fact that he was now middle-aged and settled with a wife and young child, and also served as explanation for why he had been reluctant to settle down in his early twenties when most of his peers were getting married. When discussing courtship, Ed commented that even once he met his wife he did not want to 'race into marriage.'[66] As a young adult he had never lived outside Aldershot and wanted to explore more of the world before settling, which ties in with the enjoyment of travel that Ed presented as a continuing theme in his life. By presenting his young adult self as independent, rebellious, adventurous and unwilling to settle too soon, Ed therefore justified the fact that he took longer to marry and have children and presented himself as still being an exciting and adventurous person in the present despite being settled. He therefore simultaneously explained his life trajectory to the interviewer and also justified to himself his adventurous personality. Ultimately, Ed used popular discourses about 1960s youth to give meaning to his own youthful experiences as a way to present a composed present self. The way Ed understood his youth was therefore informed both by popular memories of the 1960s and by his present experiences and sense of selfhood.

Examining the personal testimonies of people who actively assert their own youths were like the popular memory of 1960s youth culture therefore reveals two things. First, even though some people actively accept popular images, their lived experiences do not always match up to those images. This again reinforces the need for a thorough examination of young adults' daily lives in the 1960s and into what factors shaped their experiences. Second, just as some people reject popular images in an effort to produce composure, others accept those popular images to create a coherent narrative about their life and self. For Ed this allowed him to remain a rebellious and adventurous person despite being middle-aged and married, and for Frances it allowed her to explain her health issues and poor relationship with her mother.

[66] FSMA, Interview 026.

Once again, therefore, both memory and experience are crucial to creating the meanings of youth for each person.

CONCLUSION

As this chapter has shown, examining the relationship between personal and popular memories of 1960s youth reveals where the popular memory does and does not reflect lived experience. In particular, it shows that gender, location, parental authority and economics often prevented young adults from experiencing a 'swinging sixties' lifestyle, though many still enjoyed leisure activities and an increase in freedom popularly associated with the 1960s. This chapter therefore demonstrates that there is a gap – differently sized for different people, but a gap nonetheless – between the image and the experience of youth in 1960s England. It has also shown that many people are aware of this gap and engage with it reflexively and critically. People who were young adults in the 1960s do not passively accept popular discourses of the 'swinging sixties'.

Indeed, people do not passively accept other discourses about the 1960s either, meaning that is not just images of a 'swinging sixties' that come under critique. For example, Jacqueline, Frances and Ed were all interviewed in the late 1980s, when anti-permissive Thatcherite rhetoric painted the 1960s as causing moral decline.[67] Their negotiations between popular and personal memories of 1960s youth might, therefore, be expected to take an anti-permissive tone. Indeed, Jacqueline considered herself a Conservative.[68] However, Jacqueline and Ed's narratives were not obviously neoliberal or anti-permissive. Instead, they imagined 1960s youth culture as something positive and exciting (and, for Jacqueline, available to seemingly everyone but her) as a way to create composure, which overrode the conservative 1980s political narrative that portrayed the 1960s more negatively. In her 1993 MO response, Alice also rejected anti-permissive attacks on the 1960s and saw the period positively so as to feel comfortable with having had pre-marital sex. She wrote that, 'Recently there's been

[67] Grimley, 'Thatcherism, Morality and Religion'.
[68] FSMA, Interview 066.

much criticism of the Sixties' [sic] and I'm heartily sick of politicians, the press and the older generation blaming the so-called "moral decline" on my generation. "Moral decline" my foot!'[69] Only Frances suggested that the 1960s had not been completely positive given the clash between her own experiences and prevailing conservative attitudes at the time. However, this was not simply obedience to 1980s discourses on the 1960s, but again an attempt by Frances to produce composure. Therefore, just as people who were young adults in the 1960s do not necessarily accept popular memories of a 'swinging sixties', they equally do not passively accept Thatcherite anti-permissive views of the decade.

Popular images of the 1960s – whichever period they come from and whatever political stance they take – do not accurately describe the lived experiences of young adults in the period. Additionally, many people are acutely aware of and reflexive about this. Consequently, an investigation of those everyday experiences is long overdue. Moreover, an examination of how various factors – such as gender, class, age, location and parental authority – shaped those lived experiences will provide a deeper understanding of youth in the 1960s. The next four chapters therefore examine this gap between image and experience more deeply by providing a social history of the day-to-day lives of young adults in the 1960s in work, leisure, and personal relationships.

This chapter has also shown that the way people recall their youths in retrospective personal testimonies is mediated by their subsequent lives and by popular discourses about the 1960s and its youth culture, even where they consciously critique those discourses. Those who were young adults in the 1960s recall their youths in a way that best serves their attempts to create composure in the present and all use popular ideas about the 1960s to frame their understandings of youth and the period more generally. This implies that the memories, understandings and meanings of youth are liable to shift over time and between individuals. Consequently, we must pay close attention to the life story of each person and any attempt to generalise the meanings and experiences of 1960s youth will need to carefully compare what remains constant and what changes within and between people's personal memories.

[69] MOA, Spring 1993 Directive, W1813.

Examining how people use popular memories to produce composed narratives therefore enables us to better understand the relationship between experience and discourse, the effects of memory within personal testimonies, and the importance of analysing the whole life story to reveal the meanings and experiences of one life stage. Chapter six takes this analysis further to look beyond representation and lived experience to examine how both, through the processes of memory, create the meanings of youth that stay with the young adults of the 1960s throughout their lives.

CHAPTER TWO

WORKING LIFE

Throughout the 1960s the shift from heavy to light industry resulted in fewer manual workers, more technology and the expansion of the professions.[1] Both Labour and the Conservatives pursued full employment and real wages rose.[2] More married women entered the labour market, though gendered ideals of the male breadwinner and the housewife persisted.[3] Most working- and lower middle-class young adults left school close to the statutory leaving age of 15 and entered the buoyant labour market as well-paid, semi- and unskilled workers, though many young men still entered apprenticeships while clerical and shop work continued to grow among young women.[4]

Work was central to the lives and experiences of young adults and helped to define what youth meant in the 1960s. As Todd argued of interwar young women, work was important to all young adults in the 1960s because it shaped their relationships with family and friends, facilitated their leisure and lifestyle, and offered a more adult status than schoolchildren enjoyed.[5] Indeed, young adults valued work because of the status it offered, meaning that it gave them a more grown-up identity, greater socio-economic independence and a sense of self-worth and importance as workers. However, 'work' encompasses more than just paid labour. Most young adults undertook unpaid domestic labour and the divide between work and leisure was not clear-cut. While there were therefore many common elements to young adults' working lives in the 1960s, their experiences were not uniform, however. Gender, class, education and location all structured the aspirations, expectations and experiences of work for young adults in the 1960s.

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[1] Andrew Newell, 'Structural Change', in Nicholas Crafts, Ian Gazeley, and Andrew Newell (eds), *Work and Pay in 20th Century Britain*, (Oxford, 2007); Addison, *No Turning Back*, pp. 59–60, 170.
[2] Gazeley, *Poverty in Britain*, p. 161; Addison, *No Turning Back*, pp. 155, 168.
[3] Gazeley, *Poverty in Britain*, p. 159; Kenneth O. Morgan, *Britain Since 1945: The People's Peace*, (Oxford, 2001), pp. 206–207; Smith Wilson, 'The Good Working Mother', p. 207.
[4] Bugge, 'Marketing to Youth in Britain', pp. 187–188; Donnelly, *Sixties Britain*, p. 35; Horn, *Juke Box Britain*, pp. 96–97; Osgerby, *Youth in Britain Since 1945*, pp. 23–24.
[5] Todd, *Young Women, Work and Family*, pp. 1–5.

This chapter examines the working lives of young adults in the 1960s by analysing their aspirations, how they found and chose their occupations, their wages and the family economy, their experiences of work, their further education, the intersection of leisure and work, and work undertaken in the home. Finally, the meaning of work for young adults in the 1960s is examined to expand on important recent research into the meaning of women's work in twentieth-century Britain.[6] First, however, a note should be made about social surveys on young adults' work in the 1960s. As the introduction to this thesis outlined, many social surveys of youth employment are coloured by contemporary concerns, particularly over the successful transition from school to work. Consequently, most surveys only focused on the first few years of young adults' working lives and offer little on older young adults' employment. Nevertheless the surveys are rich and illuminating and can be balanced by using personal testimonies.

ASPIRATION

In the 1960s young adults aspired to jobs that offered security and status, though class, education and gender shaped the exact nature of these ambitions and few had a specific career in mind when they left school. As shown in Table 1, most working- and lower middle-class young adults left school at or near 15 to enter paid employment. Carter, Morton-Williams and Finch found that those in their last year of school generally looked forward to starting work.[7] Responses to the YWP showed that while some were apprehensive about starting work because they liked school, did not want to leave friends or were generally nervous, many relished the opportunity of a new start because they disliked school, thought working would offer greater independence and wanted to make new friends and earn money.[8] A few were

[6] Claire Langhamer, 'Feelings, Women and Work in the Long 1950s', *Women's History Review*, (2016), doi: 10.1080/09612025.2015.1123025; Helen McCarthy, 'Women, Marriage and Paid Work in Post-War Britain', *Women's History Review*, (2016), doi: 10.1080/09612025.2015.1123023.
[7] Carter, *Education, Employment and Leisure*, pp. 23–24; Morton-Williams and Finch, *Young School Leavers*, p. 138.
[8] YWP.

obliged to begin working due to their family's financial circumstances, because their parents (usually in the case of young women who were expected to marry early) felt that more education was redundant, or because they simply did not have the grades to continue in education.[9] Many, however, actively wanted to start working because work offered increased status, spending money, freedom and independence. As one 19-year-old male painting and decorating apprentice put it, 'I was fairly keen to leave [school] to be like the rest and earn some money'.[10] His comment and the recollections of many others suggest that those in their mid-teens aspired to enter 'youth culture' and perform the lifestyle and identity of a young adult and that they saw work as the gateway to this.

AGE	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	Still in Education
15-19 Men	563	19	35	13	1			249
20-24 Men	591	150	56	35	12	7	11	57
15-19 Women	561	126	40	12	1			240
20-24 Women	598	158	68	36	12	23	12	27

Table 1. Population aged 15 and over by terminal education age – proportions per 1000. Taken from 1961 Census of England and Wales: Education Tables, (London, 1966), p. 2.

Young adults wanted clean and interesting occupations that offered good facilities and fair wages; girls wanted a chance to meet people, while boys valued learning to drive and future prospects.[11] However, many 15 or 16-year-old school leavers did not know what specific job or career they wanted. Alan, the son of a clerk and a nurse from Potters Bar, was born in 1953 and left school at 16. He noted that 'There are very few sixteen year olds that know what they want to do in life.'[12] Frank, born in Lancaster in 1947, was the son of a fireman and left his secondary modern school at 15 with 'no idea what to do you know. I mean working class boys of that age had no idea what they want to do. Because I mean you

[9] FSMA, Interview 095; Interview with Joan Canning, conducted by Helena Mills, 26 May 2015; Interview with Joe Knight, conducted by Helena Mills, 6 July 2015.
[10] YWP, Interview C25.
[11] Carter, *Home, School and Work*, pp. 114–115; Carter, *Education, Employment and Leisure*, p. 47; YWP.
[12] FSMA, Interview 152.

don't know what the possibilities are.'[13] These observations suggest that age, class and education affected young adults' employment aspirations. Many working-class school leavers were unprepared and too young to know what careers they wanted.

Young adults were much clearer about what occupations they did *not* want. They shunned jobs seen as 'dead end' or boring and, for girls in particular, that were seen as noisy, dirty and lower class.[14] Others wanted to avoid certain jobs because they disliked the tasks involved. Bill, born in 1948 in Lancaster to a factory-worker father and a mother who did cleaning part-time, took an office job over an apprenticeship in 1963 because 'the manual work and outside wasn't for me.'[15] Factories were particularly undesirable because they were assumed to have poor conditions, few prospects, boring tasks and were seen as a 'common' occupation. One 17-year-old male apprentice mechanic 'couldn't stand the monotony of it, doing the same job all day long', while a 16-year-old female clerk assumed 'its not the sort of job that a girl who was keen to get on would go in for.'[16]

Class and education particularly affected young adults' employment aspirations. Mann found that those in unskilled or semi-skilled occupations tended to have fewer aspirations for promotion, and that young men from a secondary modern (where, unusually, most students took exams) in a post-war housing area with fewer manual workers had higher aspirations for promotion than young men from a secondary modern in a pre-war housing estate where most left school with no qualifications and were from manual backgrounds.[17] Veness also found that ambition varied by school type, with secondary modern students having more 'realistic' ambitions towards 'good jobs' rather than a specific career.[18] Carter similarly considered his respondents' aspirations 'modest' as 60 per cent chose the same occupation when asked what job they realistically wanted and what their dream job was.[19] These education and class dependent aspirations were partly fostered within schools, as

[13] SFL, Interview with Mr H7L.
[14] YWP.
[15] SFL, Interview with Mr M10L.
[16] YWP, Interviews A1, D868.
[17] Mann, *Young Men and Work*, pp. 12–13.
[18] Veness, *School Leavers*, pp. 125, 130, 162–163.
[19] Carter, *Home, School and Work*, p. 134.

grammars pushed their students towards the professions while secondary moderns often consigned students to thinking they could only be 'factory fodder'.[20]

However, as Todd has argued, though few working-class children aspired to professional jobs in the 1960s, their ambitions were not understood by them as 'low' but as aspirations towards independence and security.[21] Indeed, when asked what they hoped their jobs would lead to by the YWP many young adults pointed to promotion, owning their own business, and owning homes and cars.[22] Young adults' aspirations in the 1960s were, therefore, inherently classed. Most working- and lower middle-class young adults did not aspire to social mobility, professional occupations or entry into the middle classes. Instead they aspired to secure jobs with relatively high status (in a skill and respectability rather than a class sense) and better material lifestyles facilitated by steady wages in a time of increasing relative affluence. In fact, as seen in their rejection of factory work, young adults could actually aspire beyond what teachers, politicians and, sometimes, their parents imagined for them.

Gender also structured young adults' employment aspirations in the 1960s. Apprenticeships were particularly desirable for young men since a trade offered good prospects, a good wage once qualified, security and status. Morton-Williams and Finch found that, despite slight regional variation, two thirds of young men wanted an apprenticeship.[23] Jack, born in 1955 to a working-class family in Birmingham, left his secondary modern at 16 to become an apprentice painter and decorator:

> I'd got this very acute awareness… what I really needed was an apprenticeship. Because there was [sic] two types of people in the world… tradesmen or labourers. And you didn't want to be a labourer because you just got all the shit jobs. So I'd got this concept that if you learn something it will get you there.[24]

[20] Carter, *Education, Employment and Leisure*, p. 13; SFL, Interview with Mr L5B; Interview with Jack Draper, conducted by Helena Mills, 22 May 2015.
[21] Todd, 'Affluence, Class and Crown Street', p. 513.
[22] YWP.
[23] Morton-Williams and Finch, *Young School Leavers*, p. 140.
[24] Interview with Jack Draper.

Jack's comment implied that an apprenticeship offered more interesting work and more status than unskilled jobs. For working- and lower middle-class young men in 1960s England, an apprenticeship was a gold standard occupation because of the security and status it offered.

Despite more (particularly married) women working in the post-war period and new opportunities for futures not focused on domesticity, many young women in the 1960s still assumed their career would ultimately be domestic and anticipated stopping paid employment once they had children.[25] Trish, born in 1951 in Liverpool to a working-class family, commented that 'I never wanted a career in that respect, you know… I always wanted to sort of like settle down and have a family.'[26] Young women's responses in the YWP also show that marriage was a greater aspiration for many than paid employment, particularly among older young women, which suggests that age was a significant factor in girls' aspirations as marriage became more important in their later teens and twenties.[27]

However, not all young women aspired to be housewives. Some wanted to become managers, forewomen, hairdressers, nurses, teachers or skilled clerical workers, though many thought their chances of promotion were slim.[28] These skilled, semi-professional careers were seen as a gold standard because they offered status, good wages and stability. These careers were, however, still 'feminine', caring, service occupations. Indeed, Langhamer has shown that in the long 1950s women's perceived femininity and emotional capacity limited their chances of promotion and channelled them into occupations based on 'feminine' qualities.[29] Moreover, these careers were not always seen as realisable ambitions so aspirations were more likely to be thwarted for young women than their brothers. For example, Judith was born in 1946 in Glasgow; her father held several jobs ranging from docker to postman and her mother was a cleaner. She had wanted to become a nurse but instead worked in a paper mill from 15 because her parents could not afford the training and her father thought marriage was

[25] Tinkler, 'The Teenage Self and Lifestyle'; Smith Wilson, 'The Good Working Mother'; Veness, *School Leavers*, pp. 26, 31–33; Carter, *Education, Employment and Leisure*, p. 49.
[26] FSMA, Interview 093.
[27] YWP.
[28] YWP.
[29] Langhamer, 'Feelings, Women and Work'.

a woman's proper career.[30] Economics and gender roles could, therefore, disrupt young women's ambitions.

Overall, young adults in the 1960s often did not know what occupation they wanted on leaving school, but many were clear on what occupations they did not want. Young adults wanted future security and status, though class, education and gender structured career ambitions. Social surveys often considered young adults' aspirations to be 'realistic', though it is more helpful to think of their aspirations as geared towards achieving independence and security rather than 'low'.

FINDING AND CHANGING JOBS

Gender, class, education and location shaped the jobs young adults had in the 1960s and how they chose and found those jobs. The buoyant 1960s economy meant that there was a good supply of jobs for young adults, though few made frequent job changes. Agricultural, mining and domestic service occupations were declining, continuing interwar trends, while administrative, clerical and engineering trades grew.[31] Significant numbers entered employment that did not require training, reflecting the increased demand for semi- and unskilled labour in the 1960s.[32] However, apprenticeships also increased during the 1960s, meaning that more young men could hope for a skilled career, unlike during the interwar years and earlier when skilled workers were part of a much smaller labour aristocracy.[33]

Gender heavily shaped young adults' occupations. As Table 2 shows, young men were more likely to enter apprenticeships than young women and the percentage of young men gaining apprenticeships rose throughout the decade. Most entered them at 16, the official age at which apprenticeships began, as Table 4 shows. Young men's apprenticeships clustered within certain industries: the biggest two, engineering and construction, took 18 and

[30] FSMA, Interview 054.
[31] Osgerby, *Youth in Britain Since 1945*, pp. 50–51; Todd, 'Flappers and Factory Lads', p. 718.
[32] Donnelly, *Sixties Britain*, p. 35; Horn, *Juke Box Britain*, pp. 96–97.
[33] Eric Hobsbawm, *Labouring Men: Studies in the History of Labour*, (London, 1964), p. 272; Eric Hobsbawm, *Worlds of Labour: Further Studies in the History of Labour*, (London, 1984), p. 236.

22 per cent of male apprentices respectively in 1959 and 17 and 26 per cent in 1964.[34] As Table 3 shows, young men were also more likely to enter agricultural occupations, mining and construction. Table 2 shows that more young women entered clerical employment, with this again rising over the decade. Young women also more commonly entered distributive trades and administrative occupations and were, in general, more likely to have non-manual jobs, usually in offices.

	Boys (%)			**Girls (%)**		
Year	**1959**	**1964**	**1969**	**1959**	**1964**	**1969**
Apprenticeship or Learnership to Skilled Trade	33.57	36.37	42.58	7.42	5.76	7.12
Employment Leading to Professional Qualification	1.22	1.65	1.22	1.12	1.67	1.79
Clerical Employment	9.69	10.80	8.34	35.46	39.18	39.67
Employment with Training Not Covered Elsewhere	no data	14.93	14.01	no data	12.88	15.12
Other Employment	55.51	36.28	33.81	56.00	40.55	36.30

Table 2. Percentage of school leavers (age 15-17) entering each type of occupation by gender. Taken from Ministry of Labour Gazette 1960, p. 236; 1965, p. 208; 1970, p. 407.

Class and education also affected young adults' employment. As Table 2 shows, relatively few entered professional occupations, reflecting the fact that the data records only school leavers aged 15-17. Willmott's study of young men in working-class Bethnal Green revealed that none entered professional occupations but three quarters took jobs in manual occupations, though twice as many were skilled as semi- or unskilled.[35] Mann found that young men from a pre-war housing estate in Sheffield where most occupants were manual workers were less likely to enter non-manual occupations than residents of a post-war housing estate with fewer manual workers and more students staying at school beyond 15.[36] Carter, Morton-Williams and Finch discovered that later school leavers and those from grammar

[34] Ministry of Labour and National Service, *The Ministry of Labour Gazette*, (London, 1960), p. 238; Ministry of Labour and National Service, *The Ministry of Labour Gazette*, (London, 1964), p. 210.
[35] Willmott, *Adolescent Boys of East London*, p. 102.
[36] Mann, *Young Men and Work*, pp. 12–13.

schools were more likely to enter professional, skilled or white-collar occupations.[37] Indeed, Table 4 shows that professional occupations tended to be held by older school leavers of both genders, who were more likely to be middle class and to have had educational advantages and qualifications. Moreover, the percentages entering 'other' unskilled occupations declined significantly with each extra year at school. Overall, those leaving school earlier and coming from more solidly working-class backgrounds were more likely to enter manual, unskilled or non-professional occupations.

	Boys (%)			**Girls (%)**		
Year	**1959**	**1964**	**1969**	**1959**	**1964**	**1969**
Agriculture	8	6	4	1	1	1
Mining & Quarrying	3	2	1			
Manufacturing Industries	39	37	40	37	35	34
Construction	12	14	12	1	1	1
Transport & Communications	3	3	4	2	2	3
Distributive Trades	18	17	16	32	32	28
Public Admin, Utilities, Professional Services, Entertainment, Commerce, Finance	10	12	12	16	18	22
Hotel, Laundries & Public Services	8	9	11	10	11	11

Table 3. Percentage of school leavers (age 15-17) entering each type of industry by gender. Taken from Ministry of Labour Gazette 1960, p. 236; 1965, p. 208; 1970, p. 407.

Where a young adult lived significantly shaped their working life. For example, nearly half of young men in Sheffield entered steel and engineering trades compared to a 20 per cent national average.[38] Rural young men were more likely to enter farming and

[37] Carter, *Education, Employment and Leisure*, p. 12; Morton-Williams and Finch, *Young School Leavers*, pp. 137–138.
[38] Carter, *Education, Employment and Leisure*, p. 63; Ministry of Labour and National Service, *Ministry of Labour Gazette 1960*, p. 238; Ministry of Labour and National Service, *Ministry of Labour Gazette 1964*, p. 210.

agricultural trades while urban young women were more likely to have clerical occupations.[39] In 1964, for example, 11 per cent of male school leavers in the South West entered agricultural occupations compared to a 6 per cent national average, while 15 per cent of female school leavers entered insurance or banking in London, compared to 7 per cent on average.[40] Other industries also had regional variation. For instance, on average 2 per cent of male school leavers entered mining and quarrying occupations in 1964, while in the Northern region and Yorkshire this rose to 6 and 4 per cent respectively but in the Eastern and Southern region less than 1 per cent did.[41]

	Boys (%)				**Girls (%)**			
Age Leaving School	**15**	**16**	**17**	**Total Boys**	**15**	**16**	**17**	**Total Girls**
Apprenticeship or Learnership to Skilled Trade	35.24	43.47	27.07	36.37	6.52	4.01	3.77	5.76
Employment Leading to Professional Qualification	0.14	3.30	9.77	1.65	0.19	3.68	8.68	1.67
Clerical Employment	4.26	22.24	34.59	10.80	27.03	69.57	65.66	39.18
Employment with Training not covered elsewhere	16.25	11.91	12.03	14.93	15.30	6.69	7.92	12.88
Other Employment	44.12	19.08	16.92	36.28	51.01	16.05	13.96	40.55

Table 4. Percentage of school leavers entering each type of occupation in 1964 by gender and age at which they left school. Taken from Ministry of Labour Gazette 1965, p. 208.

The most popular reason for taking a job among YWP respondents was because of an interest in that particular occupation or field.[42] Other common reasons were because the job offered good money or prospects, was recommended by personal contacts or the Youth Employment Service (YES) and, usually in the case of apprentices, because they were good at

[39] Morton-Williams and Finch, *Young School Leavers*, pp. 136–137.
[40] Ministry of Labour and National Service, *Ministry of Labour Gazette 1964*, p. 210.
[41] Ministry of Labour and National Service, *Ministry of Labour Gazette 1964*, p. 210.
[42] YWP.

what the job entailed.[43] Steve, born in Lancaster in 1946 to a butcher father and cleaner mother, left school at 15 and became an apprentice mechanic because it offered the chance to become skilled: 'you could always tell anybody that worked for him, well they had learned something.'[44] Kathy, born in 1946 in London, chose a clerical job when she left grammar school at 17 because 'it did seem to offer some form of training, it didn't seem a dead end.'[45] Her father was a civil servant, which perhaps influenced her ambitions. This suggests that even for young women, prospects and status were important in job choice despite many ultimately aspiring to motherhood. Others simply took the first job they were offered, such as Sylvia, born in 1945 to a working-class family in Fleetwood. She 'just wanted to go out to work and earn money, that was it', suggesting that the desire simply to work, earn money and enjoy the status it afforded was enough reason to pick a job; though as Sylvia's family occasionally struggled to make ends meet her wages were also more important to the family economy than many young adults'.[46]

Young adults did not always stay in the same job for their whole youth, though relatively few changed jobs frequently. Some contemporary social investigators were concerned that young adults frequently changed jobs, so it is significant that most only had a small number of changes as this shows that some anxieties over youth in the 1960s were unfounded.[47] The relative lack of job changes during a period of high labour demand also implies that young adults were relatively content with their jobs since it was reasonably easy to change occupations. Towards the later 1960s, as the economy weakened, young adults may also have been reluctant to change jobs as vacancies gradually became scarcer, though no interviewees discussed this so it is impossible to explore fully. Carter found that just over one third of young adults changed jobs in their first year of work, while Jephcott found that 50 per cent of girls and 61 per cent of boys she interviewed were still in their first job, though most

[43] YWP.
[44] SFL, Interview with Mr F2L.
[45] FSMA, Interview, 128.
[46] FSMA, Interview 147.
[47] Morse, *The Unattached*, pp. 29–42.

were under 18.[48] Of Morton-Williams and Finch's sample of 19-20-year-olds who had left school at 15, one third were still in their first job, one quarter had made one change and only 15 per cent of young men and eight per cent of young women had had more than five jobs.[49] The YWP sample also showed that the majority of young workers in Leicester had had only one job; having two or three jobs was not uncommon but having over four was rare.[50] Age unsurprisingly affected how many jobs a young adult had held and location possibly also impacted this, though it is difficult to draw this out fully from the available statistics.

Young adults' reasons for changing jobs were varied and complex, though often gendered.[51] Dissatisfaction with pay and prospects, disinterest, not getting on with co-workers and simply wanting a change were common reasons, while some left because they had found preferable jobs.[52] Young men tended to leave more because of dissatisfaction with pay and prospects, with male apprentices being particularly likely to leave because they felt they were not earning enough as they often had lower wages than most.[53] Young women were more likely to cite co-workers as a reason for changing jobs.[54] Very few were dismissed or made redundant. Dennis, the son of a sawyer born in 1943 in Wales, had a variety of jobs in his youth including errand boy, dockworker and warehouse assistant, moving between them for more money and better prospects.[55] Kay, born in 1950, also had several jobs: 'I was one who got bored easily and would stay in a job for between 6-9 months then simply leave', though she noted that most of her friends stayed in one job.[56]

That some young adults changed jobs because they simply wanted a change reflects the fact that in the 1960s full employment meant it was relatively easy to find jobs. Dennis even went as far as to say that in the early-mid 1960s 'people were really queuing up, you

[48] Carter, *Education, Employment and Leisure*, p. 63; Jephcott, *A Time of One's Own*, p. 54.
[49] Morton-Williams and Finch, *Young School Leavers*, p. 140.
[50] YWP.
[51] Carter, *Education, Employment and Leisure*, p. 86.
[52] Carter, *Education, Employment and Leisure*, p. 86; Carter, *Home, School and Work*, pp. 178-179, 185–189; YWP.
[53] Carter, *Education, Employment and Leisure*, p. 86; Carter, *Home, School and Work*, pp. 178-179, 185–189; YWP.
[54] YWP.
[55] FSMA, Interview 104.
[56] MOA, Spring 1993 Directive, K798.

know, sort of offering you jobs'.[57] However, many who commented on the buoyancy of the 1960s labour market did so nostalgically, often linking it to less favourable present employment statistics. Valerie, born in 1944 to a working-class family in Dudley, was interviewed in the late 1980s when unemployment was high and this shaped her comments that it had been easy to move from being a shop assistant to working at a garage in the 1960s: 'I'd simply just left there on the Friday and I'd got another job by the Monday… I mean in those times… you didn't have to worry… about getting jobs. I mean – not like today. Although luckily my son's just got one.'[58] For Valerie, like the people discussed in chapter one, subsequent life events coloured how she remembered her youth. Her relief that her son had found a job at a time of insecure employment made Valerie nostalgic about the buoyant 1960s labour market, possibly leading to her exaggerating how easy it had been to find jobs. Moreover, given the relative lack of job changes among young adults, it is significant that the narrative of easy moves between jobs is a retrospective view since it fits slightly uneasily with lived experience during the 1960s.

Young adults found paid employment through a variety of methods, though gender and occupation affected this. The three most common methods were using the YES, personal contacts or adverts. A small number also found work by writing to or visiting employers directly. Social surveys suggest that approximately 10 to 20 per cent of young adults used adverts to find jobs.[59] Young women were more likely to find jobs through adverts than young men, perhaps because young men received more help from within the family as discussed below.[60] Mann found that 44 per cent of male clerical workers responded to adverts compared to only three per cent of operatives, which implies that different occupations were often found through different methods.[61] This suggests that adverts were particularly important for finding white-collar jobs, perhaps because working-class families often had

[57] FSMA, Interview 104.
[58] FSMA, Interview 135.
[59] Morton-Williams and Finch, *Young School Leavers*, p. 134; Willmott, *Adolescent Boys of East London*, p. 105; Carter, *Education, Employment and Leisure*, p. 77; YWP.
[60] Carter, *Education, Employment and Leisure*, p. 21.
[61] Mann, *Young Men and Work*, pp. 47–48.

little knowledge of white-collar occupations (such as clerical work) to pass on to their children or few contacts in these occupations.

Between 15 and 20 per cent of young adults used the YES to find jobs, though recent school leavers used it most.[62] Apprentices (41 per cent) and operatives (32 per cent) were more likely to use the YES than clerical workers (24 per cent), which implies that it offered fewer white-collar jobs.[63] Usage of the YES likely also varied by location, though there is a lack of evidence to explore this fully. Carter's 25 per cent of boys and 18 per cent of girls who used the YES in their first year of work was potentially lower than percentages in Bethnal Green (39 per cent of boys for their first job, 14 per cent of boys in later jobs) because the provision and reception of the service differed in the two locations.[64] Carter also found that many young adults in Sheffield did not consider the YES a job-finding service and saw it as interfering and providing inferior jobs compared to those young adults could find for themselves.[65] Indeed, Bobby, who was born to a working-class West Midlands family in 1942, and David both recalled that they had either received no information from the YES or that it 'couldn't offer anything really', suggesting that it had little influence.[66] A fifth of Morton-Williams and Finch's school leavers thought the YES unhelpful because they had already secured a job, while another fifth found it unhelpful because it discouraged them from occupations they hoped to pursue.[67] Overall, the YES was instrumental in securing jobs for a significant number of young adults, but was also often misunderstood and seen as unhelpful.

Schools often also provided careers advice (sometimes in conjunction with the YES), but this again had limited influence. The quality and quantity of this advice varied between schools and was often vague and generalised which, according to Carter, made young people

[62] Morton-Williams and Finch, *Young School Leavers*, p. 134; Willmott, *Adolescent Boys of East London*, p. 105; Carter, *Education, Employment and Leisure*, p. 77; YWP.
[63] Mann, *Young Men and Work*, pp. 47–48.
[64] Carter, *Education, Employment and Leisure*, p. 77; Willmott, *Adolescent Boys of East London*, p. 105.
[65] Carter, *Education, Employment and Leisure*, pp. 74–75; Carter, *Home, School and Work*, p. 161.
[66] FSMA, Interview 133; Interview with David Canning.
[67] Morton-Williams and Finch, *Young School Leavers*, p. 128.

sceptical and meant they were unlikely to remember it even a year after starting work.[68] Some recalled receiving no advice from their school, which suggests that schools had little influence over employment choices.[69] It is possible that people in this group did receive advice but did not remember it, though this does imply that the advice was not influential since it had been forgotten. Others recalled that they had received advice from their schools and some found it useful and influential though many did not.[70] Both those who had gone to grammar schools and secondary moderns were in these two groups.

A third group, however, suggested that school careers advice was dependent on their school type and on classed and gendered assumptions. Several commented that grammar schools pushed them towards university and clerical work, or nursing and teaching if they were female.[71] Others commented that their secondary modern schools prepared them simply to be 'factory fodder'.[72] William, born in 1949 in Birmingham to a diecaster father and mother who worked part-time cleaning, recalled of his school that 'I had no sense of the professions. I had no sense of the kinds of jobs a middle-class academic child would go into. No guidance', which he found frustrating coming from a working-class background.[73] Schools therefore offered heavily classed advice on 'appropriate' employment for their students, reflecting the wider inequality the tripartite system fostered. Overall, however schools lacked influence over the career choices of most young adults since the advice received was often not considered useful.

Many young adults used personal contacts, particularly parents, to find jobs during the 1960s. Carter found that one third of boys found their first job through personal contacts compared to one fifth of girls, and that fathers played a greater role in helping sons rather than daughters.[74] This suggests that, given gender roles premised on male breadwinners and female

[68] Carter, *Home, School and Work*, pp. 41–43.
[69] SFL, Interviews with Mr W7B and Mrs S6L; Interview with David Canning; Interview with Diana Allen, conducted by Helena Mills, 19 November 2015.
[70] FSMA, Interviews 53, 104; Interview with Joan Canning.
[71] SFL, Interviews with Mrs B10P and Mrs L5B; FSMA, Interview 128.
[72] Interview with Jack Draper; SFL, Interviews with Mrs P3L and Mr M10L.
[73] Interview with William Woodsford, conducted by Helena Mills, 5 January 2016.
[74] Carter, *Education, Employment and Leisure*, p. 80.

domesticity, more family investment was made in finding work for sons than daughters and that families often had greater knowledge about jobs for young men than jobs for their daughters since more fathers than mothers worked full time.[75] Operatives and apprentices (42 and 33 per cent respectively) were more likely to use personal contacts to find jobs than clerical workers (26 per cent), which suggests again that working-class families were better placed to help young adults find typically working-class jobs.[76]

A relatively small number of parents actively encouraged or discouraged certain jobs for young adults in the 1960s, as they had done throughout the twentieth century.[77] Often this was based on parents' anxiety that their children improve their social status, understandings of what constituted a 'good' job, and on classed and gendered assumptions. For instance, several working-class young men were encouraged to get an apprenticeship, showing that the working classes valued the stability a skilled trade offered.[78] In contrast, lower middle-class parents and the parents of grammar school students tended to encourage their children into white collar or professional occupations. Eileen, a nurse born in 1944 to a farming family, for instance, recalled that her parents insisted 'we all must have a profession.'[79] More solidly working-class parents could also have this ambition for their children, however, which suggests some fluidity in class-based aspirations for children among parents in the 1960s, even if working-class young adults were less likely to gain these occupations. Sandra, a labourer's daughter born in Lancaster in 1948, went to secondary modern school and her father insisted she and her sisters became nurses as this was a secure job with status.[80] Others were discouraged from certain jobs by parents, again often due to class and status. Sharon, born in 1948 to a working-class family in London, was dissuaded from office work by her step-father because he thought her ill-suited to its middle-class environment.[81]

[75] Carter, *Home, School and Work*, p. 89.
[76] Mann, *Young Men and Work*, pp. 47–48.
[77] Fowler, *The First Teenagers*, p. 25.
[78] Interview with Joe Knight; SFL, Interview with Mr H7L; FSMA, Interviews 053, 104.
[79] SFL, Interview with Mrs A3L.
[80] SFL, Interview with Mrs S6L.
[81] FSMA, Interview 095.

Of course, parental advice was not always taken. Parents were less influential in obtaining a young adult's first job in the 1960s than they had been in the interwar period and even into the 1940s.[82] Sandra initially ignored her father's suggestion of nursing and worked in a shoe factory, while Dennis ignored his parents' advice to get a trade as 'at the end of the day really it was left up to me.'[83] While most parents had some discussion with young adults about employment, the majority gave their children free choice over occupations because they considered their children old enough to decide for themselves.[84] Indeed, Diana, born in 1949 in Birmingham to a working-class family, simply shook her head when I asked if her parents tried to influence her job choices.[85] Parents could, therefore, influence young adults' employment, though advice was classed and gendered, but many young adults exercised agency in choosing occupations. This suggests that parents were willing to see their children take advantage of new opportunities in the expanded labour market of the 1960s, though still provided some guidance.

Friends and siblings could also be instrumental in finding jobs but generally had little influence. Carter recorded that a quarter of young men and two fifths of young women discussed jobs with friends, but less than half knew what jobs friends were aiming for, suggesting that discussions were informal and not centred on career advice.[86] Discussions with friends were also gendered: girls were more likely to be given help or advice by peers whereas boys often gained help and advice from older family friends, pointing to a gendered hierarchy in investment in finding jobs.[87] Similarly, Carter found that a small number of young adults spoke to siblings about finding jobs, with young men more likely to speak to brothers and young women to sisters.[88] The YWP revealed a few cases in which siblings

[82] Todd, *Young Women, Work and Family*, p. 95.
[83] SFL, Interview with Mrs S6L; FSMA, Interview 104.
[84] Carter, *Education, Employment and Leisure*, pp. 37–38; Carter, *Home, School and Work*, p. 91; Morton-Williams and Finch, *Young School Leavers*, p. 126.
[85] Interview with Diana Allen.
[86] Carter, *Education, Employment and Leisure*, p. 40.
[87] Carter, *Education, Employment and Leisure*, pp. 80–81.
[88] Carter, *Home, School and Work*, pp. 99–100.

secured jobs for young adults, but the majority of their limited influence lay in brothers recommending jobs they were familiar with.[89]

Overall, class, education, gender and location had a significant impact on the jobs young adults had as well as how they found and chose them. Though many changed jobs over their youth, most were relatively stable and did not change jobs often. This all sits against a backdrop of a good supply of jobs for young adults in the 1960s, though knowledge of this colours their retrospective assessments of the 1960s job market and their own experiences within in.

WAGES AND THE FAMILY ECONOMY

Gender, age, occupation, class and education affected how much young adults earned in the 1960s. While earning wages offered young adults a sense of status and independence most were expected to contribute to the family economy, which tempered their independence to some extent. However, the ways in which young adults contributed to the family economy were shifting in the 1960s, potentially allowing them to feel more grown-up as paying board became more commonplace.

In 1959, the average earnings for young adults aged 15-25 were £8 per week for men and £5,10s. for women.[90] This was 50 per cent higher than young adult wages in 1938 and had grown twice as fast as adult wages.[91] Real wages continued to rise over the 1960s; by 1971 young men under 21 earned on average £13, 13s a week and young women aged 16-18 earned on average £9, 8s, 5d.[92] Young adults usually earned less early in their youth. Morton-Williams and Finch found that 15-year-old workers earned £4-£6 a week, while of 19-20-year-olds who had left school at 15, men earned £7,10s-£15 a week and women £5-£10.[93] Apprenticeships were generally low paying until qualification; only eight out of 46 in Carter's

[89] YWP, Interviews A887, C463.
[90] Abrams, *The Teenage Consumer*, p. 9.
[91] Abrams, *The Teenage Consumer*, p. 9.
[92] Pearl & Dean Ltd., *The Young Market*, p. 17.
[93] Morton-Williams and Finch, *Young School Leavers*, pp. 141–142.

study earned above £3 a week.[94] Apprentice hairdressers also earned lower wages, but received tips, while nurses and nannies (particularly during training) commanded lower wages but often received free board and lodging.[95] Male wages were highest in building and construction – perhaps to attract young men to these growing industries – while young women's wages were lowest in service occupations where two thirds earned £7,10 or less a week, exacerbating these occupations' unpopularity.[96] Most young adults were paid weekly; the handful receiving monthly salaries tended to be in white-collar or professional jobs such as teaching, nursing and the civil service. Young women who left school later commanded higher wages because they were more likely to gain higher-paid white-collar and professional occupations through the advantages of grammar school, qualifications and middle-class networks.[97] However, Morton-Williams and Finch showed that 19-20-year-old young men who left school at 15 often earned more than peers who left school aged 16-18.[98] This is likely because they had spent longer working and so progressed further in their occupations and because more 15-year-old male school leavers entered high-paying semi- or unskilled jobs than older male school leavers who were more likely to take white-collar, skilled or professional jobs that paid more at a later stage.

Generally, young adults were satisfied with their wages across occupations and throughout their youth. Abrams found that 64 per cent of young adults thought their wages were good.[99] Carter argued that satisfaction was less about the monetary value of wages and more based on the independence and status they offered.[100] Those satisfied with their wages tended to feel that they received a good wage for their age or in general, that it was enough for their spending needs, that they earned more than friends or in previous jobs, that they got regular rises and that their wages would rise once they qualified. One 16-year-old shop

[94] Carter, *Education, Employment and Leisure*, p. 71.
[95] Carter, *Education, Employment and Leisure*, p. 71.
[96] Morton-Williams and Finch, *Young School Leavers*, p. 142.
[97] Morton-Williams and Finch, *Young School Leavers*, p. 156.
[98] Morton-Williams and Finch, *Young School Leavers*, p. 156.
[99] Abrams, *The Teenage Consumer*, p. 13.
[100] Carter, *Education, Employment and Leisure*, p. 97.

assistant commented that 'it's the highest paid job in Leicester for a girl of 16'.[101] A 16-year-old male coach painter wrote that 'it's enough for me to get along with'.[102] One 19-year-old female comptometer operator 'felt a person at last bring[ing] money home every week' suggesting that work conferred adult status and even personhood.[103] Young adults were satisfied with their wages when they matched their own sense of self-worth, were financially adequate and offered status.

However, some young adults were dissatisfied with their wages and changed jobs for better pay. Approximately one third of young men and one fifth of young women in the YWP expressed dissatisfaction with their wages.[104] They often felt that the wage was too low for their age, unfair for the work they did, and that it left them still dependent on their parents. One 18-year-old computer technician was dissatisfied because he did not get paid for overtime while an 18-year-old male clerk thought his £6,10s a week was 'not much at 18.'[105] A 15-year-old female shop assistant wrote that 'I go to work to earn money for myself but I give my M[other] so much + by the time the end of the week comes I've got back off my mother what I've given her. I'm still dependent on my mother.' [106] Young adults' dissatisfaction suggests again that independence and status were important and that money was a crucial tool in gaining these.

Young adults' wages were not simply disposable income as the vast majority contributed to the family economy. In a few cases these wages were crucial to the family economy because post-war affluence had not completely eradicated poverty.[107] Generally, however, young adults' wages were no longer necessary for subsistence unlike in the interwar and immediate post-war period due to reduced family size, rising adult male wages and an increase in married women working. However, the cultural expectation persisted that young

[101] YWP, Interview D663.
[102] YWP, Interview A237.
[103] YWP, Interview E17.
[104] YWP.
[105] YWP, Interviews B140, B103.
[106] YWP Interview, D408.
[107] Todd, 'Affluence, Class and Crown Street'; Todd, 'Breadwinners and Dependents'; SFL, Interview with Mr M10L.

adults would contribute a proportion of their wages by tipping-up (usually to their mother) and receiving a proportion back as spends, or by paying a set amount as board. The amount contributed varied by age, gender, wages, family circumstances and how much peers contributed.[108] Generally, those paying board and in later youth kept more money for themselves, young men kept more than young women (though often because they simply earned more), and higher earners contributed more. The YWP showed that young adults contributed roughly between £1 a week and £5,10s a week in 1963, though age and gender created variance within this.[109] A 1971 market survey by Pearl & Dean estimated that young adults contributed between £2 and £3 a week on average.[110]

Before the Second World War young adults generally tipped-up their wages, though occasionally an older young man (and less often a young woman) might pay board.[111] How young adults contributed to the family economy was shifting by the late 1950s and 1960s, however. The more favourable economic climate meant paying board became more common for both young men and young women, which offered greater status and independence by giving them control of their own money.[112] Indeed, by 1971 the Pearl & Dean survey assumed paying board was the norm, though a few young adults tipped-up throughout the period.[113] A few paid board from when they started work but most did so after a few years. The transition from tipping-up to boarding occurred when the young adult was seen to reach an appropriate age, maturity or level of income, sometimes at the insistence of the young adult.[114] For example, Steve tipped-up as an apprentice but boarded once he qualified, while Sandra paid board from when she turned 18.[115] There was no uniform pattern or point at which young adults paid board, however, suggesting that family circumstances played a role in determining this alongside age, gender and wages.

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[108] Carter, *Education, Employment and Leisure*, p. 142; Jephcott, *A Time of One's Own*, p. 56.
[109] YWP.
[110] Pearl & Dean Ltd., *The Young Market*, p. 17.
[111] Davies, *Leisure, Gender and Poverty*, pp. 83–86; Langhamer, *Women's Leisure*, pp. 101–103; Roberts, *A Woman's Place*, pp. 42–43.
[112] Carter, *Education, Employment and Leisure*, p. 145.
[113] Pearl & Dean Ltd., *The Young Market*, p. 17.
[114] Carter, *Education, Employment and Leisure*, p. 145.
[115] SFL, Interviews with Mr F2L and Mrs S6L.

The vast majority of young adults contributed to the family economy in the 1960s not simply due to expectation and financial necessity but because they lived in the family home until marriage. Middle-class young adults were more likely to leave home before marriage for higher education; indeed in 1961 they were eight times more likely to attend university than working-class peers.[116] Though a small number of working-class young adults did attend university, numbers were low overall with only around eight per cent of all 18-19-year-olds entering higher education in 1962 and still just under 14 per cent attending in 1970 after the 1960s expansion of the universities.[117] Only a very small number of working- and lower-middle-class young adults left the family home before marriage for other reasons, usually due to family problems (explored in chapter four) or work. Young women who lived away from home due to work often did so for teacher or nursing training.[118] Young men had more varied reasons for working away from home. Alan lived in digs during the week for his apprenticeship but returned home at the weekend while Robert, who was born in 1942 to a farming family in Scotland, left home to join the Police, and Ed moved to take a better journalism job in Brighton where he stayed in digs.[119] Living away from home was sometimes temporary – Alan returned home once qualified, for example – meaning that some contributed to the family economy only at certain points in their youth.

Age	**14-15**	**16-18**	**19-21**	**22-24**
Percentage living at home with parents	98	94	84	78

Table 5. Percentage of young adults in each age group who are unmarried and left school at 15 living with parents. Taken from Pearl & Dean Ltd., The Young Market 1971, (London, 1971), p. 40.

[116] William Whyte, *Redbrick: A Social and Architectural History of Britain's Civic Universities*, (Oxford, 2015), p. 239.
[117] A.H. Halsey, 'Further and Higher Education', in A.H. Halsey and Josephine Webb (eds), *Twentieth-Century British Social Trends*, (Basingstoke, 2000), pp. 226, 230; Peter Mandler, 'Educating the Nation II: Universities', *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*, 25 (2015), pp. 4–8. It should be noted that these figures include those who attended teacher training and further education; the percentages attending only university were lower.
[118] Mass Observation Archive, University of Sussex (MOA), SxMOA2/1/88/2, Replies to Spring 2010 Directive, M3408, M3476; SFL, Interview with Mrs A3L.
[119] FSMA, Interviews 152, 160, 026.

Overall, young adults' wages increased over the 1960s; though gender, age and occupation determined their earnings and contributions to the family economy. The cultural expectation that young adults contributed to the family economy remained, though their wages were less crucial than before and how they contributed was changing. Young adults therefore occupied a contradictory role in the family economy due to the impact of relative affluence on the working class. They contributed to the family economy but (as will be explored more in chapter four) parents often spent much of this on young adults. Moreover, they gained independence by earning, but living in and contributing to the family home tempered this. Nevertheless, most young adults were satisfied with their wages because they afforded spending money, independence, status and self-worth.

EXPERIENCES OF WORK

In the 1960s, young adults' experiences of work were broadly positive, though they had a range of things they both liked and disliked about their jobs. Gender and occupation necessarily shaped the day-to-day experiences of work but overall young adults' relationships to and in the workplace were generally cordial, even friendly, and certainly lacking in the antagonism some contemporary commentators and later academics have assumed existed.[120]

Young adults' experiences of work were shaped by gender and the occupation they had. Young women often worked shorter hours than young men; Carter found that half of young adults worked a 41-44 hour week, while two fifths of girls and only one fifth of boys worked less than 40 hours a week.[121] Only a small number worked over 45 hours a week, usually builders, plumbers, mechanics, steel or engineering workers, or female shop assistants who regularly worked weekends.[122] Half of young adults worked a five day week, with the remainder usually working half a day on Saturdays.[123] Shop assistants often worked all day Saturday, with a half-day during the week and, in general, shop assistants had the longest

[120] Paul Willis, *Learning to Labour: How Working Class Kids Get Working Class Jobs*, (Farnham, 2012), p. 3; Barron Mays, *The Young Pretenders*, pp. 21–24.
[121] Carter, *Home, School and Work*, p. 156.
[122] Carter, *Home, School and Work*, p. 156.
[123] Carter, *Home, School and Work*, p. 157; Jephcott, *A Time of One's Own*, pp. 56–57.

hours.[124] Start and finish times varied according to occupation; for example, factory workers usually started and finished earlier than others.[125] Breaks in the working day also varied between workplaces and were not always rigidly enforced. Social surveys did not explore in depth the tasks involved in particular occupations, though Carter suggested that most jobs involved relatively few and undemanding tasks.[126] Personal testimonies also showed that tasks varied significantly between occupations.

Young adults were generally satisfied with their jobs, though most had a mixture of likes and dislikes.[127] Even if they disliked their tasks, most enjoyed the status working conferred.[128] As noted above, good wages could make jobs satisfactory. Some liked their work because it offered freedom, particularly in comparison to school.[129] Tomasz, born in Preston in 1949 to a working-class Polish family, felt 'I was you know, more independent' once he began as an apprentice fitter in 1965 in Preston.[130] Others found a sense of pride and achievement in their abilities and output. Carol, born in 1947 to a single mother who worked in a factory, worked herself at an acetate factory in Lancaster, commenting that 'when I went on a machine it was a sense of achievement… This is my machine I am working it.'[131] Some also enjoyed having responsibility and power. One 19-year-old salesman noted that he liked 'being left to myself and trusted with the responsibility of the department.'[132] Those who enjoyed their work because of their sense of autonomy challenge previous histories of work, which have tended to attribute this only to skilled employees and to characterise the unskilled and women as alienated by work.[133] Enjoying the freedoms and responsibilities of paid

[124] Carter, *Home, School and Work*, p. 157.
[125] Carter, *Home, School and Work*, p. 157.
[126] Carter, *Education, Employment and Leisure*, p. 11.
[127] Mann, *Young Men and Work*, p. 11; Willmott, *Adolescent Boys of East London*, pp. 108–109; Morton-Williams and Finch, *Young School Leavers*, p. 140; Abrams, *The Teenage Consumer*, p. 13; Ni Bhroin, *Young Women Workers*, p. 70.
[128] Carter, *Education, Employment and Leisure*, pp. 23–24, 97.
[129] Carter, *Education, Employment and Leisure*, pp. 23–24, 93.
[130] SFL, Interview with Mr W8P.
[131] SFL, Interview with Mrs L3L.
[132] YWP, Interview B25.
[133] Anna Pollert, *Girls, Wives, Factory Lives*, (London, 1981), pp. 130–145; Todd, *Young Women, Work and Family*, pp. 159–160; Hobsbawm, *Labouring Men*, p. 273; Hobsbawm, *Worlds of Labour*, p. 238.

employment meant that young adults liked the status work offered. It introduced them into the adult world and afforded a sense of maturity.

As well as enjoying the status working offered, young adults also liked jobs that had good conditions, nice workmates and that were interesting. Finding a job interesting was necessarily a subjective assessment and was often gendered because young men were more likely to value jobs they enjoyed and were good at than young women.[134] Some also liked their job because the working conditions were pleasant. Valerie preferred her job working at a garage to her first as a window dresser because she enjoyed being 'outdoors. That was great. I loved it.'[135] Others still, though usually young women, enjoyed their jobs because workmates provided entertainment and escape from boring tasks.[136] Carol, for example, recalled that in the acetate factory 'we used to have a laugh, all the girls you know', while Kathy enjoyed working in a personnel office 'because you are dealing with people.'[137] Young men liked being able to travel, work outside or have practical tasks (particularly the earlier they left school), while those who left school later (aged 17-18) were more likely to think their work was interesting and rewarding.[138] Overall gender, class and education shaped what young adults liked about their jobs.

However, there were also elements of their jobs that some young adults disliked. A small number disliked their jobs because they were difficult or strenuous, while others found their job uninteresting.[139] Sharon's first job aged 15 as a shop assistant was 'just boring' (though this may be exacerbated by the fact she had wanted to work in an office but her step-father discouraged her) and one 18-year-old clerk thought his job 'can be drudgery. A lot is just keeping records of what comes in and goes out.'[140] Poor wages and a lack of prospects were also common dislikes. However, it was more often young men than young women who

[134] Morton-Williams and Finch, *Young School Leavers*, pp. 139–140.
[135] FSMA, Interview 135.
[136] Morton-Williams and Finch, *Young School Leavers*, pp. 139–140; Pollert, *Girls, Wives, Factory Lives*, pp. 130–133.
[137] SFL, Interview with Mrs L3L; FSMA, Interview 128.
[138] Morton-Williams and Finch, *Young School Leavers*, p. 152.
[139] Carter, *Education, Employment and Leisure*, p. 93; Ni Bhroin, *Young Women Workers*, p. 70.
[140] FSMA, Interview 095; YWP, Interview B103.

pointed to a lack of prospects, indicating that the importance of a future career was gendered. Some young adults also disliked the conditions they worked in.[141] Jack disliked his painting and decorating apprenticeship because 'you got no mess canteen… you were just out in the open all the time… there was nowhere to sit or nothin', it was a bit bloody dire'.[142] Others – usually young women – disliked their jobs due to unfriendly workmates or difficult bosses. Sharon thought her workmates were 'snooty' and found shop work dull, while Trish left her first job as a typist because 'I never used to see anybody, speak to anybody.'[143]

Young adults' relationships with bosses and superiors depended on how often they interacted with these people, which in turn depended on the size, structure and type of firm they worked for.[144] In larger companies clear hierarchies meant young adults were more likely to interact with supervisors or foremen than company bosses.[145] Most workplaces were smaller than this, though few worked in a place where the overall manager was their immediate boss.[146] Most young adults had relatively little opinion to offer on bosses and supervisors because many occupations involved little contact with them, though many offered positive if vague comments. They displayed a general sense of respect and tended to like bosses and supervisors who were fair, friendly and helpful but did not interfere.[147] Young adults disliked bosses who were unfriendly or incompetent, or because of a dispute at work.[148] More developed opinions of bosses and supervisors arose from regular contact or over a specific issue. Steve, for example, worked closely with his boss as an apprentice mechanic, recalling that he had been tough and exacting but had also been fun and would play football with the young men.[149] In contrast an 18-year-old stock room assistant commented that her boss 'ignores you. Won't have a laugh with you when you see him in the corridor.'[150]

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[141] YWP.
[142] Interview with Jack Draper.
[143] FSMA, Interviews 095, 093.
[144] Carter, *Education, Employment and Leisure*, p. 108.
[145] Carter, *Education, Employment and Leisure*, p. 108.
[146] Carter, *Home, School and Work*, p. 222.
[147] Carter, *Education, Employment and Leisure*, pp. 109–110; YWP.
[148] Carter, *Education, Employment and Leisure*, p. 108.
[149] SFL, Interview with Mr F2L.
[150] YWP, Interview E429.

As shown above, workmates were important to young adults' job satisfaction. Indeed, most young adults got on well with their workmates.[151] The YWP sample showed that only approximately one third of young men and less than ten per cent of young women did not get on with workmates.[152] This was not a solely 1960s phenomenon, however, and workmates were important to young adults' experience and enjoyment of work throughout the twentieth century, often making it more bearable through jokes and gossip.[153] Work friendships often developed in occupations and workplaces with a number of similarly aged young adults. Where young adults developed stronger friendships, rather than simply amicable working relationships, these were developed outside the workplace as well as during work, as will be examined in chapter four.

Trade unions feature very little in personal testimonies and social surveys, making it difficult to assess how many young adults were members. Union membership rose from 10 million in 1960 to 13 million by 1979 in Britain, yet personal testimonies suggest that unions were relatively unimportant to most young adults in the 1960s.[154] Most were broadly uninterested in them and sometimes could not even remember the name of their own union.[155] Nationally, 44 per cent of all male workers were union members in the early 1960s though less than a third of female workers were by 1968.[156] In Sheffield, a comparatively strongly unionised city, unions contacted only 36 per cent of young men and 14 per cent of young women in their first year of work, suggesting low enthusiasm for unions among young workers or that union officials were uninterested in young workers.[157] Of the YWP sample, 19 per cent of young men and 38 per cent of young women were members of a union.[158] The industrial make-up of Leicester, where the YWP was conducted, likely affected membership

[151] Abrams, *The Teenage Consumer*, p. 13; Ni Bhroin, *Young Women Workers*, pp. 73–74.
[152] YWP.
[153] Langhamer, *Women's Leisure*, pp. 91–92; Pollert, *Girls, Wives, Factory Lives*, pp. 132–133; Sallie Westwood, *All Day Everyday: Factory and Family in the Making of Women's Lives*, (London, 1984), pp. 90–92.
[154] Todd, *The People*, p. 284.
[155] Carter, *Education, Employment and Leisure*, pp. 138–139; YWP.
[156] Todd, *The People*, pp. 284–288.
[157] Carter, *Education, Employment and Leisure*, p. 135.
[158] YWP.

numbers as many girls were in closed shop factories and many of the younger boys had only just turned 16, the legal age for membership. Nevertheless membership numbers were not particularly high among young adults. Many who did join a union did so because they worked in a closed shop or because of a specific dispute, such as Dennis who only joined 'when I was in the supermarket… because the manager… started taking advantage of you.'[159] Most young adults viewed trade unions positively, but had only a basic understanding of their function for solving disputes, protecting pay and fighting for better hours and conditions, which reinforces the idea that most were broadly uninterested in unions.[160] Some had more negative views, assuming that unions did little and were not useful. Trish simply said 'No' and laughed when asked if her union did anything for her while she worked at Barclays bank.[161]

This lack of enthusiasm for unions sits uneasily with Todd and Huw Benyon's arguments that young workers fuelled workplace militancy in the late 1960s.[162] Consequently, more research into trade unions and young workers in the 1960s is needed to untangle whether young adults were ambivalent or the drivers of workplace militancy. Todd and Benyon draw on the experiences primarily of young men in large, organised workplaces, such as the Ford plants, and so may overstate young workers' enthusiasm for industrial involvement. Benyon also notes a stark difference in commitment between union activists and ordinary workers, which again suggests that accounts of young workers' militancy have focused too closely on leaders rather than the majority.[163] Moreover, while many were largely ambivalent about unions, it is possible their enthusiasm peaked and troughed (meaning they may have become more active in the later 1960s when disputes increased and the economy began to falter) as many potentially saw little need for unions in a period of full and stable employment. The processes of memory potentially also dull the way interviewees later understood trade unions, particularly for those being interviewed in the late 1980s in the aftermath of Thatcher's clash with the miners.

[159] FSMA, Interviews 093, 104.
[160] YWP.
[161] FSMA, Interview 093.
[162] Todd, *The People*, pp. 275–288; Huw Benyon, *Working for Ford*, (London, 1973).
[163] Benyon, *Working for Ford*, pp. 201–206.

Overall, young adults had a variety of likes and dislikes and their experiences of work varied due to occupation and gender. Trade unions were seemingly unimportant, most thought their bosses were generally good and the majority got on with workmates. Ultimately, paid employment was a generally positive experience for young adults, which undermines the concerns in many contemporary social surveys that young adults needed close guidance to successfully accommodate them into the labour market and adulthood. It also contrasts with work by Paul Willis and the CCCS that has argued that young workers had a culture of resistance to school and work.[164] Instead, everyday relations to and in the workplace in the 1960s were less antagonistic and broadly satisfactory for young adults in a climate of stable and well-paid employment, even if moments of fun were sometimes needed to alleviate boredom.

WORK AND EDUCATION

Though most working- and lower-middle-class young adults left school around 15 in the 1960s, beginning work was not always the end of their education as many attended evening classes and day release. Often these were in vocational subjects, though employers might also send young adults to classes for general academic education and social development.[165] These classes were a form of work not only because they involved hard work, but also because they were linked to paid employment. Experiences of further education varied according to location, gender and class but were usually more positive than negative.

Jephcott recorded that 47 per cent of young men and 14 per cent of young women in her Scottish towns attended further education, while Carter found that two fifths of young men and one third of young women attended evening classes, day release or both in Sheffield.[166] Of the YWP Leicester sample, 59 per cent of young men and 38 per cent of

[164] Willis, *Learning to Labour*, p. 3.
[165] For an account of young women's further education through day release see W.R. Page, *Introducing the Younger Woman: The Story of an Experiment in Further Education for Younger Women out at Work*, (Cambridge, 1965).
[166] Jephcott, *A Time of One's Own*, p. 52; Carter, *Education, Employment and Leisure*, p. 117.

young women attended classes associated with their work.[167] Willmott found only 20 per cent of boys from Bethnal Green attended further education.[168] This suggests regional variation in further education, likely depending on local occupational structures. More broadly, Morton-Williams and Finch concluded that more young adults attended further education in the North compared to the Midlands or South, and that those from urban areas were more likely to attend than peers in rural locations.[169]

Gender also affected further education. Young women were less likely to attend because they were less likely to enter occupations requiring qualifications and because their training was considered less important given assumptions of future domesticity.[170] The types of classes attended were also gendered because occupations were gendered. Most young women who attended classes were office workers doing typing and shorthand, though female apprentices in hairdressing and floristry, for example, also took classes.[171] For young men, there was a less obvious relationship between occupation and further education as both semi- and skilled workers took classes, though more apprentices than non-apprentices did so.[172] Instead, young men's attendance depended on the policies of individual employers.[173] Young men undertook a variety of different classes in subjects ranging from painting and decorating to chemistry and from journalism to engineering.

Class and education shaped young adults' further education too. Young men from Bethnal Green were more likely to attend classes if they had been to a grammar or comprehensive school than a secondary modern.[174] Mann found that young men who left school at 15 with no qualifications were less likely to attend further education compared to peers who stayed at school beyond 15 and gained qualifications.[175] Moreover, in Morton-Williams and Finch's study half of those with fathers in non-manual occupations studied for

[167] YWP.
[168] Willmott, *Adolescent Boys of East London*, pp. 96–97.
[169] Morton-Williams and Finch, *Young School Leavers*, p. 160.
[170] Carter, *Education, Employment and Leisure*, p. 117.
[171] Carter, *Education, Employment and Leisure*, p. 117.
[172] Morton-Williams and Finch, *Young School Leavers*, p. 160.
[173] Carter, *Education, Employment and Leisure*, p. 117.
[174] Willmott, *Adolescent Boys of East London*, p. 98.
[175] Mann, *Young Men and Work*, p. 13.

qualifications after leaving school at 15 compared to only one third of those with fathers in semi- or unskilled occupations.[176] This reflects the fact that young adults, particularly young men, from higher socio-economic backgrounds or who left school after 15 were more likely to enter skilled jobs requiring further education.

Carter concluded that young adults were unenthusiastic about further education, viewing it as 'a medicine, not to be taken unless prescribed'.[177] He added that many did not take classes seriously, used them to socialise, resented the intrusion into their leisure time and knew little about what their classes entailed.[178] He also commented that many found it hard to concentrate after a full day of work and that some struggled with long journeys and the difficulty of the work involved.[179] David liked his classes but recalled long, tiring journeys there after full days of work: 'it was hard work because you had homework as well and so there wasn't much time for much else to be honest.'[180] Ann, born in 1942 to a working-class family in Altrincham, took evening classes in shorthand and typing aged 15 for her job on a switchboard and was more negative. She recalled that 'I weren't keen on the shorthand. The typing was all right. The girls that I used to go with were a bit giggly, so we didn't really take it too seriously… So I never really got to the end of that.'[181] This reinforces Carter's summation that, for some, classes were more about socialising than learning, were not taken seriously and – possibly more so for young women –were not seen as relevant. It is possible that some young adults' disliked their classes because they were forced to attend by employers, but as few talked about their further education in much depth this is difficult to substantiate.

However, as W.R. Page described in his account of young women on day release in the late 1950s, even the most recalcitrant often came to like the classes once they had attended

[176] Morton-Williams and Finch, *Young School Leavers*, p. 160.
[177] Carter, *Home, School and Work*, p. 237.
[178] Carter, *Home, School and Work*, pp. 244–246.
[179] Carter, *Home, School and Work*, p. 249.
[180] Interview with David Canning.
[181] FSMA, Interview 004.

for a while.[182] Even though he was rigorously quizzed on them by his boss, Steve remembered that his classes were 'interesting you know, you was learning a lot of things, you met a lot of new people as well.'[183] Jack, disliked his job as an apprentice painter and decorator but really enjoyed his classes: 'I loved it! I never missed a night or day'.[184] For Jack, this enjoyment came from his desire to learn and progress and love of practical tasks. Similarly, Marilyn remembered that 'I didn't want to be a junior [in the office] obviously so that's what started me to learn typing.'[185] Others enjoyed further education because it offered adult status. Jack recalled, 'all the lecturers just treated you with literal respect. So in terms of school it was completely different, y'know, we were just bein' treated as adults… we were more or less on first name terms.'[186] Therefore, young adults understood further education as positive when it was interesting (particularly if they considered their job interesting), and because it offered responsibility, maturity and a more adult status. Of course, retrospect and nostalgia possibly heighten how fondly people remember further education classes, particularly when, as in the cases of David, Jack and Marilyn, successful further education aided their employment later in life. Yet, their memories still suggest that Carter was overly pessimistic in his assumptions about young adults and further education.

LEISURE IN THE WORKPLACE

Langhamer has argued that 'work' and 'leisure' are not always as separate as might initially be assumed because some activities are both work and leisure simultaneously.[187] As such, here the concept and experience of 'work' is expanded to examine where leisure intruded into work and how this contributed to young adults' general satisfaction with work.

[182] Page, *The Younger Woman*.
[183] SFL, Interview with Mr F2L.
[184] Interview with Jack Draper.
[185] Interview with Marilyn Shaw.
[186] Interview with Jack Draper.
[187] Langhamer, *Women's Leisure*, p. 16.

First, work times and spaces could be used for socialising, which is commonly understood as a leisure activity. For example, when asked what he did for leisure once he started working as an apprentice mechanic, Steve recalled that

> I think all the fun was all round work because it was that close. Even if you went home early and the place was still open, we all used to hang about there… if other people were still working you used to just go and stand and talk or mess about or whatever.[188]

David and Joe made friends as apprentices at their firm, Wilmott Breden, where they not only had an apprentice association that functioned like a youth club, but several sports teams that they regularly participated in with other colleague-friends.[189] Work and leisure were not, therefore, always strictly separated in terms of friends and spaces. Work could mean more than simply the activities, time and spaces of paid labour and could encompass a venue and set of relationships based on leisure. Moreover, this suggests that young adults' leisure in the 1960s was not solely based on commercial venues and entertainments but occupied a wider variety of locations, activities and relationships.

Work could also incorporate other leisure activities. Marilyn recalled that one office she worked in 'used to have music while you work there… you could take six records in to be played' and that in the canteen 'there was a jukebox… so we all used to put a penny each and we would be jivin'.'[190] Joe and other apprentices used to play practical jokes at work: 'we started to pull each others' leg and play little tricks… you'd have a metal cup to go get your tea… you would leave your cup just on the top of your work station there, and you'd come back to get it and somebody's nailed it to the bench!'[191] At other times they would even dismantle a workmate's lathe while he went to the bathroom. This horseplay introduced fun into the working day and facilitated friendships because reacting well to a joke was 'the mark of sort of acceptance', reinforcing that socialisation was an important part of paid employment.[192] Sallie Westwood, Anna Pollert, Todd and Willis have argued that socialising

[188] SFL, Interview with Mr F2L.
[189] Interview with David Canning; Interview with Joe Knight.
[190] Interview with Marilyn Shaw.
[191] Interview with Joe Knight.
[192] Interview with Joe Knight.

and playing jokes in the workplace are undertaken to defy authority, alleviate boredom and mitigate workers' powerlessness.[193] This complicates the idea that young adults were broadly satisfied with their jobs if many pursued entertainments during the working day; though it also suggests that pursuing such entertainments was a key reason why many young adults enjoyed their jobs since it countered potential monotony and subordination.

Therefore, the times and spaces of work and leisure could intersect. This made work more enjoyable for young adults and also shaped the meaning of work. Paid employment was not simply about labour for young adults in the 1960s, nor was it necessarily always boring and serious. It could also mean a place and time for fun and friendship when activities more usually seen as 'leisure' crept in. Ultimately, given that aspects of 'leisure' are clearly visible in the 'work' lives of young adults, historians need to be flexible with both concepts. This is explored further in chapter three where some forms of 'leisure' are examined as 'work'.

WORK IN THE HOME

The concept of work must also be expanded because not all work young adults undertook in the 1960s was for employers. Many had been expected to help with domestic labour in the home while still at school, usually for pocket money, and this expectation continued once they started work, although pocket money usually ceased. Once again, this experience of work was heavily gendered, though it had changed significantly since the earlier twentieth century.

David's parents had separated so he and his brothers helped his mother by taking on 'male' domestic chores: 'we'd look after gardening type things… I became quite proficient at electrical things as well.'[194] Other young men sorted out the fireplaces, cut the grass or cleaned the car. Bobby, when asked if his sister had helped around the house, even replied, 'I *presume* so. Every daughter does. Yeah, she did the house-cleaning', demonstrating that young adults assumed household tasks were gendered and that young women undertook

[193] Willis, *Learning to Labour*, pp. 29–33; Westwood, *All Day Everyday*, pp. 90–92; Todd, *Young Women, Work and Family*, pp. 146–152; Pollert, *Girls, Wives, Factory Lives*, pp. 131–145.
[194] Interview with David Canning.

'feminine' housework.[195] Certainly, young women's chores commonly involved cleaning, making beds, washing, ironing and cooking. Some were expected to help more than their brothers, much to their annoyance.[196] One female Mass Observer, born in 1949, wrote that 'it always seemed very unfair that my brother… was never expected to do any of these things.'[197] However, unlike earlier in the twentieth century, none of the young women included in this thesis had to take primary responsibility for domestic chores or siblings in normal circumstances, nor were any kept at home to do housework rather than going to work.[198] This suggests that young adults' (and particularly young women's) relationships to domestic labour had shifted significantly by the 1960s due to smaller family sizes, increased affluence, better housing and increasing acceptance of women's paid employment.

A few (usually young women) temporarily shouldered more domestic labour, usually due to the illness or death of their mother. Joan, born in Birmingham in 1946 to a working-class family, for example, took over the running of the house when her mother died.[199] However, personal testimonies reveal that while most young adults undertook household labour a significant number actually had very little housework to do, were not expected to help or were actively discouraged from doing so. Marilyn remembered 'we'd supposed to [help with chores] but if we could get out of it we could' and she and her brothers never faced any real consequences for this.[200] Diana recalled not being expected to help with chores because 'I can always remember my mother saying "you will have enough to do of your own." However, when I did something, I always did it wrong.'[201]

This shift to some young adults providing less domestic labour resulted from several factors. Rising affluence meant more families owned labour saving devices and had left sub-standard housing for newer, cleaner council stock that reduced domestic labour. Second, as

[195] FSMA, Interview 133. My emphasis.
[196] McRobbie, *Feminism and Youth Culture*, p. 52.
[197] Mass Observation Archive, University of Sussex (MOA), SxMOA2/1/8/1, Replies to Autumn 1982 Directive, C126.
[198] Anna Davin, *Growing Up Poor: Home School and Street in London 1879-1914*, (London, 1996), pp. 85–97; Todd, *Young Women, Work and Family*, p. 56.
[199] Interview with Joan Canning.
[200] Interview with Marilyn Shaw.
[201] Interview with Diana Allen.

Diana suggested, some mothers were dissatisfied with how their children completed tasks so preferred to do chores themselves, perhaps because contemporary discourses urged married women back into the home after the Second World War.[202] The growing emphasis on companionate marriage in the 1950s and 1960s encouraged husbands to help more in the home so the burden of housework was increasingly shouldered by both parents rather than the mother alone or the mother and children, though many husbands were slow to increase their domestic roles.[203] It is also possible that parents, in line with Todd and Young's argument that affluence allowed them to be more supportive of their children, shielded young adults from chores because they saw youth as a period of relative freedom and fun.[204] Indeed, this is reflected in Diana's exemption from housework given that her mother assumed Diana would have plenty once married. Finally, some were perhaps exempt from domestic labour because their status as full-time workers excused them as it had often excused husbands.

Ultimately, while most young adults worked in the home this was no longer the case for all and was experienced differently to predecessors in the interwar period and earlier. Nevertheless, domestic work often remained heavily gendered for young adults in the 1960s.

THE MEANING OF WORK

For young adults in the 1960s 'work' encompassed more than just paid employment in the labour market. Young adults also contributed unpaid labour in the home while education and leisure featured in the times, spaces and activities of the labour market. Moreover, as Langhamer has argued, 'work' is a heavily gendered concept based on ideas of the male breadwinner, while the unpaid domestic labour of women is often undervalued, under-recorded and even ignored.[205] Yet in the 1960s young men and young women undertook both paid employment and unpaid domestic labour, so understandings of work need to be expanded.

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[202] Smith Wilson, 'The Good Working Mother'.
[203] Davis, *Modern Motherhood*, pp. 195–199; King, *Family Men*; Michael Young and Peter Willmott, *The Symmetrical Family*, (London, 1973), pp. 84–98.
[204] Todd and Young, 'Baby-Boomers to "Beanstalkers"'.
[205] Langhamer, *Women's Leisure*, p. 2.

Consequently, 'work' can be defined as an activity undertaken *not only* for self-enjoyment or social enjoyment – though some people did enjoy their work. 'Work' has an additional functionalist purpose. It is undertaken for economic gain, for household gain, for personal gain beyond simply enjoyment and for social gain beyond simply maintaining relationships for self-enjoyment. 'Work' may or may not be financially remunerated. Furthermore, 'work' as a time, place and activity can incorporate elements of 'leisure'. This definition of work for young adults in the 1960s is historically contingent. It sits against the backdrop of rising real wages, changing family roles and structures, and of working- and lower middle-class young adults commonly entering a buoyant youth labour market at or around 15 while still living at home. Additionally, many experienced 'work' in different ways once married meaning that these definitions and experiences are also age-specific.

As this chapter has argued, paid employment offered young adults increased status in the 1960s. Indeed, Carter found that 'work itself was not a main source of satisfaction in most cases. What was important was the status which being a worker conferred.'[206] Of course, this chapter has challenged Carter's first assumption by demonstrating that many actively enjoyed their jobs, the ability to socialise with workmates, and deployed strategies to alleviate boredom and increase satisfaction. Nevertheless, many young adults felt they became more mature and closer to achieving adult status through paid employment, while it was also a gateway into a youth lifestyle and identity.

Lynn, the daughter of a miner born in 1942 in Bedlington, recalled that, as a secretary, 'There wasn't anybody saying just do this, do that, do the other, I had a lotta responsibility', implying that working offered more adult independence, power and responsibility than school.[207] Tomasz echoed this when asked to compare his apprenticeship to school: 'I was away from this bit where you were forced to do things that you really didn't want to do… I was you know, more independent.'[208] When asked how it felt to earn money, David replied that it 'Gave you a certain amount of freedom so you could make choices of

[206] Carter, *Education, Employment and Leisure*, p. 102.
[207] FSMA, Interview 009.
[208] SFL, Interview with Mr W8P.

your own'.[209] Their comments show that it was not just working itself but wages earned that afforded young adults' status in the 1960s because this allowed them to make their own financial decisions. Marilyn talked about her enthusiasm for leaving school at 15 and starting paid employment: 'rock and roll was starting… you just wanted to be out and dancing at dances and… y'know, jivin' and buying records and buying popular things really.'[210] Marilyn's comments suggest that getting a job signalled her entry into youth culture, and thus a youth identity, because it provided her with the entitlement and the money to pursue popular young adult pastimes. To young adults in the 1960s, paid employment provided access to popular leisure activities, a sense of entitlement to leisure, and greater responsibility, independence and maturity.

Paid employment was not the only kind of work young adults undertook in the 1960s, however. Further education did not provide the same access to leisure or responsibility, but could afford young adults more status when they felt they were treated more like adults and less like schoolchildren by tutors. Unpaid work in the home could restrict independence and freedom by taking up time and effort that might otherwise be spent on leisure. Yet that many were increasingly excused from chores once working suggests that young adults enjoyed increased status, which cemented their entitlement to leisure as breadwinners – though changing dynamics within the home due to affluence and shifting marital and gender roles also shaped this. 'Work' could have multiple meanings, therefore, because it encompassed a wide range of activities and duties for young adults in the 1960s. Paid employment was, however, the dominant form of work undertaken by working- and lower middle-class young adults since the vast majority had full-time occupations. As such, the dominant meanings of work were as a marker of the beginning of a youth identity and lifestyle, characterised by access to 'typical' youth leisure, increased economic and social freedoms and a more adult status. Work was central to young adults' lives because it helped define what it meant to be a young adult in the 1960s.

[209] Interview with David Canning.
[210] Interview with Marilyn Shaw.

However, experiences of work were not uniform. Though most entered the labour market at or soon after 15, class, education, gender and locality fractured young adults' experiences, aspirations and earnings as well as the kinds of jobs they had and the methods by which they found them. Yet there were also many common elements to young adults' experiences of work in the 1960s. In an era with a ready supply of jobs, young adults changed jobs for a variety of reasons, though many did so infrequently. Their opinions about employment varied, though most were generally satisfied. Relationships with bosses were usually good, workmates were important and could become friends, but trade unions seem to have been relatively unimportant. Young adults were generally satisfied with their wages and expected to contribute to the family economy, although the practices of this were shifting. Many young adults undertook further education directly linked to their jobs and occupation, though class and gender conditioned experiences of this. Leisure often crept into the times, spaces and activities of work and many young adults contributed unpaid domestic labour in the home, though again the practices and expectations of this were shifting during the 1960s.

Work was central to young adults' everyday lives in the 1960s. It structured relationships with the family and with friends, workmates and bosses. It offered the socio-economic independence to pursue the leisure activities commonly associated with 1960s youth and offered a status closer to that of adulthood. This enhanced status was of huge importance to young adults in the 1960s. Paid work was therefore an important marker of the beginning of youth and helped to define what it meant to be a young adult in 1960s England.

CHAPTER THREE

LEISURE

Popular memories and images of youth in the 1960s often focus on young adults' leisure and depict a singular 'youth culture'. Young adults are often depicted as sharing the same interests, frequenting the same places, doing the same activities and wearing the same fashions. However, as Davies has argued, the diversity of working-class experience can easily be obscured by a focus on class.[1] The same is true for the study of youth; the diversity of the experiences of young adults can easily be obscured by an assumption that their experiences are only shaped by being members of a particular generation. Although young adults in the 1960s often enjoyed similar activities and interests in their leisure, their experiences of that leisure were fractured and shaped by age, gender, economics, parental authority, place and courtship. Moreover, the popular images of 1960s youth culture and leisure have often centred on unrealistic stereotypes when, as lived experiences show, very few were drug-takers and subcultural rebels, and few were as straightforwardly affluent as contemporary surveys often suggested.[2] Ultimately, leisure was central to young adults' experiences in 1960s England and to the meaning of youth. It played a crucial role in defining youth as a particular stage in the life cycle, gave it meaning as a period of fun, and offered spaces for the development and performance of young adult identities.

This chapter begins by outlining common and popular leisure activities, before analysing how economics, parental authority, gender, age and place affected the experiences of leisure. The chapter then examines the blurring of work and leisure before demonstrating how most young adults did not conform to stereotypes of 1960s youth culture. Lastly, the chapter examines the meaning of leisure for young adults in the 1960s.

[1] Davies, *Leisure, Gender and Poverty*, p. 2.
[2] Abrams, *The Teenage Consumer*; Pearl & Dean Ltd., *The Young Market*.

ACTIVITIES

As Jephcott and Hanmer found, young adults in the 1960s had individualised interests and patterns of leisure activities shaped by personal preferences as well as age, gender, economics, place and parental authority.[3] Nevertheless, while there was no uniform experience of leisure among young adults in the 1960s, there were common interests and activities that many pursued.

From the interwar years onwards the rise of commercial leisure coupled with relative youth affluence meant young adults spent more of their leisure outside the home.[4] This trend solidified in the 1950s and 1960s due to increased relative affluence and the greater availability of commercial leisure, though some leisure was still spent at home.[5] This challenges assumptions that the working classes became increasingly private and pursued leisure predominantly at home post-war.[6] Dancing and the cinema were particularly popular pastimes among young adults; Jephcott found that 82 per cent of her respondents regularly went to the cinema while 69 per cent regularly went dancing.[7] Coffee bars and cafes were also popular; 51 per cent of Jephcott's sample regularly visited one.[8] Young adults also commonly enjoyed concerts, jazz clubs, visiting the pub, watching and playing sport, or going shopping. Some attended church or evening classes in subjects ranging from pottery to dancing and from academic subjects to keep fit.[9] Many also went on holiday with friends both in and beyond the UK while others simply 'hung out' with friends near to home. As Sian Edwards has noted, countryside activities grew in popularity in the mid-century and many young adults enjoyed walks and bike rides among other more rural activities.[10] This challenges the idea that

[3] Jephcott, *A Time of One's Own*, p. 21; Hanmer, *Girls at Leisure*, p. 19.
[4] Fowler, *The First Teenagers*, pp. 93–110; Davies, *Leisure, Gender and Poverty*, p. 63.
[5] Abrams, *The Teenage Consumer*, p. 17; Carter, *Education, Employment and Leisure*, p. 150; Hanmer, *Girls at Leisure*, pp. 21–22.
[6] Young and Willmott, *Family and Kinship*, pp. 131–143; Claire Langhamer, 'The Meanings of Home in Postwar Britain', *Journal of Contemporary History*, 40.2 (2005), pp. 341–346; Todd, *The People*, pp. 174–195.
[7] Jephcott, *A Time of One's Own*, p. 68.
[8] Jephcott, *A Time of One's Own*, p. 68.
[9] YWP.
[10] Sian Edwards, 'Youth Movements, Citizenship and the English Countryside 1930-1960', (PhD thesis, University of Sussex, 2013), p. 47; Interview with Joan Canning; FSMA, Interviews 004, 009, 043.

commercial was the only kind of leisure young adults pursued. Though earlier in the twentieth century activities such as the monkey parade were popular and prominent,[11] these had declined by the 1960s due to increased affluence and a greater selection of affordable and accessible commercial venues.[12] Some young adults attended youth clubs but these were relatively unpopular, especially among those in their later teens and early twenties.[13] Nevertheless, youth clubs attracted significant attention from the media, sociologists and government in the 1960s because concerns over 'unattached' young adults who did not attend youth clubs were associated with anxieties over delinquency and the transition to adulthood.[14]

Jephcott noted that it was difficult to establish any major interests pursued by young adults at home beyond music and reading, which suggests that hobbies had declined among young adults or were considered less notable by young adults so are under-recorded.[15] Many listened to music on records and through pirate radio stations. Television was increasingly popular as more households obtained sets after the Second World War. Several programmes, particularly music programmes like *Ready Steady Go!* and *Top of the Pops* which first aired in 1963 and 1964 respectively, were especially popular. Watching television and listening to music could also take place at the same time as other activities such as getting ready to go out or completing chores, reinforcing Langhamer's argument that leisure and work can be layered and simultaneous.[16] Young adults also enjoyed reading, entertaining friends or holding parties at home. For some, particularly young women, getting ready to go out could also be a leisure activity in itself, though how far this was also a form of work is considered below.

[11] Davies, *Leisure, Gender and Poverty*, p. 83; Fowler, *The First Teenagers*, pp. 107–108; Langhamer, *Women's Leisure*, p. 183; Todd, 'Flappers and Factory Lads', p. 718.
[12] Davies, *Leisure, Gender and Poverty*, p. 63.
[13] YWP.
[14] The following studies all discuss 'unattached' youth and this, as part of the wider pathologising of post-war youth, would be an important area for future studies to analyse. It is, unfortunately, too large a question to be considered fully within this thesis. Bazalgette, *Freedom, Authority and the Young Adult*; Cox, *Youth Work in East London*; Goetschius, *Working With Unattached Youth*; Hanmer, *Girls at Leisure*; Jephcott, *A Time of One's Own*; Laurie, *The Teenage Revolution*; Morse, *The Unattached*.
[15] Jephcott, *A Time of One's Own*, pp. 62–64.
[16] Carter, *Education, Employment and Leisure*, p. 159; Willmott, *Adolescent Boys of East London*, p. 55; Langhamer, *Women's Leisure*, p. 16.

Many young adults' leisure followed a weekly routine, with each night dedicated to a set activity and more leisure spent outside the home at weekends. Ed recalled his weekly leisure schedule when he was interviewed in the late 1980s:

> Early part of the week was generally stop in, and perhaps go football training, or in summer it would be tennis, badminton, usually something involved in sport. At the tail end of the week when we had some money it would be Friday nights would be a local disco, or meet at the pub or something like that. Saturday nights we used to go up the West End to a club called The Flamingo in Wardour Street to see people like Georgie Fame.[17]

Ed's routine was not the same as many other young adults' (particularly in terms of his interest in sport and his visits to London's West End) who might instead spend a few nights watching television, going to the cinema or to local dances and visiting friends. Young adults' individual weekly leisure routines varied according to age, gender, parents, their disposable income, where they lived and access to transport. Nevertheless, like Ed, many had a routine, suggesting that leisure was a stable and ingrained part of youth. Moreover Ed's itinerary is broadly typical of many young adults' as it shows that activities could be seasonal (especially sport), could take place locally or further afield, were a mixture of home-based and external, informal and commercial, and were dependent on money since nights out usually took place towards the end of the week soon after being paid.

SPENDING MONEY AND AFFLUENCE

As chapter two demonstrated, young adults did not keep the entirety of their wages but contributed a proportion to the household economy and retained or received the rest as spending money. Often young adults in the 1960s have been presumed to be affluent – perhaps best epitomised in Abram's characterisation of them as 'teenage consumers'.[18] Yet while young adults in the 1960s had greater disposable income than previous generations their affluence was still relative. Few were truly economically independent and the relativity of their affluence affected their leisure. Age, gender, wages and family circumstance shaped how

[17] FSMA, Interview 026.
[18] Abrams, *The Teenage Consumer*; Pearl & Dean Ltd., *The Young Market*; Osgerby, *Youth in Britain*, pp. 24–26.

much a young adult contributed to the family economy and, consequently, how much spending money they had. This means it is difficult to assess averages accurately.[19] However, in 1959 Abrams found that young men and women respectively had an average of £5 and £3 per week spending money.[20] Young adults' spending power also increased over the course of the 1960s; in 1959 they accounted for £850 million of spending per year and by 1968 this had risen to £1,1710 million per year, though unfortunately there are no figures for average individual spending money later in the decade.[21] Not all of this money was necessarily disposable, however. Many young adults had to use spending money to pay for fares to work, lunches and other essentials. Carter concluded that 'many fifteen- and sixteen-year-olds are, indeed, much less wealthy – and much less hedonistic – than is commonly assumed' and his conclusions can also be applied to those in their later teens and early twenties.[22]

Nonetheless, much of young adults' spending in the 1960s was for pleasure and on leisure.[23] Abrams noted that the post-war period witnessed the rise of 'distinctive teenage spending for distinctive teenage ends in a distinctive teenage world.'[24] In the 1960s markets increasingly targeted well-paid working- and lower middle-class young adults who became prime consumers of fashion, music and commercial entertainments – though gender, age, location and the relativity of an individual's affluence affected spending patterns. As Richard, who was born in 1951 and lived in Luton during youth with his working-class family, put it: 'Well when I started work I started to have money in my pocket, so I could do the things that I wanted to do. My social life changed quite considerably I suppose. I started going… I could afford to go out more places and that sorta thing.'[25] Work and leisure were inextricably linked for young adults in the 1960s since paid employment provided the money with which they could pursue leisure, particularly outside the home. Therefore entering work, as Richard commented, could radically change young adults' lifestyles.

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[19] Carter, *Education, Employment and Leisure*, p. 141.
[20] Abrams, *The Teenage Consumer*, p. 9.
[21] Abrams, *The Teenage Consumer*, p. 9; Pearl & Dean Ltd., *The Young Market*, p. 17.
[22] Carter, *Education, Employment and Leisure*, p. 149.
[23] Pearl & Dean Ltd., *The Young Market*, p. 29.
[24] Abrams, *The Teenage Consumer*, p. 10.
[25] FSMA, Interview 106.

However, young adults' spending money was neither inexhaustible nor even necessarily adequate. Many commented that it could be hard to make their money last all week, sometimes because they were reckless on payday, but often because they had limited and relatively low spending money. As Joan put it when asked what she did with her £1 per week spending money: 'Had a job to make it last!'[26] Gender, age and class were central to the relativity of young adults' affluence in the 1960s, as chapter two demonstrated. Young women often earned less than young men so had less disposable income. Young adults in their earlier youth, particularly apprentices, also earned less and had lower disposable incomes. Class also affected relative affluence since certain occupations attracted higher wages. Young women who left school later (and were more likely to be middle-class) earned more than working-class peers, whereas young men who left school later tended to earn slightly less in white-collar jobs during their youths than 15-year-old male school leavers who often entered high-paying unskilled jobs. Many young adults 'made do', limiting their leisure or going without because of their relative or limited affluence. Marilyn shared the cost of records with siblings while George, who was born in Northern Ireland in 1950, and Joe saved money by using reel-to-reel tape recorders instead of buying records.[27] Jill, born in 1945 to a working-class Preston family, and Joan used to make their own clothes as this was cheaper than buying ready-made.[28] Joan also limited going dancing to one night a week because 'you can only afford to go out one night a week really.'[29] Shirley was born in 1944 near Blackpool; her father was a barber and her mother a housewife. She recalled that she often visited coffee bars with friends 'to sit… all night, with one cup of coffee', making it last because her spends were limited.[30]

Many young adults in the 1960s also saved money as well as spending it, which again limited their affluence. Of the YWP sample, 84 per cent of young women and 77 per cent of

[26] Interview with Joan Canning.
[27] Interview with Marilyn Shaw; Interview with Joe Knight; Interview with George Connolly, conducted by Helena Mills, 29 May 2015.
[28] Interview with Joan Canning; SFL, Interview with Mrs R1P.
[29] Interview with Joan Canning.
[30] FSMA, Interview 125.

young men saved money, while five per cent of young men and two per cent of young women sometimes saved.[31] Often, saving facilitated the purchase of a specific item such as a car, radio or expensive piece of clothing, particularly during earlier youth when young adults earned less. Once older and courting seriously young adults (particularly young women) often began saving for marriage, though really this meant saving for a mortgage deposit rather than a white wedding. Rodney was born in 1946 in Surrey; his father was a pattern maker and his mother a housewife. He commented that 'we were engaged for two and a half years… we had to start saving like mad then, so we could get a house.'[32] Similarly, Elaine, born in 1956 in London to a cabinet-maker father and housewife mother, recalled that she and her fiancé 'were saving desperately for our house because under no circumstances was I going to get married and … live at my mother in law's...'[33] This suggests that marriage was seen as the ultimate attainment of independence, particularly by young women, since living with parents and in-laws, and thus still being under technical parental authority, was unthinkable. Moreover, it suggests that affluence was limited not only for young adults, who needed to save for items during youth, but also in society more widely because a comfortable home-owning lifestyle in adulthood depended on money saved during youth. Paradoxically, of course, in the 1960s it became easier for young adults to own homes given house-building initiatives and rising real wages.[34] The money young adults saved during the 1960s therefore shows that affluence was age-dependent, relative and complex.

Saving for marriage often limited young adults' leisure, especially for young women who often earned less than their partners. This suggests that the experience of youth affluence in the 1960s was strongly gendered. Diana got engaged aged 18, after which 'we did tend to save quite a lot' meaning that her leisure often involved 'sit[ting] and listen[ing] to records' rather than going out.[35] Similarly, Jacqueline, as discussed in chapter one, felt she had 'not a

[31] YWP
[32] FSMA, Interview 043.
[33] FSMA, Interview 012.
[34] John Burnett, *A Social History of Housing 1815-1989*, (London and New York, 1986), p. 282.
[35] Interview with Diana Allen.

very interesting teenage life really' since she rarely went out due to saving for marriage.[36] Jacqueline viewed this restriction more negatively than Diana, possibly because Diana remained happily married at the time of her interview in 2015 whereas Jacqueline's divorce was still a raw issue during her late 1980s interview. Thus, while leisure was restricted for many young women who were saving for marriage in the 1960s, how they retrospectively portrayed this was shaped by subsequent life events and their attempts to create composure. Ed was asked if his social life changed once he got engaged and began saving money in 1966. He replied, 'Considerably. It was down to cheapness of operation then. A lot of time was spent at W's house… There was the occasional night out at the pub', which was a big reduction compared to his routine quoted above for his earlier youth.[37] Therefore, though they reported this less frequently, saving for marriage could also limit young men's leisure in the 1960s.

These limitations to young adults' affluence meant that parents often contributed to their spending money in some way. This was facilitated by general working-class affluence in the 1960s that narrowed the gap between working- and middle-class household economies and made more equal parents' ability to spend money on children.[38] As Todd and Young have highlighted, this increasing affluence also made parents *want* to spend money on their children's pleasure and opportunities, possibly because they had comparatively missed out when growing up in the harsher economic climate of the 1930s.[39] Barbara, whose father was a labourer, was born in Lancaster in 1948. She earned £3 a week in her office job and 'used to give her [mother] all of it and she used to give me back my bus money and some spending money, and it was probably more than three pound that she gave me back.'[40] Others borrowed money from parents, though they usually expected to pay it back. One female Mass Observer, born in 1950, wrote that she 'was always hopeless with money' and regularly borrowed from her mother though 'the trouble was of course by the time I got paid I had to pay it all out

[36] FSMA, Interview 066.
[37] FSMA, Interview 026.
[38] Todd and Young, 'Baby-Boomers to "Beanstalkers"' p. 452.
[39] Todd and Young, 'Baby-Boomers to "Beanstalkers"', p. 452.
[40] SFL, Interview with Mrs P3L; Hanmer, *Girls at Leisure*, p. 33.

again to repay the debts', suggesting that borrowing did not necessarily solve the inadequacy of their pay, particularly for those less careful with their money.[41] Parents often bought clothes for young adults, particularly for those in their earlier teens and in lower paying jobs such as apprenticeships.[42] Joe's parents helped towards the cost of his first car while Ann was allowed to contribute less to the household while saving for marriage.[43] Young adults were not, therefore, fully economically independent in the 1960s and often relied upon parents to facilitate their spending and leisure. This reinforces Todd and Young's argument that from the 1950s working-class parents exercised their new-found economic security to help their children enjoy better lives, meaning that 1960s relations between parents and young adults were about support rather than generational conflict.[44] Moreover, relative affluence narrowed the gap between working- and lower middle-class families, meaning that young adults from both classes had a more similar youth experience in the 1960s than before.

Davies has rightly noted that early twentieth-century working-class leisure must be understood in the context of working-class economics and poverty.[45] The same is true of youth and leisure in the 1960s. While young adults were key consumers with few financial responsibilities and were more affluent than their interwar predecessors, their spending money was finite meaning that many had to make do or restrict their leisure and most were not completely economically independent. Age, gender, parents and courtship status shaped this relative affluence, though class divisions were narrowing. This reinforces recent scholarship on post-war affluence by showing how it was neither absolute nor universal.[46] As Davis has argued, the post-war affluent teenager is at least partly mythologised.[47]

[41] MOA, Autumn 1982 Directive, S519.
[42] YWP; Carter, *Home, School and Work*, p. 286.
[43] Interview with Joe Knight; FSMA, Interview 004.
[44] Todd and Young, 'Baby-Boomers to "Beanstalkers"', p. 452.
[45] Davies, *Leisure, Gender and Poverty*, pp. 82–83.
[46] Black and Pemberton, 'The Uses (and Abuses) of Affluence'; Todd, 'Affluence, Class and Crown Street'; Gazeley, *Poverty in Britain*; Hatton and Bailey, 'Postwar Poverty Puzzle'; Addison, *No Turning Back*, pp. 177–178.
[47] Davis, *Youth and the Condition of Britain*, p. 121.

PARENTAL AUTHORITY AND CONTROL

Parental authority could significantly affect young adults' leisure, particularly through the imposition of curfews and in connection with age and gender. Langhamer has shown how parental discipline and control shaped and sometimes limited young women's leisure in the mid-twentieth century, and this continued into the 1960s.[48] Indeed, young women came under greater parental control than young men in the 1960s but young men did not enjoy complete freedom from parents, particularly in their earlier youth.

Since the vast majority of young adults lived at home until marriage in the 1960s their parents still exercised some control over their activities and curfews were the most common manifestation of this. Carter found that one third of the young men and three quarters of the young women he surveyed were subject to curfews, suggesting that the practice was gendered.[49] The YWP sample also showed that 56 per cent of 15-16-year-old men had a curfew compared to 27 per cent of 18-19-year-old men, and that 84 per cent of 15-16-year-old women had curfews compared to 52 per cent of 18-year-old women, suggesting that parental authority – at least in the form of curfews – was aged as well as gendered.[50] One 18-year-old female fabric sampler had 'been told off for coming home in the early hours. Brother can stay out till morning and no-one says anything. If it was me, my parents would have the police out', while Steve recalled that his older sister was only allowed out until 10pm whereas once he was 18 'I stopped out after midnight', showing that gendered and aged curfews could differ even between siblings.[51] The restrictions on young women were often centred on gendered notions of needing to protect them, particularly from sexual or delinquent 'trouble', as implied by the YWP's respondent's claim that her parents would call the police. Where they existed, the majority of curfews were between 10pm and midnight though a few were much stricter, usually for young women. As chapter four examines further, most young adults respected their parents' rules or feared the consequences of breaking them and so abided by

[48] Langhamer, *Women's Leisure*, pp. 96–98.
[49] Carter, *Home, School and Work*, p. 317.
[50] YWP.
[51] YWP, Interview E429; SFL, Interview with Mr F2L.

curfews, though a few did disobey. Therefore, even though some did resent their parents' control or break their rules, this was hardly evidence of intractable generational conflict.

Curfews often got later as young adults aged, particularly for young men whose curfews might be removed altogether. Richard recalled that when he first started work at a car dealership aged 15, 'I had to be in by about half past ten… But as I got older, when I was about 17 or 18, then I come in what time I wanted to come in.'[52] Where young men had no curfews this was usually because parents were lenient or viewed their son as mature and trustworthy. David attributed his lack of curfew to his mother being '*laissez faire* I think really.'[53] Jack 'was me own person once I started work' and no longer had a curfew, while George technically had a curfew of midnight 'but it would be fairly flexible… they [his parents] wouldn't really worry about it, because there really wasn't very much going on, there wasn't much trouble.'[54] These experiences suggest that, for young men, starting work and entering their youth afforded a more adult status and greater trust and independence from parental control. Moreover, as George implied, this greater freedom was situated against a backdrop of assumed innocence in the 1960s. This is a common trope in memories of childhood, as Matthew Thomson and Jennifer Helgren have shown.[55] Consequently, the innocence that some assumed informed their lack of or later curfews may be overstated, but their gender, age and perceived proto-adult status meant that young men, particularly later in youth, enjoyed less parental control than young women and therefore less restriction over their leisure.

Young women's curfews often got later when they began courting seriously rather than due to increasing age alone and most had a curfew throughout youth unlike many young men. Diana, for instance, had a curfew of 10pm but 'once I met B [her fiancé] it didn't matter quite so… it would be a little bit later', and Marilyn also had to be in by 10pm until she was

[52] FSMA, Interview 106.
[53] Interview with David Canning.
[54] Interview with Jack Draper; Interview with George Connolly.
[55] Matthew Thomson, *Lost Freedom: The Landscape of the Child and the British Post-War Settlement*, (Oxford, 2013), pp. 1–2; Jennifer Helgren, 'A "Very Innocent Time": Oral History Narratives, Nostalgia and Girls' Safety in the 1950s and 1960s', *Oral History Review*, 42.1 (2015).

seriously courting when 'I used to have to be in by 11 o'clock' instead.[56] For young men, adult status was based on age but young women could only gain some freedom from parental control through a steady boyfriend who could provide *in loco parentis* supervision, reinforcing the fact that young women required protection and limiting how far they could truly achieve independence. Youth, in terms of independence from parental control, was therefore heavily gendered.

Consequently, curfews had a greater limiting impact on young women's leisure. Marilyn 'could never stop to some of the ends of dances, because we'd gotta get the bus and you'd gotta be in by 10 o'clock.'[57] One Mass Observer even recalled not being allowed to go out at all on New Year's Eve when she was 18: 'Imagine my embarrassment when my mother said no!'[58] These gendered accounts of curfews and parental control came through most strongly in the interviews I conducted, though they are also supported by archived personal testimonies. This is because I probed more deeply into the experiences of gender and youth, asking detailed questions about curfews, whereas the archived interviews took a less detailed whole life history approach and MOA responses are, necessarily, sometimes on tangential topics. My interviews therefore complement and deepen other sources and allow a fuller investigation of the effects of gender on everyday experience in the 1960s.

Overall, parents directly affected young adults' access to and experience of leisure in the 1960s since they retained some authority over young adults. This control was most commonly exercised through curfews, though the age and gender of a young adult affected just how much control a parent had and how far this affected leisure. Young women were generally afforded less freedom than young men so their leisure was more likely to be restricted.

[56] Interview with Diana Allen; Interview with Marilyn Shaw.
[57] Interview with Marilyn Shaw.
[58] MOA, Spring 1993 Directive, G2486.

GENDER

As well as shaping affluence and the amount of parental control a young adult came under, gender also affected young adults' leisure in the 1960s by influencing the interests and activities they pursued and their reasons for pursuing them. It has been argued that, though youth is the pre-eminent life stage for leisure, young women have fewer opportunities for leisure given their lower spending power and because more of their time is spent in the home.[59] However, the experiences of 'ordinary' young adults in the 1960s show that young women were key leisure consumers in public spaces, particularly in dances, cinemas and coffee bars. Some activities and interests were strongly gendered though and while Langhamer has argued that leisure can allow the re-making of gender roles for women,[60] many leisure activities actually reinforced traditional models of femininity and masculinity in the 1960s.

Dances had a gendered dual function for young adults throughout the twentieth century; they could be used simply to enjoy dancing and were also key venues for courtship.[61] Young women went dancing purely for pleasure as well as for courtship whereas young men tended to go only (or more often) for courtship.[62] Joan frequently mentioned dancing as her favourite leisure activity in the 1960s: 'Always loved dancing. Yes, I think that always figured quite highly on the list.'[63] She enjoyed dancing simply as dancing, though she also mentioned that 'that's where you'd meet the fellas' showing that for her, as for many young women, dancing could be both a pleasure in itself and a venue for courtship.[64] In contrast, Steve noted how dancing was more about courtship for young men:

> Well we used to go down to the pier regular, Friday nights was THE place… You know I mean it was like mainly all the opposite sex were dancing all night with the odd drink at the bar, and all the blokes were up in the bar. And then it come to the last

[59] Davies, *Leisure, Gender and Poverty*, p. 1; Osgerby, *Youth in Britain Since 1945*, pp. 55–60; McRobbie, *Feminism and Youth Culture*, pp. 15–18.
[60] Langhamer, *Women's Leisure*, p. 270.
[61] Davies, *Leisure, Gender and Poverty*, p. 91; Langhamer, *Women's Leisure*, pp. 66–69.
[62] Carter, *Education, Employment and Leisure*, pp. 157–158; Jephcott, *A Time of One's Own*, p. 69.
[63] Interview with Joan Canning.
[64] Interview with Joan Canning.

> dance there was like a mass exodus from the bar down to the dance floor to see how you went on.[65]

Gender therefore shaped why young adults went dancing, with young men and young women having slightly different, though sometimes overlapping, motives. Moreover, this gendered analysis shows that a single leisure venue or activity could have multiple meanings and functions for different young adults in the 1960s.

Sport and going to the pub were male-dominated leisure activities. The majority of young women showed or recalled little interest in watching or playing sport – only two interviewees recalled spending their leisure time watching boyfriends play sport.[66] Sport was central to some young men's leisure, however. David's first response to the question 'what would you do in your free time as a young adult?' was 'In the summer I played tennis and cricket… in the winter I'm not so sure… I suppose we'd go to the cinema.'[67] That his impulse was to list sports and that he struggled to remember what else he did strongly suggests sport was central to David's leisure as a young man. David's close friend Joe also commented that

> my main thing was sports… that's what I did, sports was a big part of my life. But um… other social things… if we played soccer on a Saturday, Saturday evening we'd go out to place.. there's a pub they had great sixties music… hang around and just talk about the day's game.[68]

Joe and David worked for the same firm and their friendship group and leisure revolved around the firm's sports teams, indeed their non-sport leisure followed on from sport and even involved discussing it. For some young men sport was therefore both a personal interest and facilitated socialising and other forms of leisure. Although no interviewees talked about this sufficiently to draw concrete conclusions, it is likely that sport allowed young men to develop masculine identities due to its competitiveness, athletic prowess and team spirit, as White suggested it did for interwar young men.[69]

Going to the pub was also a particularly male space and activity. In line with Langhamer's analysis of the mid-twentieth century, young women in the 1960s rarely saw the

[65] SFL, Interview with Mr F2L. Emphasis in original.
[66] Jephcott, *A Time of One's Own*, p. 65; FSMA, Interviews 009, 012.
[67] Interview with David Canning.
[68] Interview with Joe Knight.
[69] White, *Campbell Bunk*, p. 165.

pub as a leisure venue though some would go with a boyfriend.[70] Many women actually recalled the pub as an unsuitable venue for young women. Barbara noted that

> even when I was you know eighteen… I would never have dreamt of going in on my own… It didn't feel right, it wasn't done really. It was like you know fellows would look at you and think you were perhaps on the game or something.[71]

The only way young women could acceptably visit pubs in the 1960s was if accompanied by boyfriends. As Sue, born in 1944 in Preston to a family on the edge of the lower middle class, put it: 'Girls that went in a pub by themselves… they were sort of frowned on really… I didn't go in pubs until I started going out with J really', implying that her boyfriend made her presence more acceptable.[72] This feeds into the perceived necessity of men policing and protecting young women's leisure in the 1960s since going to the pub with a boyfriend shielded young women's reputation and respectability. Moreover, it shows that courtship could alter the activities and meanings of leisure for young adults since if they were not courting young women would be significantly less likely to visit (and less welcome in) pubs. This lack of respectability did not surround young men's frequent use of the pub, revealing a gendered double standard. Going to the pub even conferred adult status and 'manliness' upon young men through its association with drinking alcohol.[73] For young men, therefore, the pub was an introduction to and performance of a more adult masculinity. For young women the pub could offer this adult status, but only insofar as it was a venue and activity primarily available through courtship which, in itself, was a marker of a more grown-up identity.

Fashion, as a leisure pursuit, is often seen as gendered. Certainly, in the 1960s young women spent more money on clothes and their personal testimonies show that more of them were interested in fashion than young men.[74] Marilyn recalled that on days off she and friends would 'just talk about what we're gonna wear [to go dancing]… do a bit of shopping', she also remembered picking up fashion ideas from magazines and television programmes like

[70] Langhamer, *Women's Leisure*, p. 71.
[71] SFL, Interview with Mrs P3L.
[72] SFL, Interview with Mrs G7P.
[73] Jephcott, *A Time of One's Own*, pp. 93–94.
[74] YWP; Pearl & Dean Ltd., *The Young Market*, pp. 29–31.

Ready Steady Go! and would customise her own clothes.[75] For Marilyn, like many other young women, fashion was not only a key interest but also central to how she spent much of her free time. Young men were often less interested (or even uninterested) in fashion. In his interview, David recalled a few key fashions for young men in the 1960s but when asked if he often went shopping for clothes simply replied 'no' and then only shook his head when asked if he had been interested in fashion at all.[76] Some young men were interested in fashion, however. When asked what he used to buy with his spending money, Jack commented that as well as his bus fares and cigarettes, 'I'd also buy some clothes, I think I wanted myself to sort of look more fashionable', while Jim, born in Preston in 1944, responded to being asked whether clothes had been important to him by saying 'yes, I liked to be fairly up, I would say up to the minute really… I used to buy the best in those days.'[77] For some young men fashion was important because they wanted to be stylish and so, like Jim, spent significant amounts on clothes. Overall, fashion was a relatively gendered leisure interest in the 1960s since young women were usually (though not always) more interested in it than young men, though a significant number of young men also enjoyed being fashionable.

In the 1960s, youth offered reasonable equality in leisure for both young men and young women since both were relatively affluent, had similar amounts of free time and were key consumers of commercial goods and entertainments. However, gender affected young adults' leisure by shaping how much disposable income they had, how much parental control they experienced, what interests they pursued and what meanings or purposes certain leisure activities had. The result was that some leisure activities were particularly gendered, though others, such as fashion, were less gendered than often assumed. Moreover, these gendered activities and interests fuelled the learning and perpetuation of traditional gender roles for young adults by facilitating courtship, policing young women's respectability, offering young men a protective role over young women, and providing young adults with the chance to

[75] Interview with Marilyn Shaw.
[76] Interview with David Canning.
[77] Interview with Jack Draper; SFL, Interview with Mr R1P.

formulate typical gender roles of either 'masculine' strength and competitiveness or 'feminine' beauty.

AGE

In the 1960s, youth covered the stage of life from the mid-teens to the early twenties, a period over which the interests and activities of individuals changed significantly. Though the young adults in this thesis are all part of one generation, their everyday lives were still shaped by their age and position within that group. Age affected young adults' affluence and how much parental control they experienced. Increasing age also affected and changed the leisure interests and activities of young adults, particularly their patronage of youth clubs, church and the cinema. Those in their later teens and early twenties also often had their leisure affected by courtship, as chapter five examines.

Youth clubs were generally unpopular with young adults in post-war England. In the 1950s they provided substandard services and facilities and, although these were improved after the 1960 Albemarle report, only a minority of young adults attended clubs during the 1960s.[78] Additionally, youth clubs decreased in popularity as young adults aged from their early teens to their late teens and twenties.[79] Many post-war sociologists were concerned about this and concluded that the clubs were often cold and uncomfortable; that their activities were considered childish, boring and uninteresting; that youth club leaders were superior and unfriendly; that there were too many rules; that those who attended were considered 'square' and childish; occasionally, that clubs were too rough; and that as young adults aged other activities, particularly courtship, became more appealing than clubs.[80]

Joe had attended a church youth club in his early teens but stopped once he started his apprenticeship: 'I think the apprenticeship took over, yes… but it was like a transition from

[78] Davis, *Youth and the Condition of Britain*, pp. 109–112.
[79] Anthony Jeffs, *Young People and the Youth Service*, (London, 1979), pp. 47–48.
[80] Carter, *Education, Employment and Leisure*, p. 151; Goetschius, *Working With Unattached Youth*, p. 69; Hanmer, *Girls at Leisure*, p. 34; Laurie, *The Teenage Revolution*, pp. 36–40; Morse, *The Unattached*, p. 38; YWP.

those friends to other people…'[81] When asked if he had ever attended any youth clubs, Chris, born in 1950 in Warrington to a lower middle-class family where both parents were teachers, answered, 'Scouts, briefly. For about two years. Rock and roll intervened and I started playing the drums instead.'[82] As young adults developed more 'teenage' tastes and interests (such as music) and gained more money and freedom to pursue a variety of leisure activities and make new friends (through working and earning) youth clubs lost their appeal. In particular, that youth clubs were seen as childish is important because youth in the 1960s was about moving towards adult status, independence and freedom. Youth clubs were therefore unpopular because they simply could not offer young adults the status they sought and gained through other leisure activities.

Church attendance also declined among young adults as they aged. In my own interviews and in archived interviews respondents were asked about their religion and the majority defined themselves as Christian. Many had attended Sunday school or church with parents as children but tended to drop off regular attendance once working. Carter argued that this decline was due to church being considered childish, because parents allowed young adults to decide their own activities once working, and because many relished a Sunday lie-in after Saturday nights out.[83] Indeed, Sandy, born in 1954 to a working-class Yorkshire family, stopped going to church aged 16 at the end of the 1960s 'because you'd get to that age where you start going out Saturday night… so Sunday morning you don't exactly want to get up at half past nine to start getting ready for church you know.'[84] Diana stopped going to church in her mid-to-late teens once she met her boyfriend: 'I suppose I really stopped going once I got to know B because he didn't go.'[85] Joe had only attended church so he could go to the associated youth club, but stopped going to both once he began his apprenticeship.[86] Entering youth and starting work offered young adults greater choice in their activities (due to

[81] Interview with Joe Knight.
[82] FSMA, Interview 038.
[83] Carter, *Home, School and Work*, pp. 158–159.
[84] FSMA, Interview 099.
[85] Interview with Diana Allen.
[86] Interview with Joe Knight.

disposable income and reduced control from parents), which allowed other activities to take precedence. Church attendance therefore declined with age because other interests and activities became more important and engaging. Moreover, church was often considered childish and so could not offer the status and independence young adults sought.

While many stopped going to church in their youth, however, some still felt culturally Christian through their sense of right and wrong and duty to help others.[87] Very few interviewees commented that they had stopped going to church because they questioned religion philosophically, though a few did such as Gene, born in 1948 in Preston to a working-class family, who stopped going to church in the mid-1960s when he 'started reading a lot about various stuff and so it [religion] didn't make the sense it did before.'[88] The retention of cultural Christianity and the relative lack of active questioning suggest that a decline in church attendance as young adults aged was more a pragmatic decision about preferred leisure activities than a theological or philosophical choice. Many interviewees simply commented that church and religion had meant little to them in their childhood and youth, which mirrors the wider trend of secularisation in the 1960s where religion became generally less important in everyday life. That many did not go to church for pragmatic reasons corroborates Brown and Abrams' assertions that Christianity was no longer central to people's identities and everyday practices.[89] Yet that religion meant little to many in childhood implies this move away from the church had begun by the 1940s and 50s not, as Brown suggests, suddenly in the 1960s.[90] Moreover, that most stopped going for pragmatic rather than philosophical reasons and that some remained culturally Christian questions Brown's argument that secularisation was the result of a purely discursive shift.[91] That both young men and young women stopped going to church also undermines Brown's assertion

[87] FSMA, Interviews 026, 034, 038.
[88] SFL, Interview with Mr Y1P.
[89] Brown, *The Death of Christian Britain*, p. 2; Abrams, 'Mothers and Daughters', p. 79.
[90] Brown, *The Death of Christian Britain*, p. 2.
[91] Brown, *The Death of Christian Britain*, pp. 12–13.

that women were the drivers of secularisation.[92] This also raises the possibility that youth, as much as or even more than gender, was a primary factor in secularisation in the 1960s.

Some young adults did attend church in the 1960s, however. For a few it remained an important social and leisure activity and some also held strong religious convictions. One female Mass Observer, born in 1950, wrote that in her mid-teens,

> I was befriended by the daughter of a local minister & went to their church youth club & Bible class… I then became a Christian & got very into Church youth life, finding there, as well as a real faith, a group of people who accepted me. We also went out socially together – skating, bowling etc.[93]

Some interviewees also noted that though they had not attended church during their youth, they had come to it later in life. Joan recounted how she had decided to 'get to sorting out what this God business is all about' after some health scares in middle age.[94] This shows that religion and church attendance are not static throughout the life cycle, but can change according to personal interests and important life events. Nevertheless, though church and Christianity were important for some, retained a cultural significance and though several later re-joined the church, for the majority of young adults in the 1960s the church declined as a leisure activity as they aged.

Over the post-war period, the popularity of the cinema declined as more households obtained televisions.[95] Moreover, cinema attendance declined among young adults in the 1960s as they aged; it was more popular among the younger end of the age group.[96] Indeed, Jephcott's figure of 82 per cent regularly attending the cinema is inflated as her sample was weighted towards those under 17 and a half.[97] This decline in the popularity of the cinema with age is explained by the fact that, compared to cinema's interwar heyday, in the 1960s young adults enjoyed a far greater variety of commercial entertainments as well as the greater availability of television, records and radio stations. Interestingly, however, while use of the cinema as a leisure activity in itself declined with age, many young adults increased their

[92] Brown, *The Death of Christian Britain*, pp. 179–180.
[93] MOA, Spring 1993 Directive, R2179.
[94] Interview with Joan Canning.
[95] Clarke, *Hope and Glory*, pp. 248–253.
[96] Carter, *Education, Employment and Leisure*, p. 154.
[97] Jephcott, *A Time of One's Own*, p. 68.

attendance again once courting. Cinema's decline was not linear; it could shift over the course of one person's youth from a venue used to simply watch films to a place and activity of courtship. Jim remembered this pattern to his cinema going in the 1960s: 'It dropped off for a period of being fifteen to seventeen… but when you started going out with girls you used to take them to the cinema, probably just once a week Saturday or Friday or whatever, you know.'[98] In general, and as an activity in its own right, the cinema became less appealing with age for young adults in the 1960s. This was complicated, however, as it was often used as a courtship venue and activity by older young adults. This again highlights how the use and purpose of leisure activities and venues by young adults in the 1960s could vary significantly.

Ultimately age shaped young adults' interests and activities in the 1960s in combination with gender, courtship, affluence and parental authority. Moreover, as young adults moved throughout their youth, the purpose and meaning attached to different leisure activities could change. When young adults shifted to different activities and interests this was because their new pursuits fitted better with their personal interests, preferences, relationships and schedules and, crucially, because they offered greater status and independence.

PLACE

Place affected young adults' leisure in the 1960s by determining what venues and activities an individual had access to, though age, gender, economics, parental authority and the ability to travel also affected this. Place, particularly through commercial clubs and the bedroom, also afforded young adults spaces in which a youth identity and lifestyle could be performed and experienced.

Bigger towns and cities, unsurprisingly, had more venues and activities for young adults whereas smaller or more rural places had less available meaning young adults might need to travel for their leisure, particularly if they wanted to visit commercial venues. Edwards has rightly argued that rural young adults' experiences of leisure have been

[98] SFL, Interview with Mr R1P.

neglected in the mid-twentieth century.[99] But those who lived in small towns and villages in the 1960s often still enjoyed similar activities to their urban counterparts, even if on a smaller scale and only after a bus ride. Michael was asked what young people did for fun in Barrow in the 1960s, he replied, 'every church had a church hall and every church hall was booked almost fully throughout the week… you just went down there to make a noise… and you had a dance of course on the Saturday night… well all the youth went to these places, there was no night clubs or anything as such.'[100] Indeed, many of Roberts' interviewees noted a relative lack of venues in Lancaster, Preston and Barrow which either resulted in them travelling for leisure to places such as Morcambe and Blackpool or using more low-key leisure venues like church halls. Nevertheless, compared to the 1960s Birmingham remembered by interviewees – with its numerous clubs, music venues, cinemas and coffee bars[101] – Barrow had relatively little for young adults to do. Morse even observed that a lack of local leisure and an inability to be mobile could result in boredom.[102]

However, young adults who lived in less well-provisioned places could access more leisure opportunities as many, though not all, had access to transport in the 1960s. Morse noted that one small east England town in her study had few leisure facilities and poor public transport, meaning that young adults in surrounding villages often had significantly less access to leisure activities and venues.[103] Many from Lancaster, Preston and Barrow, however, travelled to nearby Blackpool or Morcambe for dances.[104] Even rural young adults therefore often experienced relatively urban leisure during the 1960s. Indeed, young adults often had to travel for leisure even within cities since the city centre was not always within walking distance. Travel was, therefore, an important component of leisure. Marilyn, for

[99] Edwards, 'Youth Movements, Citizenship and the English Countryside', p. 19.
[100] SFL, Interview with Mr P5B.
[101] Interview with Marilyn Shaw; Interview with Diana Allen; Interview with Jack Draper; Interview with George Connolly.
[102] Morse, *The Unattached*, p. 174.
[103] Morse, *The Unattached*, pp. 151–152, 162–163.
[104] SFL.

example, used to travel from her home in Edgbaston to a Friday and Saturday night dance in Handsworth, which involved catching two buses.[105]

Travelling meant that young adults needed both physical and financial access to either public or private transport. This was not a new phenomenon in the 1960s as Davies has noted that young adults often travelled between Salford and Manchester for dances in the earlier twentieth century while Edwards has noted that rural young adults in the mid-twentieth century often relied on public transport to access leisure.[106] Such mobility was more common in the 1960s, however, due to rising affluence. Nevertheless, age, gender, economics and parental authority shaped mobility. Young women were less mobile since they earned less and experienced stricter curfews, meaning many were dependent on the last bus or train of the evening and so often missed the end of dances or other activities. Avoiding this by getting a taxi was considered an extravagant expense only to be enjoyed occasionally while, as one female Mass Observer, born in 1949, noted, hitchhiking was only for the 'adventurous' and not for girls 'indoctrinated by mothers' about avoiding pregnancy and sexual encounters.[107]

Usually only young men in their later teens and early twenties had access to private transport given that they earned more.[108] Joe saved up to buy a scooter and then a Mini van, which 'was brilliant because I could put the old bed in the back and I could sleep in it when we went away', while Jack saved for a motorbike 'that sort of give [sic] me an element of mobility.'[109] Having access to their own transport enabled Joe, Jack and other young adults to pursue different kinds of leisure – often further afield – more cheaply and when and how they wished. It therefore reinforced the idea of (male) youth providing freedom in the 1960s. Travelling could even become a form of leisure in itself; Joe, along with David and other apprentice friends travelled abroad over the summer in each other's cars while John, born in 1947 in Barking to a working-class family, joined a motorcycle club in his late teens after

[105] Interview with Marilyn Shaw.
[106] Davies, *Leisure, Gender and Poverty*, p. 90; Edwards, 'Youth Movements, Citizenship and the English Countryside', p. 19.
[107] MOA, Spring 1993 Directive, H1263.
[108] Pearl & Dean Ltd., *The Young Market*, p. 41.
[109] Interview with Joe Knight; Interview with Jack Draper.

buying a bike on Hire Purchase and would go on day trips with the club.[110] Indeed, going on holiday became an increasingly common activity for young adults of both genders in the 1960s. The increasing ability to be mobile therefore offered young adults more leisure options and an enhanced sense of independence and freedom.

Personal testimonies show that certain leisure venues were especially popular among young adults in the 1960s. Despite age, gender, economics and family fracturing their experiences, this suggests that young adults did share some common experiences and interests. It also suggests that certain spaces were key sites for the experience and meaning of youth. As Edwards has argued, place had a strong impact on the gendered identities young adults were encouraged to adopt in the mid-twentieth century, particularly in terms of the urban-rural divide.[111] Logically, youth therefore meant slightly different things to young adults in different areas of England in the 1960s. Unfortunately, as this thesis looks at experience rather than representation and since the vast majority of respondents in this thesis lived in urban areas their personal testimonies do not allow this geographical divide to be considered fully here.

However, many did point to commercial venues as particularly popular and meaningful among young adults in their hometowns, reinforcing how central commercial leisure was to youth in the 1960s. Jim remembered the Adriatic club (the AD) as particularly popular among young adults in Preston in the 1960s. He recalled that, 'my favourite was the AD… Now, that was my generation… you were it… that was the place'.[112] Others used similar language to describe popular venues in their own towns and cities. Marilyn described the Locarno dancehall in central Birmingham as 'really the in place' and the Plaza in Handsworth as 'where everybody used to go Friday night', while Harold, born in Birmingham

[110] Interview with Joe Knight; Interview with David Canning; FSMA, Interview 011.
[111] Sian Edwards, '"Nothing gets her goat!" The Farmer's Wife and the Duality of Rural Femininity in the Young Farmers' Club Movement in 1950s Britain', *Women's History Review*, (2016), doi: 10.1080/09612025.2015.1123022.
[112] SFL, Interview with Mr R1P.

in 1947 and the son of a clerk, referred to the Locarno as 'the place of the day'.[113] Steve described Morcambe Pier as 'THE place, well everybody went to' as did several others from Lancaster; and Jim commented of the church halls in Barrow that 'you just went down there to make a noise but you still went.'[114] These were important places for young adults, as evidenced by the fact that they were so popular. They were also important, as Jim suggested, because they allowed an outlet for young people to enjoy themselves and relax after work, sometimes noisily. Jackson has suggested that coffee bars were popular among young adults in the 1960s as they offered a space away from the adult gaze and this analysis can be extended to other popular venues.[115] Indeed, Jim strongly implied that the AD belonged to young adults. Patronising the AD therefore offered Jim a sense of belonging; it reinforced he was a young adult with a particular lifestyle, interests and activities. The AD was not just a place young adults went but a space for them. The places that young adults congregated in, usually for leisure, therefore provided spaces in which young adults could gain a sense of belonging and develop, experience and perform a young adult identity.

The bedroom could also be a space to develop and perform a young adult identity in the 1960s. Increasing numbers of young adults had their own bedrooms due to rising affluence, decreasing family sizes and the movement of working-class families from inadequate housing into newer, more spacious council housing, putting them more on par with their middle-class peers. The bedroom provided a space away from the parental gaze, though many still had to share so this was not a private space for all. McRobbie has argued that the bedroom was crucial for young women's culture and leisure in the 1960s,[116] though it was also important for young men. Joe 'would have soccer posters up' while Diana's bedroom walls were 'absolutely covered' in posters of pop stars.[117] Diana also listened to music in her bedroom while Martin, who was born in 1953 to a working-class Nuneaton

[113] Interview with Marilyn Shaw; Interview with Harold Spencer, conducted by Helena Mills, 23 May 2015.
[114] SFL, Interviews with Mr F2L and Mr P5B. Emphasis in original.
[115] Jackson, 'The Coffee Club Menace', p. 290.
[116] McRobbie, *Feminism and Youth Culture*.
[117] Interview with Joe Knight; Interview with Diana Allen.

family, liked spending time in his bedroom to gain privacy from his parents.[118] The bedroom therefore allowed young adults a space to develop interests and activities away from the family and so facilitated their developing independence and possibly avoided conflict if, for example, parents were not keen on pop music. It also allowed young adults to visually display their identity through posters and decorations and was a space in which the latest fashions and hairstyles could be trialled. The bedroom let young adults feel connected to and part of wider 'youth culture' by giving them a private space for these interests.

Place therefore structured young adults' leisure in the 1960s in two ways. First, where a young adult lived affected what leisure venues and activities were available, though this was increasingly mitigated by young adults' ability to travel. Second, certain places functioned as spaces in which young adults could develop and perform the identities, lifestyles and relationships of their age group and generation.

LEISURE AS WORK

As chapter two demonstrated, the line between leisure and work was not always clear-cut for young adults in the 1960s. Work can be defined as an activity undertaken not *only* for self- or social enjoyment; it is an activity with an additional functional purpose. Just as leisure could feature within the times and spaces of paid employment, some leisure activities could also be considered or contain work. Fashion and courtship are the most common examples of this, though courtship as both leisure and work will be analysed in chapter five. They are work because as well as providing enjoyment, fashion and courtship both involved time and effort and were pursued for social status and to fulfil gender roles. However, that enjoyment is derived from these leisure activities even where work is involved makes the relationship between work and leisure nuanced and complex.

Fashion and beauty are, as Langhamer has demonstrated, often seen as leisure but are simultaneously expensive and time-consuming work for women.[119] While many young

[118] FSMA, Interview 141.
[119] Langhamer, *Women's Leisure*, p. 43.

women pursued fashion in the 1960s for pleasure (through shopping, getting ready and making clothes), it was also often a form of work to attract men and to conform to gendered ideals surrounding young femininity at a time when magazines and television heavily promoted the latest styles for young women. Some young women made their own clothes, making fashion a form of relatively skilled labour. When asked how she spent her days off as a teenager, Trish replied, 'Getting ready to go out! Full day's job – bathing, the hair and all the rest of it.'[120] One Mass Observer even detailed her nightly hair routine:

> Every night I would dampen my hair with a comb in a glass of water. After dampening each strand it would then be wound round a spiky plastic roller and secured with a plastic pin. Sometimes the fringe and side curls would be held in place with a piece of sellatape [sic]. When this was all done and the rollers painfully in place you then hair-sprayed it for extra strength. Finally you tied a chiffon scarf around it all. Then you left it to dry naturally… If you were sleeping in them over night then you had to make holes in the pillow with a finger where each curler would fit so as to get as comfortable as possible for sleep.[121]

Achieving a fashionable appearance therefore involved skilled, uncomfortable and time-consuming work for young women.

Carter noted that 'Caught up in the whirl of fashion, bargains, "good value", and colour, girls wanted something new each week. Clothes became not so much a joy as an ever-present problem: they *must* keep up with events…'[122] Hanmer found in her study of young women that confidence was often linked to attire and that they judged each other sartorially; some might not go out if they had nothing fashionable to wear and many assumed they would only attract young men by being dressed well.[123] Peter Laurie even argued that fashion acted like a uniform and that having common tastes and appearances was important to young adults as it operated like a 'thieves sign', conferring belonging and identity.[124] Indeed, Marilyn remembered when she used to watch *Ready Steady Go!* that

> you're looking at Mods, y'see, you're looking at the London version… And then one time when we went to Margate, you'd get a lot of people coming obviously from

[120] FSMA, Interview 093.
[121] Mass Observation Archive, University of Sussex (MOA), SxMOA2/1/62/1, Replies to Spring 2001 Directive, H1703.
[122] Carter, *Education, Employment and Leisure*, p. 148. Emphasis in original.
[123] Hanmer, *Girls at Leisure*, p. 31.
[124] Laurie, *The Teenage Revolution*, pp. 50, 94.

> London so you'd look at their clothes…and you knew… what clothes you wanted to wear.[125]

Marilyn chose her clothes and worked on her appearance to conform to a particular visual and youthful identity. Consequently, fashion was pursued by young women not simply because they enjoyed buying and wearing clothes and make-up but due to both peer and commercial pressure to outwardly and visually perform the identity of a fashionable young woman. Fashion was both pleasure and work.

Fashion could also be a form of work for young men by involving time, effort and an attempt to conform to gendered ideals. Following fashion could also give young men, like young women, a sense of belonging and could help develop their youthful identity. Both Brian, who was born in 1945 in Preston to a working-class family, and Jack recalled sitting in a bath wearing new pairs of jeans since, in the 1960s, jeans had to be soaked to achieve the fashionable tight look.[126] Some young men therefore put considerable effort into looking fashionable. When asked if he was interested in fashion as a young man, Joe responded, 'just to be in with the dancin' crowd I think', implying that, for him, fashion was a way in which to visually perform the identity of a young adult and therefore feel a sense of belonging rather than being about simple personal pleasure.[127] Similarly, Jack, when asked what he used to buy with his spending money, commented that 'I'd also buy some clothes, I think I wanted myself to sort of look more fashionable and attractive to girls, like, y'know!'[128] For Jack, fashion was a personal pleasure but was also work given the effort involved and because he at least partly pursued it to attract young women and therefore conform to heterosexual male norms, as chapter five examines further. Ultimately, as for young women, for young men fashion was a complex mix of both personal pleasure and work in the 1960s.

Other forms of leisure also contained elements of work. Several young men enjoyed tinkering with cars and motorbikes in their spare time, though this was also a form of both physical and skilled labour requiring both time and money. Indeed, Jack remembered that he

[125] Interview with Marilyn Shaw.
[126] Interview with Jack Draper; SFL, Interview with Mr G6P.
[127] Interview with Joe Knight.
[128] Interview with Jack Draper.

would often drive himself and his girlfriend on day trips, but 'We always had to take a set of bloody tools 'cos the car would always break down somewhere…'[129] In Jack's case, therefore, leisure was even punctuated by needing to work to fix his transport. For others, music was both leisure and work. Chris considered music one of his keen interests and leisure activities but also played the drums in working men's clubs for money, making his leisure a form of paid employment.[130] For others still, paid employment could take place in the spaces of and for leisure. Marilyn worked several evenings a week at the Locarno nightclub in central Birmingham which meant that when she went dancing on Saturdays 'you couldn't go there… we used to go over to another dance over in Handsworth.'[131] The Locarno changed its meaning for Marilyn, who associated it with work rather than leisure and therefore did not want to dance there. Marilyn wanted to keep her work and leisure separate, implying that the two could only acceptably mix to an extent and that once a young adult realised that a critical amount of work coloured their leisure, it stopped being leisure.

Overall, many leisure activities contained elements of work since they could be undertaken for pleasure as well as to conform to gendered and heterosexual norms and often involved considerable skill, time and effort. Some leisure activities even involved paid labour. These activities, like Chris' music, remained leisure to a young adult while they were still considered primarily as an enjoyable activity. When that balance tipped however, as it did for Marilyn, the activity lost its pleasure and became more obviously work. Ultimately, the line between work and leisure was blurred for young adults in the 1960s but could still be an important division.

SUBCULTURE AND STEREOTYPES

Popular images of 1960s youth culture often hinge on stereotypes that are simply not reflected in the lived experiences of most young adults. While popular images of young adults in the

[129] Interview with Jack Draper.
[130] FSMA, Interview 038.
[131] Interview with Marilyn Shaw.

1960s enjoying dances, pop music, coffee bars and fashion do match up to the reality of many, images of the 1960s as drug-fuelled and subcultural do not.

Working-class youth subcultures (particularly the Mods and Rockers) have been understood by sociologists and cultural theorists as a rebellious, collective, class-based solution to problems their members have with the dominant (middle) class and culture.[132] However, these academics acknowledge that most young adults in the 1960s and 1970s were not deviant or subcultural and were, in fact, invested in the *status quo*.[133] As Fowler has shown, for example, not all the young adults at the clashes between Mods and Rockers at seaside resorts in 1964 were Mods or Rockers and only one per cent were arrested.[134] McRobbie has shown that subcultural theory is male-dominated and that young women were rarely subcultural.[135] Certainly, when recounting their youths no interviewees framed their experiences or principles in a class-based, rebellious politics, which undermines the popular image of young adults as subcultural rebels. For example, even though William remembered 'a vague identification' with Rocker subculture in his mid-teens because 'it was just the working man stuff' and the 'middle class y'know were Mods and scooters', his understanding of subculture in class terms did not extend to his internalising a rebellious politics of class oppression.[136]

Indeed, many wore subcultural styles in the 1960s without participating in rebellious class struggle.[137] Through programmes like *Ready Steady Go!*, the media disseminated subcultural fashions – particularly the sleek, Italian Mod styles – to a national audience, which in turn meant many young adults adopted these styles.[138] Marilyn considered herself a Mod because of 'the clothes you wore… Rockers was [sic] more… leathers and long hair and

[132] Brake, *Comparative Youth Culture*, pp. 7–8; Clarke, Hall, Jefferson and Roberts, 'Subcultures, Cultures and Class', pp. 42–48.
[133] Brake, *Comparative Youth Culture*, pp. 23, 72; Clarke, Hall, Jefferson and Roberts, 'Subcultures, Cultures and Class', p. 16; Davis, *Youth and the Condition of Britain*, pp. 1–2, 16; Simon Frith, 'The Sociology of Youth', in Michael Haralambos (ed.), *Sociology: New Directions*, (Ormskirk, 1986), pp. 348–350.
[134] Fowler, *Youth Culture in Modern Britain*, p. 137.
[135] McRobbie, *Feminism and Youth Culture*.
[136] Interview with William Woodsford.
[137] Donnelly, *Sixties Britain*, pp. 37–38; Brake, *Comparative Youth Culture*, p. 23.
[138] Fowler, *Youth Culture in Modern Britain*, pp. 131–135.

greasers and motorbike riders whereas Mods were scooters and much more trendy.'[139] Her definition and understanding of Mods and Rockers was based on style not class politics. Similarly, Ed noted that 'we were all Mods, so we all had Vesper [sic] GS scooters and we all wore the parkas and all the uniform', again defining the subculture by its aesthetics and material trappings.[140] Ed did consider himself rebellious in his youth, and even got in trouble with the law for insurance fraud but, as analysed in chapter one, this was more a tactic to compose a life narrative than an authentic expression of class politics. For many who considered themselves subcultural in the 1960s, therefore, this was more about fashion than politics.

The relationship between subculture and consumerism in post-war British youth culture is hotly debated by academics. In contrast to the cultural studies view of subcultures displaying their authentic rebellious meaning through style,[141] Bugge and Davis have argued that the growing youth market exploited and popularised subcultures, making young adults passive consumers rather than active subcultural rebels.[142] Osgerby has argued for more of a middle ground, suggesting that though the market popularised subcultural styles young adults could actively attach their own meanings to objects.[143] However, this does not mean they necessarily attached rebellious meanings to commercialised subcultural styles. For Marilyn, wearing Mod style clothes simply meant being fashionable and youthful. Moreover, Marilyn, like many young adults, defined herself as conformist: she expected to marry, got on well with her parents and never smoked or took drugs.[144] It is difficult to see Marilyn as being subcultural in any way other than sartorially or as a consumer. Others, such as Ed, possibly did attach more rebellious meaning to the subcultural styles they wore, though his reference to rebellion never explicitly focused on style.[145] Moreover, this was likely a retrospective lens

[139] Interview with Marilyn Shaw.
[140] FSMA, Interview 026.
[141] Dick Hebdige, 'The Meaning of Mod', in Stuart Hall and Tony Jefferson (eds), *Resistance Through Rituals: Youth Subcultures in Post-War Britain*, (London, 1996).
[142] Bugge, 'Marketing to Youth in Britain'; Davis, *Youth and the Condition of Britain*, pp. 123–124.
[143] Osgerby, 'Youth, Consumerism and Hegemony'.
[144] Interview with Marilyn Shaw.
[145] FSMA, Interview 026.

applied to create composure, and does not change the fact that Ed's actions as a young man were not subcultural politically. Though some young adults may have attached personal subcultural meanings to commercialised fashions, certainly not all did and very few can be considered authentically subcultural in their politics. For most young adults in the 1960s subculture was a media furore and a style often, but not always completely, stripped of its rebellious meaning.

Though impossible to measure precisely and likely increasing, there was little evidence of widespread drug use among young adults in the 1960s and much of the concern about drugs was simply media and political hype.[146] In fact, drug laws tightened during the 1960s through the 1964 Dangerous Drugs Act and Drugs (Prevention of Misuse) Act (amended to control possession of LSD in 1966) and the 1967 Dangerous Drugs Act. Indeed, many interviewees reported having no contact with drugs as young adults. William 'never saw drugs… just rumours of drugs' in Birmingham, while many of Roberts' interviewees noted they had not been aware of drugs around Lancaster, Preston and Barrow.[147] When asked if she knew of anyone taking drugs in the 1960s, Diana replied that she 'didn't hear anybody mentioning them let alone anything else'.[148] Of course, Diana herself noted that 'I must have had my head in a bucket of sand most of the time' and had a relatively sheltered youth, while Lancaster, Preston and Barrow, as already noted, were less vibrant places than bigger towns and cities. Thus a lack of experience of drugs was shaped by location and upbringing, but drugs were not a normal part of youth for many. Others were aware of drugs being around but did not participate. As one female Mass Observer, born in 1949, commented: 'There were drugs around – purple hearts, bombers, stuff you smoked and quite available. But again, just to be in the company of people who had indulged in this sort of habit was daring enough for us.'[149]

[146] Laurie, *The Teenage Revolution*, p. 134; Addison, *No Turning Back*, p. 205; Davis, 'The London Drug Scene'.
[147] Interview with William Woodsford; SFL.
[148] Interview with Diana Allen.
[149] MOA, Spring 1993 Directive, H1263.

A very small number did admit to taking drugs in their youth. Jim was aware of drugs being around in 1960s Preston and when asked if he took drugs replied, 'No… I never again, never indulged in that. I was taking the odd bluey and purple heart, but I don't think I've ever taken more than a dozen altogether.'[150] George, recalled that 'we didn't get into drinking… there was a bit of dope going around!'[151] It may be that very few interviewees talked about drugs because of concerns over morality and legality, but since those who did admit spoke relatively freely it would be reasonable to expect that if a large proportion of young adults had taken drugs in the 1960s more would have admitted to it. What is also interesting is how those who took drugs minimised the activity retrospectively. George talked of only a 'bit' of cannabis, while Jim even tried to imply that the amphetamine-barbiturate purple hearts he took were not actually drugs and that he took very few. This linguistically downplayed their drug taking, perhaps to make it more morally acceptable to the interviewer or themselves, and to demonstrate that it simply was not central to their youth. Furthermore, those who admitted to taking drugs tended to mention only less serious drugs such as cannabis or purple hearts, with heroin, cocaine and LSD going unmentioned or being dismissed as something they had never encountered. Therefore, it may be impossible to ever fully elicit accurate information on drug usage from personal testimonies. Nevertheless, testimonies show that while a small number of young adults did take drugs in the 1960s, this was not the majority.

Ultimately, subcultures and popular images of drug-fuelled, rebellious 1960s young adults are often not representative of the lived experience of most young adults. Studies, like this one, of 'ordinary' youth outside of subculture therefore complement as well as challenge previous academic studies that have uncovered much about subculture by giving a deeper insight into everyday life. Indeed, given how far the experiences of youth in the 1960s were fractured by gender, age, location, parental authority and economics it is not surprising that the majority of young adults' experiences do not easily conform to popular stereotypes.

[150] SFL, Interview with Mr R1P.
[151] Interview with George Connolly.

THE MEANING OF LEISURE

Youth has often been seen by historians of the twentieth century as a phase of life centred on leisure. As Langhamer put it in her work on young women's leisure between 1920 and 1960,

> Oral history characterised the years between leaving school and marrying as a time of unparalleled freedom and independence – a period with no major responsibilities and no developed sense of duty to others. In effect, youth constituted a period of legitimate leisure.[152]

In the 1960s young adults often had disposable income, few economic obligations, minimal or declining restrictions in the form of household chores, parental controls that allowed relative freedom of time and movement, and they were increasingly targeted as consumers. Moreover, since they worked and earned a wage in clearly defined hours of employment, young adults in the 1960s felt entitled to leisure. As Sandy put it when asked if her parents had ever disapproved of any of her leisure activities, 'I mean, at that age – I mean if you're working, you go out and you're earning the money, and as long as, like I say, you're not coming staggering home and you're coming in at all hours.'[153] Since she was working and spending her own money, Sandy was entitled to enjoy her leisure as she wished as long as she remained within the rules her parents enforced. Similarly, when asked if she had wanted to leave school at 15 to begin working, Marilyn commented, 'Well, I suppose it's coming into the era of like… rock and roll was starting, y'know and you'd got people like Elvis and you just wanted to be out and dancing at dances and y'know jiving and buying records and buying popular things really.'[154] Marilyn associated working with the ability to partake in typically 'youthful' leisure because it provided the money to buy things and the freedom to go out.

Indeed, many personal testimonies contained narratives of beginning new kinds of leisure once a young adult started work, reinforcing that work provided a sense of entitlement to, and the economic means to enjoy, new kinds of leisure. As Carter put it, once they had begun work, 'Instead of just meeting friends in the neighbourhood and around the streets and

[152] Langhamer, 'Leisure, Pleasure and Courtship', p. 270.
[153] FSMA, Interview 099.
[154] Interview with Marilyn Shaw.

parks, children got in the habit of dressing up and "going out".'[155] Moreover, since starting work is often seen as the beginning of youth and this was strongly associated with increased or new forms of leisure by young adults, both at the time and retrospectively leisure was, therefore, a defining part of youth in the 1960s. Being a young adult entailed having a significant amount of leisure time often spent in common ways; though as this chapter has shown experiences of leisure were fractured by age, gender, place, economics and parental authority.

For many young adults in the 1960s leisure was, generally, a fun and positive part of their experiences, particularly when their jobs were boring or difficult.[156] For example, Tomasz described his social life as a young man as 'Hectic. As I say we had a great time, because we all had the money to spend… we were just out having lots of fun. Parties and pubs and clubs and discos and whatever.'[157] Joe described his leisure as 'really enjoyable. I mean I had nothing but happiness thinking about the fun we had', while Sandra recalled her leisure as, 'Basically, having a good time'.[158] Moreover, in oral history interviews, respondents often spoke with the most enthusiasm and detail when asked about their leisure as a young adult. They did not disproportionately talk about leisure compared to other aspects of their lives, such as work, because the structure of the questions I and other interviewers asked prevented this. Nevertheless, people, in a similar way to Tomasz, Joe and Sandra, often spoke animatedly and fondly about their leisure and many interviewees gave detailed responses about the kinds of activities they pursued, when, where and with whom. This reinforces the sense that leisure was both a significant and fun part of their youth in the 1960s because they enjoyed remembering it and because the details of their leisure activities were easily recalled and excitedly related. Their leisure remained central to what they remembered about their youth in the 1960s and was framed as enjoyable and exciting.

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[155] Carter, *Education, Employment and Leisure*, p. 150.
[156] Morton-Williams and Finch, *Young School Leavers*, p. 176; Carter, *Education, Employment and Leisure*, p. 151.
[157] SFL, Interview with Mr W8P.
[158] Interview with Joe Knight; SFL, Interview with Mrs S6L.

Of course, in analysing positive memories of youth leisure we must remain aware that these are *memories* and that both retrospect and composure affect how a person recalls their youth. Joe, for example, may have felt nostalgic about his youth at a time when he was entering old age and may have been inclined to think positively about his youth given the strong and lasting relationships he made with friends in his teens that he still maintained in 2015. Others who appraised their leisure more negatively also did so as a product of memory, such as Jacqueline who presented her youth as boring in order to justify her divorce, as demonstrated in chapter one.[159] Yet although their memories are necessarily mediated, the personal testimonies used in this thesis still strongly suggest that young adults in the 1960s considered their leisure both a fun and central part of being a young adult.

Most also thought that their leisure as young adults in the 1960s had been typical. When asked how he spent his free time as a young adult, Ed commented, 'Just basically the general things that teenagers tend to get involved in', Trish responded to the same question with 'Doing what all teenagers do, listening to records', while Sandra remembered 'dancing, discos, pictures, boys, if that's normal, that sort of thing.'[160] Sandra's questioning of whether her activities were normal can be interpreted as trying to seek approval from the interviewer and as an attempt to compose herself as 'normal', so again these retrospective characterisations of youth leisure must be used carefully. However, those who said that their leisure had been 'normal' often recounted common young adult leisure activities in the 1960s: dancing, going to the cinema, going to coffee bars or pubs, socialising with friends, shopping and listening to music. This reinforces that while the experience of 1960s youth was not homogenous, there were shared interests and activities among young adults.

Describing their leisure as both fun and 'normal' also suggests that, in the 1960s, young adults could derive pleasure and meaning from the ordinary. Consequently, they also derived status, identity and a sense of belonging from participating in 'typical' young adult lifestyles. Being 'ordinary' was important because it signalled that you were a young adult.

[159] FSMA, Interview 066.
[160] FSMA, Interviews 026, 093; SFL, Interview with Mrs S6L.

Additionally, the labels of ordinariness imply that leisure was taken for granted. This again highlights the sense of entitlement to leisure young adults felt in the 1960s and that they assumed leisure to be a central and necessary component of what it meant to be a young adult. Furthermore, it suggests that the shifts that had taken place in young adults' leisure since the interwar period had become normalised. While cinema and dancehalls were popular pre-1945, young adults had less access to them than in the 1960s due to lower disposable incomes. Moreover, the 1950s and 60s witnessed the rise of new forms of leisure for young adults that their interwar predecessors had had little or no access to, such as television, coffee bars, cheap fashion, and the new and exciting plethora of pop concerts, records and pirate radio stations.

Leisure was, therefore, central to the experiences of youth in the 1960s. While its boundaries with work were blurred, leisure was predominantly seen as a fun, positive and enjoyable part of youth. Many young adults enjoyed common interests and activities in their free time and partaking in these kinds of leisure in particular spaces allowed the development and performance of a young adult identity and gave them a sense of belonging to a particular generation. However, young adults' experiences of leisure in the 1960s were not homogenous, meaning that a singular or universal 'youth culture' did not exist. Gender, age, place, parental authority and economics all shaped and fractured young adults' leisure experiences in the 1960s, often interacting with each other in complex and nuanced ways.

By analysing this diversity of experience, this chapter has contributed to wider debates about both the 1960s and post-war society. First, it has contributed to academic debate about post-war affluence by showing that young adults experienced only relative affluence, limited spending money and were not economically independent. Second, the boundary between work and leisure was blurred for young adults in the 1960s and many activities contained elements of both. Third, examining young adults' leisure in the 1960s offers new insights into the debates over twentieth-century secularisation in Britain by suggesting that youth rather than gender may have been a primary cause of declining religiosity and that secularisation did not necessarily occur suddenly in the 1960s or due only to discursive shifts. Last, many academics have previously and fruitfully studied youth sub-

and countercultures, but this chapter has shown that stereotypes of subculture and drugs in the 1960s do not accurately describe the lived experiences of most young adults in the period, though many dabbled at the edges of these cultures. Youth leisure was more than just subculture in the 1960s, but many adopted subcultural styles even if they did not adopt subcultural politics. Together, these findings deepen our understanding of post-war England by refining and challenging what we know about affluence, secularisation, youth culture and the relationship between leisure and work, allowing historians to understand more fully the lives of 'ordinary' people during these years from their own perspectives.

CHAPTER FOUR

FRIENDS AND FAMILY

Relationships with friends and family shaped young adults' lived experiences, identities and understandings of youth in the 1960s. Though friends became more central to everyday life in youth, parents and siblings remained important, particularly since most working- and lower middle-class young adults lived in the parental home until marriage. Moreover, while patterns are discernible in each type of relationship, how young adults felt about and interacted with friends, parents and siblings depended on individual personalities and personal circumstances.

Three main arguments are made within this chapter. First, friendship based on shared leisure and a supportive emotional connection was central to the everyday experience of youth and allowed young adults to develop a youthful identity by associating with peers. Second, most young adults enjoyed good (though gendered) relationships with their parents in the 1960s and popular ideas of generational conflict do not accurately describe these relationships since disagreements were more about young adults gaining independence than rejecting their parents' way of life. Third, though relationships with siblings were often not central to everyday life their exact nature depended on how far young adults shared interests, how far they felt emotionally close to each other and the age difference between them.

Unfortunately, due to constraints of space and a paucity of material, this chapter cannot consider young adults' relationships with extended family. Interviewees, contemporary social surveys and subsequent histories rarely or incompletely discussed the extended family.[1] This suggests that extended families were not central to the experiences of youth; though this may be exaggerated by the way interviews were structured. The absence of the extended family reflects post-war shifts towards ideas of selfhood and individualism, the widespread preoccupation with the nuclear family, and the relocation of many families to new

[1] For a contemporary study into the extended family (though one with little consideration of youth) see Young and Willmott, *Family and Kinship*.

housing estates away from family networks. However, as this chapter shows, young adults' experiences challenge how far the working and lower middle classes became less sociable and more immediate family focused in the post-war period. Anecdotally, a few did recall close relationships with extended family members in the 1960s where that relative assumed a role more commonly associated with friends or immediate family. Where a grandmother took on a maternal role, a cousin acted as a friend or an uncle seemed more like a brother, they were important and influential.[2] Though, for most, the extended family was not central to everyday life, further research into why would be fruitful.

FRIENDS

Friendship in twentieth-century Britain has received little attention from historians. This chapter begins to rectify this. Mark Peel, Liz Reed and James Walter are the only scholars to have meaningfully examined friendship in the later twentieth century. They argue that friendship became increasingly important, intimate and selective after the Second World War as people were less bound to family and neighbours because rising affluence and the welfare state reduced obligations of material support to these networks.[3] Indeed, in the interwar years and even into the mid-1950s, the necessity of their wages for the household economy tied young adults closely to the family.[4] It was not until the 1960s that this economic interdependency began to weaken and young adults could increasingly spend more time with friends outside the home. This section examines what friendship meant to young adults in the 1960s and explores how friendship groups shifted with age, gender, employment and courtship. It demonstrates that friends were crucial in creating and performing a youthful identity, and challenges assumptions that the post-war period saw a decline in working-class sociability.

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[2] FSMA, Interviews 026, 045, 095; Interview with George Connolly.
[3] Mark Peel, Liz Reed, and James Walter, 'The Importance of Friends: The Most Recent Past', in Barbara Caine (ed.), *Friendship: A History*, (London, 2009), p. 319.
[4] Selina Todd, 'Breadwinners and Dependents'.

In his 1965 essay on youth, John Barron Mays argued that growing up entailed decreasing dependency on the family and increasing importance of the peer group.[5] By socialising with peers a young man or woman learned how to be a young adult. Friendship was, therefore, central to young adults' socialisation and identity.[6] Hanmer, Jephcott and Willmott all noted that young adults' leisure activities were usually undertaken with a small group or a particular best friend and that this gave them a sense of belonging and identity.[7] Marilyn commented that she learned about fashion and sex from her best friend who 'always seemed far more advanced than what I was'.[8] When asked if friends had been important to his youth, George replied,

> Oh, desperately important… you can really sort of trace the development of… moving from regarding my parents as the most significant people in my life to my friends becoming… at least as important if not more important… And I guess that's a fairly common sort of adolescent experience, so the psychology would suggest… I wanted to be accepted and be accepting of them...[9]

Having been an educational psychologist undoubtedly influenced how George described the importance of friendships in youth, but his ideas were not unusual even if more eloquently put. Most testimonies show that young adults increasingly socialised with, were influenced by and gained a sense of belonging from their friends in youth. David pointed unhesitatingly towards friendships when asked what the best thing about his youth had been: 'Being part of the group.'[10] Friendships were central to youth in the 1960s because they offered a sense of belonging and allowed the development and experience of a young adult identity. Like Marilyn, many learned how to be a young adult by learning about fashion, music and other popular activities from friends. Moreover, associating with friends rather than family granted young adults greater independence from parents, which many desired.[11] Indeed, young women had been using friends and leisure venues to escape parental

[5] Barron Mays, *The Young Pretenders*, pp. 130–131.
[6] Peel, Reed, and Walter, 'The Importance of Friends', p. 324.
[7] Hanmer, *Girls at Leisure*, p. 28; Jephcott, *A Time of One's Own*, p. 64; Willmott, *Adolescent Boys of East London*, pp. 22, 33.
[8] Interview with Marilyn Shaw.
[9] Interview with George Connolly.
[10] Interview with David Canning.
[11] Peel, Reed, and Walter, 'The Importance of Friends', p. 324.

supervision in the interwar period too.[12] During youth people outside the family became young adults' main reference point, signalling their departure from the spaces and relationships of childhood. When remembering their youths many interviewees, like George and David, therefore understood their youth as a period of independence and freedom due to the friendships they experienced, as chapter six examines further.

In the 1960s, most young adults had a small, local, same sex and similarly aged group of between four and ten friends with whom they spent a large proportion of their leisure time.[13] This suggests that youth was not a homogenous category since young adults preferred friends with similar interests and experiences. A few had only one or two close friends rather than a group, but these were a minority and their friends were also usually the same sex, a similar age and central to leisure.[14] As familial obligations decreased under relative affluence in the post-war period, friends could become more central to people's leisure,[15] particularly for young adults. Relative affluence also meant that young adults had more disposable income to spend on activities with friends and many, as chapter two demonstrated, could spend more time with friends due to reduced domestic responsibilities.

Indeed, young adults primarily understood their friends in terms of leisure, suggesting that friendships were based on shared activities and that leisure was premised on having friends to enjoy it with. George did a 'lot of hanging out with that gang of friends', suggesting they were central to his leisure.[16] Hilary was born in 1940, had divorced parents and spent her youth in both London and Blackpool. She was asked what a good night out was once she was working, and replied, 'Well, with a crowd of friends, I suppose, was a good night out'.[17] Janet, born in 1943 to a working-class family, used to go dancing and to the cinema with a big group: 'there was usually about 20 of us… there was a crowd of us.'[18] As White, Davies and

[12] Langhamer, *Women's Leisure*, p. 63.
[13] Carter, *Home, School and Work*, pp. 308–309; Jephcott, *A Time of One's Own*, p. 83; Willmott, *Adolescent Boys of East London*, p. 37.
[14] Willmott, *Adolescent Boys of East London*, p. 36.
[15] Peel, Reed, and Walter, 'The Importance of Friends', pp. 325–326.
[16] Interview with George Connolly.
[17] FSMA, Interview 119.
[18] FSMA, Interview 034.

Langhamer have shown, young adults closely associated friendship with leisure earlier in the twentieth century too, suggesting significant continuity between the 1960s and earlier periods.[19] Understanding friendship as inherently connected to leisure also meant that those who were young in the 1960s often understood youth as a period of fun, as chapter six examines.

Young adults' friendships challenge characterisations of the post-war working-class family as increasingly private and unsociable. It has been argued that loosening social ties on isolating council estates and the rise of home-based leisure options like television made the working class more insular and reduced interaction with kin and community.[20] These analyses have focused on married, middle-aged adults however, whereas young adults' social habits in the 1960s suggests that social ties beyond the family remained hugely important for the younger generation. Friendship was central to how young adults defined themselves and learned how to be a young adult. It featured heavily in their daily lives through their leisure activities. Changes in the family and its social habits after the Second World War were therefore fractured by the age of individual family members. Indeed, Todd has even suggested that post-war parents sacrificed some of their leisure outside the home to provide their children with greater opportunities for socialising in an age of relative affluence.[21] This ability to socialise with friends outside the home helped young adults to see youth as a period of both fun and independence since their ties with the family loosened and significant amounts of their time was spent on enjoyable leisure activities.

Young adults were often discriminating in their hierarchy of friends and the meaning attached to close friendship. In her work, Jackson has shown that young adults associated with peers in leisure venues such as coffee bars in the 1960s without necessarily being friends.[22] As Marilyn suggested, however, shared interests and activities alone were not

[19] White, *Campbell Bunk*, p. 201; Davies, *Leisure, Gender and Poverty*, p. 94; Langhamer, *Women's Leisure*, pp. 66–69.
[20] Young and Willmott, *Family and Kinship*, pp. 131–143; Langhamer, 'The Meanings of Home', pp. 341–346; Todd, *The People*, pp. 174–195.
[21] Todd, 'Affluence, Class and Crown Street', p. 509.
[22] Jackson, 'The Coffee Club Menace', pp. 290–299.

sufficient to create friendship: 'M really was me only friend as such. I mean I'd got acquaintances… you'd see them out and you'd wave and you'd laugh and everythin' but you'd walk away'.[23] When I asked Joan what the difference between a friend and acquaintance was, she replied, 'it's someone in whom you can share confidences and know they won't blab.'[24] I asked David the same question and he said people were better friends if they shared 'common interests I suppose. And you get, it's hard to say but you just… people who are on the same social background in certain degree… same aspirations.'[25] George had his 'gang' but also 'one or two particularly that I saw as kind of soul mates', suggesting that they were better or closer friends due to an emotional connection.[26] A friend was, therefore, someone who knew you very well, could be trusted, shared your interests and had a similar socio-economic status and life trajectory. Therefore, despite the increased pressure on home and family to provide emotional support and close relationships in the post-war period,[27] friendship was central to the emotional and social lives of young adults in the 1960s. Decreasing obligations to the family in an age of relative affluence – which also provided young adults with increased opportunities to socialise outside the home – allowed more time and closer affective bonds with friends.

Indeed, friends often played a supportive or confidant role. Friendship was important for young adults in what Peel, Reed and Walter term their 'emotional inner lives', how they negotiated the process of growing up and issues such as sex and love.[28] Hanmer and Jephcott noted that friends helped each other, shared confidences and confided problems and secrets.[29] When asked if she would share her problems with her best friend, Joan replied, 'Yeah. We used to talk about everything… you'd listen, y'know, and try to make each other feel better'; reiterating that this close support was founded upon 'reliability and trust'.[30] Supportive

[23] Interview with Marilyn Shaw.
[24] Interview with Joan Canning.
[25] Interview with David Canning.
[26] Interview with George Connolly.
[27] Langhamer, 'The Meanings of Home', pp. 344–346.
[28] Peel, Reed, and Walter, 'The Importance of Friends', pp. 325–326.
[29] Hanmer, *Girls at Leisure*, p. 38; Jephcott, *A Time of One's Own*, p. 66.
[30] Interview with Joan Canning.

friendship was gendered, however. Women more often recalled sharing ideas about fashion and sex or needing to trust friends with problems than young men, likely because typical femininity allowed for unproblematic emotional homosocial relationships. Yet young men's friends could also play supportive roles. Jack thought of his friends as 'somebody to bounce ideas off' and as a support when trying to ask girls out.[31] George's friends shared 'personal problems and issues inevitably mostly about partnerships and love and sex', demonstrating that young men could both receive and give support and that they used friends to understand complex personal issues.[32] This increasingly supportive and emotional friendship perhaps reflects generally shifting models of masculinity in the post-war period.[33] Some young men were still less openly emotional when supporting and confiding in friends, however, suggesting that masculinity had not shifted entirely. As Joe put it, friends would try 'to solve a problem rather than sort of "oh poor me" want consoling, y'know'.[34]

That friends provided emotional support in the 1960s again shows that young adults did not become more insular and private in the post-war period since they developed strong emotional connections outside the family and home. This was because young adults sought increased independence from the family, meaning that friends came to play a bigger role in their lives. It was also facilitated by the generally shifting emotional landscape of the post-war period. Langhamer argues that greater weight was attached to emotional intimacy after the Second World War, though she focuses on romantic love.[35] That young adults formed strong emotional connections with friends in this period implies that more intimate platonic emotional relationships were also important. Indeed, Peel, Reed and Walter have argued that the intimate friendships that first appeared in the early twentieth century intensified in the more affluent post-war period as friendship became more closely linked to love and as its private and emotional aspects gained ascendency over public and practical obligations to the

[31] Interview with Jack Draper.
[32] Interview with George Connolly.
[33] See, for example, King, *Family Men.*
[34] Interview with Joe Knight.
[35] Langhamer, *The English in Love*.

family.[36] Young adults' emotional worlds were therefore expanding in the 1960s and friendship gained important affective functions. It offered young adults not only leisure companions, belonging and a sense of independence but also emotional support, though the performance of this was often gendered.

Friendship groups were affected by age, gender, courtship, employment and proximity. The single-sex friendships of earlier youth often evolved into mixed-sex friendships when young adults reached their later teens and twenties and increasingly mixed with the opposite sex at work and became more interested in courtship, which encouraged them to mix with the opposite sex in leisure venues.[37] Indeed, courtship had a significant, if gendered, impact on friendships. Young women's friendships were most affected since, once courting, they often spent significantly less time with female friends and more time with their boyfriend and his friends.[38] Sylvia 'stopped seeing my own personal girlfriends when we was [sic] courting really. I saw my husband every night'.[39] Marilyn commented that, 'if you had a boyfriend your life then seemed to revolve around your boyfriend's friends. And you seem to lose y'girlfriends… [boys] seem to retain all theirs.'[40]

Courtship also affected young men's friendships by reducing how often they saw male friends. Jack noted that once his best friend got a girlfriend he 'didn't see him again for ages!'[41] David's friendships shifted when 'girls came along and interfered with our fellowship!', while William noted that he 'probably missed out a bit with my mates, didn't get drunk enough and stuff like that' as he had a relatively serious relationship in his late teens.[42] However, no male respondents recalled changing their friends to revolve around those of their girlfriend while courting. Young men were more likely to keep pre-existing, independent friendships. As Jack recalled, 'there was also this thing about bein' lads as well, you see' and

[36] Peel, Reed, and Walter, 'The Importance of Friends', pp. 317–324.
[37] Willmott, *Adolescent Boys of East London*, pp. 35–36.
[38] Carter, *Home, School and Work*, pp. 308–309.
[39] FSMA, Interview 147.
[40] Interview with Marilyn Shaw.
[41] Interview with Jack Draper.
[42] Interview with David Canning; Interview with William Woodsford.

his group of male friends still socialised together without girlfriends.[43] As chapter five explores further, young women willingly shifted their friendships when courting because courtship was often more serious for them at a younger age and because it was more central to their identities and future aspirations and careers than for young men. Young men did not subsume their identity and friendships into courtship as it was less central to their identity and future aspirations. How courtship therefore affected the friendships of both young men and young women in the 1960s was gendered.

Once they started work young adults generally lost touch with school friends.[44] Joe made friends at work instead and 'I keep in touch with people I worked with in those apprentice years' even in 2015, suggesting that youthful friendships could enjoy significant longevity.[45] When asked if she kept in touch with school friends once working, Valerie replied, 'not so much. Of course I think you make your own friends once you've started work… different sort of friends.'[46] Marilyn drifted away from school friends because they no longer went to school together and 'we moved out… and they moved out as well… and we didn't really see much of one another'.[47] Young adults therefore lost touch with school friends if they did not live or spend much time in proximity. This was particularly true for those who attended schools (especially grammars) in larger towns and cities that they did not live near. This was not a new phenomenon; young adults' friendships were often based on living in close proximity throughout the twentieth century, as White demonstrated in his study of interwar Campbell Bunk in London.[48] In the 1960s most replaced school friends with new friends made through work.[49] This suggests that young adults saw youth as a new and distinct phase of life, requiring new and distinct relationships. They saw themselves as more independent and grown up and so it is possible, though no interviewees expressed it in these

[43] Interview with Jack Draper.
[44] Carter, *Home, School and Work*, pp. 308–309.
[45] Interview with Joe Knight.
[46] FSMA, Interview 135.
[47] Interview with Marilyn Shaw.
[48] White, *Campbell Bunk*, pp. 169–171.
[49] Carter, *Home, School and Work*, pp. 308–309.

terms, that they prioritised work friends over school friends as this offered more maturity and status by distancing them from childhood.

A small minority did keep in touch with school friends. Sandy was asked if she had made good friends at school and replied that 'There's only one that I've kept in touch with', suggesting that a particularly strong friendship could survive the transition to work.[50] Ed also kept in touch with some school friends once working 'because we were all so interested in sport' though he also developed a new, separate set of friends in his late teens.[51] School friends might be kept because of shared interests and activities, though this did not prevent a young person making additional friends with whom they shared other interests. Indeed Joyce, born in 1945 to a family that moved from the working to lower middle classes, replied, 'I did keep my old friends… and I made some new friends at work. They did not actually meet each other but I did go out with both sets.'[52] While for a few young adults, school friends remained important, they were often distinct from friends made at work, again suggesting that young adults conceived of school friends as different to ones made in youth.

Friendships at work, as chapter two demonstrated, offered strategies to mitigate the tedium and subordination often experienced in paid employment. Work colleagues that became friends were usually of a similar age and the same sex given that many apprentices, factory workers and shop girls predominantly worked in single-sex environments, and that young adults necessarily had most in common with peers. This, combined with their solidarity in the face of boredom, allowed young adults to develop a sense of belonging to their workplace and as a young worker, further cementing youth as a distinct stage in the lifecycle characterised by paid employment and a sense of independence.[53] A small number became friendly with workmates but did not socialise with them outside of work. Charlie, born in Wigan in 1949 to a working-class family, did 'nothing on a regular basis' with his

[50] FSMA, Interview 099.
[51] FSMA, Interview 026.
[52] FSMA, Interview 060.
[53] Todd, *Young Women, Work and Family*, p. 152.

workmates.[54] Many, however, socialised regularly. Michael often went to the pub with fellow apprentices, while Joe and David were part of the same friendship group at their company who played sport, visited the pub and went on holiday together.[55] Marilyn made friends with young women in several office jobs and they would go dancing together.[56] Work friendships, therefore, often also took place outside of work and were developed by pursuing leisure together. However, though there were exceptions, such as Joe and David's lifelong friendship, many did not maintain work friendships once they left a particular workplace. Marilyn 'never retained friendship with them after I left' any of her jobs.[57] This was often because workmates did not live nearby, particularly in larger towns and cities – this possibly also explains why people like Charlie socialised infrequently with workmates. Moreover, workplace friendships were often based on solidarity in the face of monotony rather than shared interests or emotional closeness and so were more likely to end with a change of job.

Many young adults also socialised with friends at home. This was aided by the increasing comfort and cleanliness of many working- and lower middle-class homes after the Second World War, as many were able to leave inadequate housing.[58] At home, friends would listen to music, chat or, in the case of young women, try out clothes and make-up. Many parents willingly allowed young adults' friends in the house and some even enjoyed this. William remembered that his mother 'was a good mate to friends' and enjoyed hosting them.[59] When asked if her parents met her friends, Sylvia said, 'Yes, yes, very much so [we had] this open house business, on a Saturday, with me mum' where her mother would prepare food.[60] David joked that 'my house was known as Canning's Café… there was always a chip pan' and his mother would also make food for his friends.[61] George remembered that on

[54] FSMA, Interview 137.
[55] SFL, Interview with Mr P5B; Interview with Joe Knight; Interview with David Canning.
[56] Interview with Marilyn Shaw.
[57] Interview with Marilyn Shaw.
[58] Langhamer, 'The Meanings of Home'.
[59] Interview with William Woodsford.
[60] FSMA, Interview 147.
[61] Interview with David Canning.

Sunday mornings a large group of his friends congregated at his house, 'and my mum and dad were very happy.'[62]

Only a small number remembered not bringing friends home or friends being unwelcome. Joan liked visiting her friend's house 'because there was a lot of love' there, but never brought friends to her own home 'because it was so horrible!'[63] Joan's difficult and unhappy family life, although atypical, made her reluctant to bring friends home. Her comments also suggest that young adults evaluated their home and family experiences against their peers', which potentially conditioned their relationships with parents and memories of this. Jack recalled that 'when friends visited, quite often parents wouldn't let 'em in… used to make 'em wait outside', though he linked this to his father's draconian attitudes and temper, suggesting that some parents were significantly more private and less accommodating than others.[64] Jack's father's unwillingness to host visitors perhaps reflects what has been identified as the increasing privatism and decreasing sociability of working-class families post-war. However, that young adults often visited and received friends at home challenges how far this privatism existed among younger generations, while the fact that many parents happily accommodated their children's friends suggests that there had not been a complete change in the social functions of the home and that the working-class family often remained sociable.

Sometimes parents commented on or disapproved of young adults' friends. Contemporary concerns about juvenile delinquency emphasised the importance of the 'right' kinds of friends and caused cautious parents to advise young adults.[65] 'Suitable' friends were usually those who were considered 'respectable' rather than 'rough', were not visibly subcultural and who held down stable jobs.[66] Ann noted that 'Me mum would say things like "She's very nice" and "I'm not keen on her"'.[67] Richard's parents 'didn't like some of the

[62] Interview with George Connolly.
[63] Interview with Joan Canning.
[64] Interview with Jack Draper.
[65] Peel, Reed, and Walter, 'The Importance of Friends', p. 325.
[66] FSMA, Interview 016; Interview with Marilyn Shaw.
[67] FSMA, Interview 004.

friends I used to bring home… what all mothers are like', suggesting that he thought it typical for parents to pass judgement on friends.[68] For some, these comments were influential, suggesting that parents had some control over young adults' friendships and that their opinions were valued. Donna, born in 1942, grew up in a lower middle-class family in Yorkshire, Bristol and London. Her parents often commented when they disliked her friends and when asked if this influenced her Donna replied, 'I think so, because my mother tended to steer us away'.[69] Parents did not so easily influence all friendships, however, showing that some did not always defer to or agree with parents. Marilyn remembered that her parents had initially not liked her best friend because she seemed too grown up in her 'tight skirts and high heels', but Marilyn persisted with the friendship and her parents eventually 'got over it really.'[70] Indeed, Marilyn noted this was 'a sign of growin' up', suggesting that she saw her autonomy in choosing friends as a crucial development of her own maturity and independence.[71] That parental advice was sometimes taken on board and sometimes ignored demonstrates that respect for and deference to parents existed uneasily alongside young adults' desire to gain independence.

Very few interviewees recalled falling out with friends and fallings out were usually minor. Joe commented that 'Yeah sure we fell out with friends but… I don't remember falling out with somebody where "I'm never gonna speak to you again!"'[72] David recalled one friend he never fully fell out with but with whom he was 'always squabbling', but when asked what they squabbled over he laughed and said 'Oh goodness knows', implying that the squabbles were minor.[73] Even where young adults did disagree or fall out this was often temporary. George recalled that 'we would just have heated words… not speak to each other for a while and then slowly, y'know, things get repaired'.[74] This contrasts with contemporary popular images of young adults, particularly young men, as being part of delinquent, violent and often

[68] FSMA, Interview 106.
[69] FSMA, Interview 013.
[70] Interview with Marilyn Shaw.
[71] Interview with Marilyn Shaw.
[72] Interview with Joe Knight.
[73] Interview with David Canning.
[74] Interview with George Connolly.

subcultural gangs that fought each other as tests of masculinity and expressions of class conflict.[75] Indeed, as Bartie, Jackson and Cohen have shown, these images had little basis in reality and were often distorted moral panics.[76] A few interviewees did recall witnessing or participating in fights as young adults in the 1960s, but these were a very small minority and they usually condemned violence.[77] Generally, young adults were peaceful and law-abiding. Narratives of never or infrequently falling out with friends are undoubtedly conditioned by memory and the passage of time, but they nevertheless suggest that young adults' friendships were generally stable and amicable.

For young adults in the 1960s, friendship was based on shared leisure as well as on emotional and physical support. Young adults often made friends with people from similar age and social backgrounds and, earlier in youth, with people of the same sex. As young adults aged and became increasingly involved in serious courtship, however, friendship groups shifted, though this effect was gendered. Generally, young adults lost touch with the friends they had made at school, instead meeting new people though their employment. They were discriminating about who constituted a friend and whether or not to take on parental advice over 'suitable' companions. Overall, friendship was crucial to the experience of youth in the 1960s since young adults spent so much of their time with friends and because associating with peers helped provide independence from the family and define what it meant to be a young adult.

PARENTS

Parental relationships were central to working- and lower middle-class young adults' lives since most lived at home until marriage. The majority of young adults in the 1960s enjoyed good relationships with their parents, though these relationships were often gendered. Contemporary social studies and concerns often focused on the family (particularly the

[75] Bartie, 'Moral Panics and Glasgow Gangs'; Davis, *Youth and the Condition of Britain*, pp. 187–190.
[76] Bartie, 'Moral Panics and Glasgow Gangs'; Jackson and Bartie, *Policing Youth*, p. 87; Cohen, *Folk Devils and Moral Panics*.
[77] SFL, Interviews with Mr H7L, Mr F2L, Mr M10L, Mrs A3L; Jephcott, *A Time of One's Own*, pp. 95–97.

parent-child relationship) in the context of more married women working, the changing nature of marriage and the division of labour within it, housing shortages and the relocation of the working classes into new estates, rising immigration, and anxiety over intergenerational relationships.[78] Many studies on youth in the post-war period and the 1960s assumed that a generation gap existed between young adults and their parents – where young adults rejected the values and authority of the older generation – and that changes in the family since the Second World War were creating a generation of potentially unstable and delinquent young adults.[79]

However, not all contemporary surveys were so pessimistic. Eustace Chesser *et al* argued in their 1961 collection of essays that 'teenagers are not a peculiar species with a code of morals which is distinctively their own, but vigorous, imitative young people making haste yet earlier to adopt the standards of those older than themselves.'[80] In other words, there was conformity rather than a radical break between the values and behaviours of young adults and the older generation. Horn has argued that that there was little evidence of a generation gap between young adults and parents from 1945 to 1960 and this holds true into the 1960s.[81] Indeed, personal testimonies reveal that tensions between young adults and parents were not indicative of a generational gap in morals and practices. Where tensions did occur these were a symptom of the changing status of young adults as they entered and progressed through their youth. Disagreements arose over specific issues as parents and young adults negotiated the boundaries of their relationship to gain independence and a more adult status.

Personal testimonies show that most young adults got on well with their mother, often seeing her as kind, not too strict and the more affectionate parent. George noted that 'my mum and I always got on… famously well, kindred spirits and we just sort of saw things

[78] Colin Harris, 'The Family in Post-War Britain', in James Obelkevich and Peter Catterall (eds), *Understanding Post-War British Society*, (London and New York, 1994), pp. 47–48.
[79] British Medical Association, *Venereal Disease and Young People*, pp. 8, 36, 40–43; Bazalgette, *Freedom, Authority and the Young Adult*, pp. 2–3, 89–91.
[80] Chesser, Davey, Gorer, Maclure, Nichols, Watson, *Teenage Morals*, p. 3.
[81] Horn, *Juke Box Britain*, p. 100.

pretty much the same and she loved the sort of things I did and she loved my company.'[82] Elaine and her mother 'used to get on very well – she always seemed to understand without ever having to actually tell her like. Very easy-going relationship'.[83] The Autumn 1982 MOA directive asked respondents what they bought with their first wage packet and several remembered buying something for their mothers. One woman, born in 1949, bought her mother a linen tablecloth, another, also born in 1949, bought her mother a pearl brooch.[84] These gifts suggest that young adults were affectionate and close to their mothers as well as perhaps indicating gratitude for years of maternal provision that they could repay in kind once working. This characterisation of relationships with their mothers as warm, close and affectionate plays into the 1960s ideal type of the homemaker mother.[85] This in turn suggests that while many adult women undertook more paid work outside the home in the 1960s, their maternal role remained the primary way in which their children understood them.

Some also recalled that their mother had been a confidant during their youth, reinforcing the idea of a close relationship between mothers and young adults. Jill was always able to tell her mother her troubles as a young woman, while Cerys, born to a working-class Cardiff family in 1943, 'mostly just always confided in my mother, being a girl' over issues surrounding sex and puberty, though she noted that her brother probably went to their father with problems since he was male.[86] Closeness to parents was therefore, at least in terms of sensitive issues, gendered. Others, however, felt unable to discuss sensitive issues with their mothers. April, born in 1943 in Lancashire to a working-class family, recalled that she got on well with her mother but 'couldn't talk to her about anything rude [sex]… she was very, very old fashioned'.[87] Robert commented that, 'Things like sex and everything else like that wasn't discussed.'[88] While the mother was often the 'loving' and affectionate parent, this did not mean she was always willing or able to discuss sensitive topics. Indeed, the exchange of

[82] Interview with George Connolly.
[83] FSMA, Interview 012.
[84] MOA, Autumn 1982 Directive, C109, K315.
[85] Davis, *Modern Motherhood*, pp. 112–137, 190.
[86] SFL, Interview with Mrs R1P; FSMA, Interview 016.
[87] FSMA, Interview 162.
[88] FSMA, Interview 160.

knowledge about sex between parents and children was often limited in the 1960s due to embarrassment and poor knowledge, as chapter five examines. The knowledge and openness of the mother therefore shaped her relationship with her children. While most remembered good and affectionate relationships with their mothers, exactly what this involved was more individualised.

Relationships with fathers were usually recalled as less close and affectionate, though still generally good, because they were seen as strict and distant, particularly if they spent much of the day at work and enjoyed leisure activities alone. Ed 'always felt my father was a bit of a distant figure… although we both shared a keen interest in sport which used to bring us together'.[89] Ann similarly saw little of her father as 'If he wasn't at work, at nights he was in the pub.'[90] Willmott's subjects often saw fathers as remote authority figures, though personal testimonies show that this disciplinary relationship with the father often varied even within a family.[91] Ann recalled that her father was stricter with her older sister, possibly because Ann spent some time away from home at a boarding school and so had less contact with him, but also noted that once her older sister was older, 'she used to roll in at 11.30 and he said nothing'.[92] Vivian was born in Barrow in 1943; her father was a draughtsman and her mother a housewife. She also 'felt my father was very strict… and I felt very much aggrieved that my older brother who was allowed to do things which I wasn't allowed to do'.[93] This suggests that a father's strictness and authority varied by age and gender, as seen in chapter three. The father's authoritarian role could also cause tension where young adults were treated differentially or wanted more independence. Winston, born to a working-class Barrow family in 1950, for example, resented his father's authority so much that he left home to join the Merchant Navy aged 21.[94] Mort's semi-autobiographical examination of the relationship between fathers and sons in post-war Britain suggests that a lack of affection could be created

[89] FSMA, Interview 026.
[90] FSMA, Interview 004.
[91] Willmott, *Adolescent Boys of East London*, pp. 59–60.
[92] FSMA, Interview 004.
[93] SFL, Interview with Mrs L5B.
[94] SFL Interview with Mr L5B.

by the father's authoritarian distance.[95] These testimonies also echo King's work on fatherhood between 1914 and 1960, which argues that economic provision and disciplinary authority were key to fatherhood.[96] Indeed, fathers remained economic providers and disciplinarians into the 1960s and this could create distance between them and their children, resulting in the mother being the more involved and affectionate parent.

Yet many recalled strong, affectionate and close relationships with their fathers during their youths in the 1960s. Diana, for example, characterised her parents as strict but also remembered her father as 'so easy going'.[97] Yvonne, born in 1946 in Yorkshire, was close to her father who was both a fitter in a colliery and 'a cuddly sorta man'.[98] One Mass Observer, born in 1950, described herself as a 'Daddy's girl' and recalled that she 'loved being with him', more so than her mother who had a quick temper.[99] The father could, therefore, occupy multiple roles in the 1960s and his young adult children's relationships with him could take multiple forms. He was simultaneously provider, disciplinarian and a warm, loving figure. This reflects King's argument that twentieth-century fatherhood was a changing and multifaceted role, but one that increasingly involved emotional investment from fathers.[100] Interestingly, however, accounts of close, affectionate relationships between young adults and fathers in the 1960s tended to come from women, implying that there was gendered element in father-child relationships. This suggests, as Mort has hypothesised, that it was easier or more acceptable for fathers to display emotion and affection towards female children and that fathers sought to inculcate 'strong' and less emotional roles in male children by being less affectionate with them, though further research is needed into this.[101]

A small minority recalled less good relationships with their parents during youth. Tensions between parents and children, while relatively uncommon, often had historically

[95] Frank Mort, 'Social and Symbolic Fathers and Sons in Postwar Britain', *Journal of British Studies*, 38.3 (1999), pp. 375–377.
[96] King, *Family Men*, pp. 49–50, 121.
[97] Interview with Diana Allen.
[98] FSMA, Interview 117.
[99] MOA, Spring 1993 Directive, R2179.
[100] King, *Family Men*, pp. 2, 121.
[101] Mort, 'Fathers and Sons', p. 375.

specific and gendered roots in the 1960s. As discussed in chapter one, Frances felt drinking, staying out all night and having multiple boyfriends resulted in a difficult relationship with her 'very conventional mum'.[102] For Frances, her poor relationship arose from having a different understanding of morality and respectability to her mother given the changing mores of the 1960s, which chapter five discusses further. As Carolyn Steedman describes in *Landscape for a Good Woman*, her tense relationship with her mother in the 1950s and 1960s was based on her mother's desire for a better life in an age of affluence and the resentments this caused.[103] Similarly, Joan remembered a fractious relationship with her mother in the 1960s because of curfews Joan thought unfair and because her mother resented her intelligence and freedom, though Joan requested the exact details of this not be discussed.[104] Abrams argues that post-war young women actively wanted to move away from the values and lifestyles constraining their mothers, which some mothers envied and could not easily accept.[105] Tensions could therefore arise as mothers envied their daughters and daughters seemed to leave their mothers behind. Young women and their mothers could experience the affluence and supposed permissiveness of the 1960s very differently, which could fracture their relationship. This kind of tension particularly affected mothers and daughters because of the increasing opportunities available to women post-war, whereas lifestyles for young men remained more constant. They were different to mother-daughter tensions earlier in the twentieth century, however, which Carol Dyhouse notes were based around the lack of alternative lifestyles for daughters rather than on envy at new possibilities.[106]

Tensions with fathers were also gendered and often centred on the father's aggression and violence as well as on changing conceptions of masculinity and the self. Joan did not get on with her father because he was 'foul mouthed and violent'.[107] Jack described his father as 'raving nuts' and their relationship as 'dreadful'; their father regularly beat Jack and his

[102] SFL, Interview with Mrs H9P.
[103] Carolyn Steedman, *Landscape for a Good Woman: A Story of Two Lives*, (London, 1986).
[104] Interview with Joan Canning.
[105] Abrams, 'Mothers and Daughters', pp. 68–70.
[106] Carol Dyhouse, *Girls Growing Up in Late Victorian and Edwardian England*, (London, 1981), pp. 3–40.
[107] Interview with Joan Canning.

brother and 'we'd always have big arguments about summat', meaning that Jack stayed out of the house as much as possible.[108] These father-child tensions were likely also historically contingent as some fathers may have exercised their aggression in defence of a masculinity that seemed under threat from changing paternal roles and the rise of married women working or as a result of trauma from service in the war, though further research is needed to confirm this. Indeed, Jack even hypothesised that experiences in the Second World War caused his father to be 'loud and bullish and saw himself as the breadwinner.'[109] As Mort has argued, albeit from a more intellectual perspective than that taken by most interviewees, his poor relationship with his father in the 1950s and 1960s likely stemmed from their differing subjectivities and gendered identities.[110] Having grown up as modernity took hold and a reflexive self became more important, Mort developed a different masculinity to his father and the two therefore could not relate. Ultimately, bad relationships with parents hinged on individualised but gendered clashes of self, personality and expectations. These bad relationships were, however, in the minority so cannot be understood as evidence of universal generational conflict.

A very small number of young adults left home in the 1960s due to family difficulties. Joan went to Italy as a nanny for six months before moving into a bedsit aged 19 because she 'Didn't get on well with home, at home. Parents rowing, it was horrible'.[111] Though she eventually repaired her relationship with her mother and moved home, the bedsit gave Joan independence: 'I was free… there was no one nagging me all the time'.[112] Jim 'threatened many and many a time to leave' home due to arguments with his father because 'I fancied the freedom'.[113] However, Jim 'didn't fancy the drudgery side of it' and realised how comfortable living at home was while a low-earning apprentice.[114] Since so few lived away from the family home and since a significant breakdown in relationships prompted it, moving

[108] Interview with Jack Draper.
[109] Interview with Jack Draper.
[110] Mort, 'Fathers and Sons', pp. 364–370.
[111] Interview with Joan Canning.
[112] Interview with Joan Canning.
[113] SFL, Interview with Mr R1P.
[114] SFL, Interview with Mr R1P.

out was a major action for young adults in the 1960s. That some left due to poor relationships shows that not all had good relationships with parents, and that sometimes moving out was the only way to gain the independence they desired. However, as Jim suggested, home offered many benefits to young adults and the rarity with which they left strongly suggests irreparable relationships were uncommon.

Young adults' relationships with mothers and fathers were not usually experienced in isolation from the other parent since most lived with both. Consequently, their retrospective assessment of those relationships was comparative. Jack, for example, described his bad relationship with his father in contrast to a 'far more strong [relationship] with me mother' whom he loved and almost pitied for how she was treated by his father, perhaps causing him to retrospectively exaggerate how unreasonable his father was or to feel closer to his mother.[115] This fits into a long-standing twentieth-century working-class trope of pity for mothers who were expected to put the needs of the family before themselves.[116] Ed, in feeling that his father was distant 'didn't relate to him half as much as I related to my mother', suggesting that closeness with one parent could be shaped by a lack of emotional and physical closeness with the other.[117] His comments also suggest that the personality of each parent affected the relationship since Ed's mother was generally more open and talkative, making him closer to her. While she thought both of her parents were strict, Diana implied she was closer to her 'easy going' father since 'I always seemed to get blamed for everything' by her mother.[118] Therefore, how a young adult related to one parent, and how they retrospectively described that relationship, was based on how they also got on with the other.

Many young adults experienced a change in their relationship with their parents once they entered youth, though most were still subject to parental rules (at least in earlier youth). This change was usually in terms of status and power rather than in material conditions and activities. When asked if there had been any changes at home once they started work, 52 per

[115] Interview with Jack Draper.
[116] Davies, *Leisure, Gender and Poverty*, p. 55.
[117] FSMA, Interview 026.
[118] Interview with Diana Allen.

cent of YWP respondents said there had been.[119] A 17-year-old apprentice mechanic thought that his parents 'seem to trust you more… and you can stay out longer at night'.[120] A 19-year-old female comptometer operator commented that her parents 'treat me more grown up.'[121] Interviewees echoed these changes. When asked if he was treated differently by his parents once working, Steve replied, 'Not initially. You still had to respect the rules and everything else… [but] you was treated definitely a bit more grown up'.[122] Rodney recalled that his relationship with his parents changed ''Cos you're getting older, they talk to you a lot more, rather than treat you as a child. You're out earning your living. So you could sorta talk over things more with them'.[123] Relationships between parents and young adults were not static, therefore, but shifted over a young adult's youth. Once they started work, parents treated young adults more as adults, which afforded them greater freedom and independence. Some rules and restrictions remained in place, particularly for young women, however, meaning that power balance shifts were gendered and relative.

Indeed, despite generally good relationships in the 1960s, many young adults did come into conflict with their parents at points when desires for independence were stymied by parental control. Gordon Stewart Prince argued in 1968 that 'It is natural for teenagers to seek independence from parental control' while Barron Mays suggested in 1965 that 'Some kind of rebellion against authority is necessarily involved in the growing up process. It is a prerequisite for the establishment of personal autonomy.'[124] This implies that a degree of tension between young adults and parents is a universal and predictable part of youth. Certainly, this youthful testing of freedoms was not only a 1960s phenomenon, as Roberts has demonstrated in her work on the early twentieth century.[125]

However, the tensions of the 1960s were historically specific. As noted above, young women could conflict with their parents over the new ways of being a woman the post-war

[119] YWP.
[120] YWP, Interview A1.
[121] YWP, Interview E17.
[122] SFL, Interview with Mr F2L.
[123] FSMA, Interview 043.
[124] Prince, *Teenagers Today*, p. 3; Barron Mays, *The Young Pretenders*, p. 22.
[125] Roberts, *A Woman's Place*, pp. 41–42.

period offered, while young men could similarly find that the new subjectivities and masculinities of the 1950s and 1960s made their relationships with parents more difficult. Tensions could also arise over the different experiences of affluence parents and children had, potentially causing resentment and envy. Additionally, parents who had been encouraged to be fiercely protective over their children in the immediate post-war years, through the works of John Bowlby and Donald Winnicott, potentially struggled to relinquish control as their children entered youth.[126] These tensions between parents and young adults were also hyperbolised in the 1960s. Contemporary assumptions of generational conflict were fuelled by the increased visibility of youth and increasing attention to sub- and countercultures, which led to an over-theorisation of young adults' rebelliousness.[127] Contemporary academics used generation rather than class as an analytical tool, meaning many actively searched for differences between parents and children.[128] Indeed, many social surveys assumed that the generational gap between adults and young adults needed investigating and that young people were rejecting 'the established way of life'.[129] Politicians and the media similarly embraced the language of generational conflict, by assuming young people were all in direct opposition to the values and morals of the older generation, and consequently presented popular news stories in these terms.[130]

But young adults' conflicts with parents were about gaining independence in a material sense, not about rejecting political or cultural values, and this required negotiation of the boundaries of parental power. Eric, born in 1944 to a working-class family, recalled that 'When I was in my early teens, I used to reject everything he [father] said… just because he was my father and I wasn't going to agree with him', implying that arguments were not a rejection of his father's principles but about asserting independence from his father's

[126] For discussion on post-war child-rearing advice see Thomson, *Lost Freedom*, chapters 2 and 3; Davis, *Modern Motherhood*, chapter 5.
[127] Brake, *Comparative Youth Culture*, pp. 21–22; Davis, *Youth and the Condition of Britain*, pp. 78–80.
[128] Osgerby, *Youth in Britain Since 1945*, p. 27.
[129] Barron Mays, *The Young Pretenders*, p. 23.
[130] Marcus Collins, '"The Age of the Beatles": Parliament and Popular Music in the 1960s', *Contemporary British History*, 27.1 (2013), pp. 87–90; Fowler, *Youth Culture in Modern Britain*, p. 183.

authority.[131] Jim saw his disagreements with his father over leisure activities as a rebellious phase beginning around the age of 'fourteen, fifteen and like I say, the peak would be about sixteen. And it just ebbed away after that', suggesting that once Jim was established as a young adult he no longer needed to challenge his father's authority.[132] Sandy commented that

> you get to adolescence and then you think everybody's got a grudge against you… a lot of the things that they [parents] want you to do, you sorta resent or they won't let you do… You sorta resent it really, but afterwards you can see that it's only because, you know, they don't want you to get hurt or what-have-you.[133]

Her comments again suggest that youthful tension with parents was a temporary phase based on restrictions to independence not on disagreement with parents' values and ways of life. As chapter two demonstrated, in the 1960s young adults earned more and were less central to the family economy than in previous periods, which afforded them a sense of self-worth and entitlement to leisure as well as (relative) economic independence. Young adults enjoyed the independence they were gaining and wanted more, which affected their relationships with parents and encouraged young adults to seek greater social autonomy. Arguments with parents were, therefore, about negotiating parental authority as young adults gained independence, but they were not a rejection of the older generation's values.

Tensions with parents often arose over three common issues: curfews, leisure activities and clothes. Langhamer and Davies have shown that these were common tensions in the interwar period and the 1950s, suggesting some continuity throughout the twentieth century in conflicts between parents and young adults.[134] Todd has demonstrated that tensions with parents in the interwar period often also arose over young adults (particularly young women) wanting further education or certain jobs, though these conflicts were only mentioned by a very small number of respondents in this thesis suggesting that accepted careers and trajectories had shifted by the 1960s.[135] Indeed, parents were more likely to have higher ambitions for daughters in the more affluent post-war period and it was becoming

[131] FSMA, Interview 049.
[132] SFL, Interview with Mr R1P.
[133] FSMA, Interview 099.
[134] Langhamer, *Women's Leisure*, pp. 88–98; Davies, *Leisure, Gender and Poverty*, pp. 83, 89–90.
[135] Todd, *Young Women, Work and Family*, pp. 54–112.

increasingly acceptable for women to work once married.[136] Once again, therefore, while a young adult experiencing some conflicts with parents was not new in the 1960s, these tensions were historically specific.

Though most young adults did not openly argue with parents over curfews, many were embarrassed or resentful of them. Marilyn recalled that 'it's embarrassing, you've gotta say to a guy "I've gotta go now 'cos I've gotta be back!"', while Linda remembered 'my dad insisted on driving me to dances & collecting me afterwards – very embarrassing!'[137] Yet many young adults, even if resentful, abided by curfews, suggesting that parental authority was usually respected. A minority did, however, disobey curfews. Carol recalled that 'many a time I've come home the door was locked' because she had missed her 11pm curfew, 'I'd have to wake her [mother] up then and I'd get a good hiding.'[138] Young women more often remembered being embarrassed by, resentful of or breaking curfews because they were more restrictive to young women's independence, as chapter three demonstrated. Conflict over curfews was, therefore, a gendered attempt to negotiate the boundaries of the independence young adults thought they were entitled to, though most accepted some restriction.

Conflicts often also arose over young adults' leisure activities. Parents often disapproved of young adults' taste in music and television, particularly pop music and music programmes. Both Joan and Jack, for example, recalled their fathers strictly controlling what they could listen to or watch.[139] This shows that young adults often had differing tastes to their parents in leisure and entertainment, though this hardly amounts to full generational conflict. It was about negotiating power and independence within the house. It was also not a universal experience since some parents actually enjoyed new music and television. Sylvia, for example, recalled watching *Top of the Pops* with her mother, 'but we weren't allowed to watch that… when me father was in'.[140] Conflicts over activities were, therefore, different

[136] Todd and Young, 'Baby-Boomers to "Beanstalkers"'; Smith Wilson, 'The Good Working Mother'; Tinkler, 'The Teenage Self and Lifestyle'.
[137] Interview with Marilyn Shaw; MOA, Spring 1993 Directive, C1786.
[138] SFL, Interview with Mrs L3L.
[139] Interview with Joan Canning; Interview with Jack Draper.
[140] FSMA, Interview 147.

between families and not all parents disapproved; again showing that the concept of a rigid and widespread generational divide is erroneous. Tensions over music and television were relatively new in the 1960s, however, as television and pop music on records and radio were not widely available until the later 1950s, meaning that families were negotiating access to these for the first time. Earlier in the twentieth century young adults' leisure outside the home caused tension with parents, but in the 1960s leisure within the home also became contested.[141]

Tensions over young adults' leisure outside the home still occurred in the 1960s, however, and these were often gendered. Jephcott noted that 'late-night dancing as a *regular* feature… in the case of the younger girls… is a constant source of friction between parent and adolescent.'[142] This suggested that conflicts over leisure activities were aged as well as gendered – late-night dancing was less acceptable for girls in earlier youth, likely because they were seen as needing more protection from sex, alcohol and drugs. However, as chapter three demonstrated, dancing was popular among young women and so their desire to go dancing conflicted with their parents' apprehension. This was potentially a more common tension post-war as commercial dance venues became ever more popular and accessible even compared to the inter-war years. Sylvia thought she had had a sheltered upbringing and had to catch the last bus home in the evenings, but claimed that she 'rebelled' when she was 20 by going to an all-night party with a married man despite her mother's disapproval. Sylvia commented that 'I think we all do… rebel against authority, want to think there's something else', describing the 1960s as 'freer, everything was freer'.[143] This implied that she did not reject her parents' values about respectability but defied them because she wanted freedom. For young men, disagreements often focused around alcohol. Several interviewees recalled their parents disapproving of them being drunk. Andy was born in 1952 and lived in Elstree, his father was self-employed in the motor trade and his mother did not work. He remembered

[141] Davies, *Leisure, Gender and Poverty*, p. 89; Langhamer, *Women's Leisure*, p. 96.
[142] Jephcott, *A Time of One's Own*, p. 70. Emphasis in the original.
[143] FSMA, Interview 147.

his parents' disapproval 'when I came in sort of five o'clock in the morning legless.'[144] This disapproval again centred on parents' concern for respectability. Yet young men did not drink to deliberately annoy their parents. As noted in chapter three, they drank because it was fun and allowed them to exercise their identity as young adults and thus gain increased independence. Conflicts over leisure activities were, therefore, about negotiating independence.

Young women often came into conflict with parents over clothes and make-up, though young men rarely did making this another gendered tension.[145] Carter noted that mothers would veto clothes they disapproved of, especially if they still paid for them, but did so less often for sons.[146] Diana remembered that her mini-skirts and pale make-up annoyed her father: 'his chair was right opposite the bottom of the stairs and he looked at me, he said "you're not going out looking like that!" [laughs] "Oh yes I am it's the fashion!"'[147] Linda was prohibited from wearing make-up to dances 'so I had to do my make-up in the ladies loo… & try to rub it off before I was collected.'[148] These disagreements reveal different tastes between the generations and highlight how parents policed young women's appearance, sexuality and respectability. Some respondents even acknowledged that their parents were concerned for their reputations, possibly piqued by contemporary anxieties over promiscuity and permissiveness.[149] It was usually fathers who disapproved of young women's clothes and make-up, allowing them to assert a protective masculine role when they found it difficult to let daughters grow up.[150] Indeed, Diana referred to it as 'the typical father attitude', while her mother actually helped Diana make skirts shorter.[151] However, disagreements over clothes are not evidence of young women rejecting the older generation's values. In fact, as in Diana's case, some parents (often mothers) had no issues with their daughters' clothes. Instead, young

[144] FSMA, Interview 101.
[145] MOA, Spring 1993 Directive, B2197, C1786; Interview with Marilyn Shaw; FSMA, Interview 147.
[146] Carter, *Home, School and Work*, pp. 286–287.
[147] Interview with Diana Allen.
[148] MOA, Spring 1993 Directive, C1786.
[149] MOA, Spring 1993 Directive, C1786.
[150] Interview with Diana Allen; Carter, *Home, School and Work*, pp. 205–206.
[151] Interview with Diana Allen.

women's defiance was about asserting their identity as modern young women and exercising their increased economic and social independence by buying clothes and ignoring parents.

Tensions were not universal, however. Many felt that their parents had not been overly strict or given them anything to rebel over in the 1960s. Popular childcare advice in the 1940s and 1950s – particularly in the works of Bowlby, Winnicott and Benjamin Spock – encouraged parents to see children as individuals and argued for less strict routines.[152] This potentially made parents (particularly mothers at whom manuals were aimed) more accommodating and flexible into the 1960s. Carter found that most parents expected and accepted that children would want more independence once working, that parents often trusted their young adult children, and that both often shared understandings of what were reasonable activities and behaviours.[153] David simply laughed and said 'Oh no' when asked if his mother was strict (his father did not live with them), and that he 'didn't have to' rebel against her.[154] George commented that his parents had been lenient in his youth, pointing to 'the tremendous amount of freedom we were given'.[155] As noted above, some parents even liked modern fashions, music and television programmes. This reinforces Todd and Young's argument that parents and young adults enjoyed relatively relaxed and supportive relationships in the 1950s and 1960s, and Mitchell's argument that adults were more tolerant of youth culture than often supposed.[156] However, most who felt no need to rebel because of their parents' leniency were men, who came under less parental control by virtue of their gender. Young women more often conflicted with parents over curfews, activities and clothing because they were subject to greater restrictions.

Deference to and acceptance of parental authority also prevented generational conflict in the 1960s by making it unthinkable to rebel against or reject the values of the older

[152] Davis, *Modern Motherhood*, pp. 118–130.
[153] Carter, *Home, School and Work*, p. 320.
[154] Interview with David Canning.
[155] Interview with George Connolly.
[156] Todd and Young, 'Baby-Boomers to "Beanstalkers"'; Mitchell, 'Reassessing "the Generation Gap"'.

generation.[157] Indeed, most young adults obeyed their curfews and willingly told their parents where they were going and with whom, suggesting respect and deference towards parents. Jephcott and Carter argued that young adults wanted to be on good terms with their parents, disliked being seen as trouble, were strongly influenced by family, and often agreed with their parents' views.[158] Several interviewees commented that they had been brought up with discipline and respect, which prevented them from questioning their parents. Joan drew on popular images of 1960s youth when she commented that, 'teenagers are rebellious', but added that 'your parents or your mother had a stronger pull on you than your friends… that was where the discipline [was].'[159] Joan implied that parental discipline curbed young adults' natural desire to rebel. Dotty, born in Barrow in 1950 to a factory worker father and a part-time shop assistant mother, noted that 'dad had an air of authority… you knew he meant what he said, and he made the rules and that was it really', while her husband Michael remembered that his 'father was always boss'.[160] Deference to parental authority was gendered, since it was most often exercised by women and towards fathers. This reinforces the fact that young women came under stricter parental control and that disciplinary roles often fell to fathers. Most young adults expected and accepted that their parents (especially fathers) had some control over them, making rebellion difficult or impossible. Consequently, disagreements were confined to smaller tensions over clothes, curfews and leisure activities.

The lived experiences and memories of young adults show little evidence of widespread or intractable generational conflict in the 1960s. Young adults generally had good relationships with parents, though these were gendered and though a small number had poorer relationships due to individualised difficulties. Some tensions did exist between young adults and parents as the boundaries of young adults' increasing independence and parents' diminishing power were negotiated. These tensions were also historically specific, influenced by a landscape of relative affluence, shifting gender roles and identities, and changing socio-

[157] Davis, *Youth and the Condition of Britain*, p. 216; Gillis, *Youth and History*, pp. 205–206; Abrams, 'Mothers and Daughters', p. 72; Collins, 'The Permissive Society', p. 24.
[158] Jephcott, *A Time of One's Own*, pp. 87–88, 90, 105; Carter, *Home, School and Work*, p. 321.
[159] Interview with Joan Canning.
[160] SFL, Interviews with Mrs P5B, Mr P5B.

economic opportunities in the 1960s. Jephcott concluded that young adults felt that adults did not always acknowledge their desire for independence but that young adults 'gave the impression that they wanted to be on good terms with older people despite mutual moanings.'[161] Young adults did not, therefore, reject the values and lifestyles of the older generation, but they occasionally conflicted with them over the pace at which they gained freedom and independence.

SIBLINGS

Very little discussion of post-war sibling relationships features in either contemporary surveys or subsequent histories. Contemporary and subsequent concerns over 'family' in the post-war period and later twentieth century have instead focused on parent-child relationships. Declining family sizes after the Second World War perhaps heightened this and modern ideas about individuality and self-expression perhaps reduced the importance, role and visibility of siblings. Few interviewees talked in depth about siblings due to the limited questions asked in archived projects. In my own interviews, I asked specifically about siblings, but it was a topic on which people had less to talk about in the context of their youth, compared to leisure and work, suggesting that they did not consider siblings central to their youthful experiences. Moreover, when people did talk about siblings, they tended to focus on childhood rather than youth, suggesting that the sibling relationship was more central to the earlier life stage. However, siblings were a regular feature of youth for most young adults in the 1960s and what personal testimonies do show is that their relationships were highly variable.

Some interviewees recalled close, friendly relationships with their sibling(s) in the 1960s, often because they shared interests and activities. Indeed, Peel, Reed and Walter argue that as friendship took on greater importance in the late twentieth century, other relationships – such as between siblings – could also be based on friendship.[162] Moreover, as family sizes

[161] Jephcott, *A Time of One's Own*, p. 87.
[162] Peel, Reed, and Walter, 'The Importance of Friends', p. 318.

declined in the post-war period,[163] young adults tended to have fewer siblings who were more similar in age than predecessors, which potentially facilitated shared interests and activities and allowed more time to be spent in the company of particular siblings. Some siblings went shopping or on holiday together as well as sharing informal activities such as meeting friends or hanging out. Ken, born in Brighton in 1950 to a working-class family, recalled that 'Whenever I was doing anything I used to do it with my sister', though he attributed this to the fact that he had relatively few friends.[164] Interestingly, however, Ken's sister was his friend since they spent so much leisure time together. Joe and Marilyn swapped records and discussed current music with siblings, while Gene joined the Young Socialists, played guitar and visited restaurants and the pub with his brother.[165] Again, Gene's brother took on a friend role since they shared leisure time and interests, despite the fact that Gene characterised him as 'brother' rather than 'friend'. Siblings could, therefore, be central to youth leisure where they shared interests and activities with a young adult, even taking on a friendship-like role.

Siblings could also be important to young adults where they shared a strong emotional connection. April recalled the death of her 15-year-old brother when she was 18 in 1961: 'Oh, it was terrible. It was like everything stops, you know?'[166] She commented that she had got on best with this brother, though it is possible that her grief affected how she portrayed their relationship. When asked how she got on with her sister who was ten years older, Kathy recalled that 'I suppose I sort of adored her… I was always quite fond of her', and that she regularly visited her once her sister had married.[167] Elaine described her relationship with her brother as 'more like twins than brother and sister… we're very close', suggesting that their closeness contained a special quality only available to certain kinds of siblings and commonly stereotyped as especially intimate.[168] Some young adults therefore had a close emotional connection to their siblings. This was different to the closeness enjoyed

[163] Anderson, 'The Emergence of the Modern Life Cycle', p. 73.
[164] FSMA, Interview 063.
[165] Interview with Marilyn Shaw; Interview with Joe Knight; SFL, Interview with Mr Y1P.
[166] FSMA, Interview 162.
[167] FSMA, Interview 128.
[168] FSMA, Interview 012.

with friends, however, since relationships with siblings contained an intangible 'family' element, as Elaine implied. Nevertheless, these testimonies suggest that sibling relationships could be based on love as well as friendship. This reinforces recent arguments that love became an important part of friendship and family post-war.[169] Certainly, post-war trends towards smaller families among the working and lower middle class and decreasing child mortality under the welfare state[170] likely facilitated closer, lasting emotional connections between siblings.

In contrast, some young adults were not close to their sibling(s) in the 1960s, though few hated each other. The reasons for a lack of close relationship were often the opposite of reasons for a close relationship: a lack of shared interests and a weaker emotional bond. Eric was not close to his brother because 'he was [five years] older than me and we didn't play because he had different interests', suggesting that divergent interests and a consequent lack of closeness could begin in early childhood and continue into youth.[171] Joyce recalled of her three-year younger sister that, 'we never had a lot to do with each other. I suppose it was because we were both in our separate rooms, so our lives were fairly separate, though we lived in the same house. She was totally different to me. I suppose we were a couple of opposites really.'[172] Siblings often were not close in the 1960s if they did not share interests and activities. Joyce's memory also suggests that the changing material and economic conditions of the working and lower middle classes affected sibling relationships. As more children gained access to their own bedroom post-war, through moving to larger council houses, they shared less space and time with siblings, which potentially fostered individual interests and weakened sibling bonds. The post-war shift to the importance of the self under modernity[173] potentially also encouraged individual interests and pursuits among young adults over spending time with siblings. This perhaps suggests that rather than the post-war working

[169] Peel, Reed, and Walter, 'The Importance of Friends', p. 318; Langhamer, 'The Meanings of Home'.
[170] Anderson, 'The Emergence of the Modern Life Cycle'.
[171] FSMA, Interview 049.
[172] FSMA, Interview 060.
[173] Hughes, *Young Lives on the Left*, p. 4; Becky Conekin, Frank Mort, and Chris Waters, 'Introduction', in Becky Conekin, Frank Mort, and Chris Waters (eds), *Moments of Modernity: Reconstructing Britain 1945-1964*, (London, 1999), p. 10.

classes becoming private at the expense of community interaction, the changing housing situation of many families actually led some to become withdrawn even from their own family members once they gained access to private spaces within the home.

Others were not close to their siblings due to an uneasy or loose emotional bond. Often this centred on jealousy or rivalry. Donna, for example, had two sisters and did not get on with the youngest because 'my younger sister was the baby and she was thoroughly spoilt, and I think I felt pushed out, we used to fight terribly'.[174] Joan did not get on with her older sister because of family rivalry that was too painful for her to discuss and because she felt her mother favoured her sister.[175] Where young adults felt they were treated differently to their siblings this could tarnish their relationship. Others were less close because they lacked contact with siblings, such as Bobby whose sister lived with his grandparents as a child due to the family's financial situation.[176] This implies that the sibling relationship was often close because of proximity and shared space and time, not simply due to biology. Others still fell out with siblings, such as Eric, who fell out with his step-sister in his teens though he did not explain why.[177] It may have been because of, or complicated by, Eric's difficult relationship with his step-mother and, indeed, fractious or less close relationships may have been more likely in blended families though my material lacks detail to explore this. Overall, not all siblings were close in the 1960s, usually due to rivalry, a lack of affection or minimal shared interests. This challenges arguments that the family and home *necessarily* witnessed increasingly strong emotional bonds during the post-war period,[178] since not all families were close. It also shows a historical consistency in sibling relationships, since, as Leonore Davidoff shows, jealousy and rivalry was common among siblings in the long nineteenth

[174] FSMA, Interview 013.
[175] Interview with Joan Canning.
[176] FSMA, Interview, 133.
[177] FSMA, Interview 049.
[178] Langhamer, 'The Meanings of Home'.

century.[179] Ultimately, a variety of socio-economic and cultural factors affected sibling relationships in post-war England; some produced closer bonds while others did not.

The age gap between siblings was also significant in shaping their relationship. Indeed, position in the family has long affected sibling relationships.[180] As noted above, Kathy adored her sister who was 10 years older, commenting that 'as a younger sister, I thought she was quite, you know…', implying that they got on well because Kathy idolised her sister whose older age made her influential.[181] Winston, whose brother was eight years younger, commented that 'I certainly don't feel I have got a brother basically, I don't feel any close ties to my brother… my younger brother and I would seem like two totally different people because of the age difference.'[182] A female Mass Observer born in 1947 echoed this. Her brothers were over a decade older and 'so we never shared a childhood at all… didn't share any of my experiences at all… as far as I was concerned they dwelt on another planet'.[183] Young adults often felt that a big age gap meant they had little in common with siblings and prevented them from being close. Yet, as Kathy's relationship with her sister showed, this was not the case for everyone. Being close in age could result in a closer sibling relationship, though it was not a guarantee of closeness if siblings did not share interests or an emotional bond. What is interesting, however, is that many interviewees actively pointed to the age gap as important, suggesting that it had a significant impact on how they viewed and interacted with their siblings.

Regardless of closeness, many interviewees commented that fighting among siblings was typical. Willmott noted evidence of conflict between siblings, which often manifested as a mix of quarrelling and loyalty.[184] When asked how she got on with her brother and sister, April replied, 'Oh, all right, I think, we had fights, you know, like all brothers and sisters

[179] Leonore Davidoff, *Thicker than Water: Siblings and their Relations 1780-1920*, (Oxford, 2012), p. 115.
[180] Davidoff, *Thicker than Water*, p. 110.
[181] FSMA, Interview 128.
[182] SFL, Interview with Mr L5B.
[183] MOA, Spring 1993 Directive, C1832.
[184] Willmott, *Adolescent Boys of East London*, pp. 57–58.

do.'[185] Brian thought 'we were just like any normal brothers really. We just used to fight and fall out over who's was what', while John responded to the same question about his sisters by saying that 'Oh I got on the same as anybody else. Like – rowing with each other.'[186] These fights were commonplace but often over minor things, like whom an item belonged to or what was on the television. These sibling arguments also have a long-standing history; Davidoff, for example, documented them happening among children in the long nineteenth century.[187] Arguments were simply the product of two individuals trying to assert their power, independence and interests, and did not necessarily ruin the sibling relationship. Indeed, several interviewees noted that while they argued with siblings in childhood and early youth, their relationships were closer later on when, as Steve put it, 'everybody's brain starts working at the same level'.[188] This suggests that sibling relationships were not static but changed and developed with age and that quarrels were a normal part of siblinghood.

Some young adults looked after younger siblings in the 1960s, giving them a more parental role and relationship, though many never had to care for siblings.[189] Both young men and young women might care for younger siblings, suggesting that, compared to 'little mother' stereotypes of elder sisters in the early twentieth century, changing economics and gender and parenting roles made it more acceptable for young men to assume this responsibility post-war. No young women in this sample were kept at home to look after siblings as many were in the early twentieth century,[190] partly because it was more normal for young women to work post-war and because smaller family sizes meant few had infant and teenage children simultaneously. Indeed, those who looked after siblings often had a relatively large age gap and only babysat while a parent was at work, particularly since more

[185] FSMA, Inteview 162.
[186] SFL, Interview with Mr G6P; FSMA, Interview 011.
[187] Davidoff, *Thicker than Water*, p. 110.
[188] SFL, Interview with Mr F2L.
[189] Anderson, 'The Emergence of the Modern Life Cycle', p. 81; Angela Davis, '"Oh no, nothing, we didn't learn anything": Sex Education and the Preparation of Girls for Motherhood c. 1930-1960', *History of Education*, 37.5 (2008), p. 666.
[190] Davin, *Growing Up Poor*, pp. 85–89, 97; Sally Alexander, *Becoming a Woman and Other Essays in 19th and 20th Century Feminist History*, (London, 1994), p. 209; Elizabeth Roberts, 'Working Class Families and the Domestic Economy 1900-1970', in Andrew Gritt (ed.), *Family History in Lancashire: Issues and Approaches*, (Newcastle, 2009), p. 86.

mothers worked outside the home post-war. Jack and David both looked after younger brothers in the evenings while their mothers worked, though neither was expected to do more than simply watch their sibling.[191] Joan helped look after her younger sister by cleaning up vomit and changing nappies, while Sharon helped care for her brother in a similarly involved way because he was often ill.[192] This suggests that many young adults (particularly young men) were not expected to assume a fully parental role, but that some did if circumstances required it and possibly because they were young women. That some young adults assumed a proto-parental role demonstrates that there were multiple facets to the sibling relationship. However, this 1960s semi-parental role was different to that performed in the earlier twentieth century. Sibling relationships therefore changed over the twentieth-century for the working and lower middle classes from often containing proto-parental roles to being based predominantly on a peer relationship.

Where two siblings fell within the cohort of young adults studied in this thesis, they can provide insight into change over the 1960s. Only two interviewees talked in detail about siblings who were also 1960s young adults and no sibling pairs were interviewed, so this can only be explored to a limited extent. Interestingly, both were women and compared their experiences to a sister's. This implies that changes were most noticeable or most prevalent for young women over the decade, though it does not mean there were no changes for young men. When discussing sex in her youth, Donna, born in 1942, mentioned her sister who was ten years younger.

> It was a different generation. I mean, she believed in free sex, and the things that she was allowed to do, well, even when I was engaged I had to go and stay with my grandma when I went on holiday, I wasn't allowed to go on holiday with my boyfriend on my own… it was very different… if you were interviewing her you'd get a totally different picture.[193]

Ann, born in 1945, contrasted her experiences with her sister who was three years older and very 'prim and proper'. She also recalled that they had very different tastes in fashion, as Ann's sister once asked '"surely you're not going out like that with waspy belts and lipstick

[191] Interview with Jack Draper; Interview with David Canning.
[192] Interview with Joan Canning; FSMA, Interview 095.
[193] FSMA, Interview 013.

on?"'[194] These memories suggest that attitudes and behaviours surrounding sex loosened during the 1960s, at least for young women, as is explored further in chapter five. Consequently, older siblings might be considered 'prim' and younger ones 'free'. They also show that fashions altered over the period so quickly that siblings might not even comprehend why their sisters wore them.

Many elements of the sibling relationship in the 1960s had remained the same since at least the nineteenth century, particularly in terms of minor arguments and how position in the family and perceived favouritism affected relationships. However, much had also changed by the later post-war period due to shifting gender roles and socio-economic, cultural and emotional landscapes, smaller family sizes and better housing conditions. These shifts did not affect all sibling relationships equally in the 1960s, however, and young adults' experiences with siblings could involve a number of different roles and relationships. Young adults could take on a proto-parental role but most understood their siblings as equals, as friends rather than just as brothers or sisters, unlike earlier in the century. Many enjoyed good relationships due to shared interests and a close emotional bond; though where these things were lacking sibling relationships were less intimate. However, that relatively few interviewees talked about siblings in detail suggests that most did not and do not consider siblings central to their experiences and the meaning of youth.

THE MEANING OF PERSONAL RELATIONSHIPS

Though relationships with friends, parents and siblings functioned differently, all were important components of young adults' experiences and identities in the 1960s. The relationships young adults had shaped both everyday life and the meaning of youth. In particular, by associating more strongly with peers and by disagreeing with parents over relatively minor things such as curfews and clothes, young adults tested and advanced their independence, which allowed them to move closer to the adult status they desired. By strongly associating friends with leisure, young adults were able to understand their youth in

[194] FSMA, Interview 004.

the 1960s as a period of fun. Moreover, by moving away from family and by beginning to see friendship as more important, young adults also learned what it meant to be a young adult in the 1960s through the leisure they pursued together, the styles and practices they copied, and through the sense of belonging this afforded.

Indeed, during youth, friends often became young adults' most significant relationship. Most had a group of friends of similar age and with similar interests, though could easily discriminate between acquaintances, friends and best friends. Friends provided support as well as companions for leisure and so were central to daily life both physically and emotionally for young adults. Most young adults enjoyed good relationships with parents, though the exact nature of this relationship was gendered and individualised. Tensions between young adults and parents were not evidence of widespread generational conflict or of young adults rejecting traditional values. Instead, they were a product of the shift in power as young adults sought to gain independence. This relationship with parents was therefore central to the formation of young adults' identity and autonomy. Relationships with siblings were varied and individualised, their closeness depending on age, emotional bonds and how far they shared interests. Generally, interviewees spoke little about their siblings suggesting they did not consider them central to the experiences of youth. Nevertheless, siblings did play a role in the material and emotional worlds of young adults in the 1960s and further in-depth studies of this are needed.

Relationships with friends and family were historically contingent, shaped by the socio-economic and emotional landscapes of the 1960s. Tensions with parents, fights with siblings and spending leisure with friends have a long history for young adults, but some aspects of relationships with friends and family in the 1960s were new and changing. As increased affluence reduced material obligations to family, the meanings of love and friendship shifted and fused. Friendship therefore became important not only as a means to experience leisure, gain independence and develop identity, but also as a loving and supportive outlet to help weather the difficulties of youth. As new discourses about the self circulated, as new technologies and leisure activities developed, and as better housing and

smaller families became the norm interactions with parents and siblings took place in new contexts. Tensions with parents arose over television and pop music for the first time and desires for independence from parental control necessitated parents and children extricating themselves from popular child-rearing practices centred on parental devotion and protection. Separate bedrooms and having fewer siblings potentially altered relationships with siblings and fewer young adults were expected to take on 'little parent' roles. Young adults were, therefore, negotiating personal relationships not only during a rite of passage between childhood and adulthood, but also in a period of emotional and socio-economic change.

Examining young adults' relationships with friends and family in the 1960s offers insights into the broader shifting social and emotional landscapes of the post-war period. First, it challenges assumptions about the increasing privatism and decreasing sociability of the working classes in the post-war period. These arguments have previously been based on research into the lives of middle-aged parents. The experiences of young adults, however, show that sociability and leisure outside the home were particularly important for this generation in the 1960s. Moreover, their parents were not completely private and insular since many actively welcomed their young adult children's friends into the home. Second, this chapter has suggested that the post-war emotional revolution identified by Langhamer was not confined only to romantic love.[195] Interactions with friends and siblings took on new emotional tones in light of rising affluence, fusing friendship and love into one relationship. Young adult's relationships with friends and family in the 1960s therefore tell us not only about the social, emotional and family experiences and meanings of youth, but also offer new ways to think about the histories of post-war England more broadly.

[195] Langhamer, *The English in Love*.

CHAPTER FIVE

COURTSHIP

The post-war period and the 1960s have often been understood as a golden age of courtship and marriage where people increasingly married young, companionate marriage was the ideal partnership, and courtship was central to the experience of youth.[1] Historians have also debated how far the 1960s was a permissive decade characterised by 'sexual revolution'. Most now accept that there was no 1960s revolution since there is little evidence of linear change or widespread promiscuity or permissiveness. Conventional attitudes maintained traction even among young people, the liberalisation of legislation is itself circumspect and cannot be used as evidence of bottom-up change, and discourses of permissiveness were top-down mythical narratives rather than responses to real shifts in behaviour or attitude.[2]

The 1960s was a period of change in courtship and sex, but newer practices and ideals coexisted alongside older, more conservative models and behaviours. This was particularly evident among young people. No single moral code or experience existed and there was no simple linear progression to a more permissive culture or society.[3] However, courtship and sex were central to young adults' lives in the 1960s because they shaped the everyday lived experiences, meanings and identities of youth. This is explored here by analysing the language of courtship, the experiences of courtship and the experiences of sex. Finally, the chapter demonstrates that courtship was important to the meaning of youth because it offered status and identity as well as making youth an important preparatory stage before adulthood and marriage. Overall, this chapter shows that young adults had diverse

[1] Claire Langhamer, 'Love and Courtship in Mid-Twentieth-Century England', *The Historical Journal*, 50.1 (2007), pp. 177–179.
[2] Sam Brewitt-Taylor, 'Christianity and the Invention of the Sexual Revolution in Britain 1963-1967', *The Historical Journal*, (2016), doi: 10.1017/s0018246X160011X; Collins, 'The Permissive Society', p. 23; Mark Donnelly, *Sixties Britain*, p. 116; Hall, *Sex, Gender and Social Change*, p. 173; Mort, 'The Permissive Society Revisited', pp. 269–298; Weeks, *Sex, Politics and Society*, p. 253.
[3] Schofield, *The Sexual Behaviour of Young People*, p. 199; Hall, *Sex, Gender and Social Change*, p. 4; Simon Szreter and Kate Fisher, *Sex Before the Sexual Revolution: Intimate Life in England 1918-1963*, (Cambridge, 2010), pp. 48–50.

experiences of sex and courtship that were conditioned by age and gender, but also that significant patterns and rituals were common to many. Only heterosexual sex and courtship are examined here given the constraints of space and a lack of evidence on homosexual relationships.

Of course, getting people to discuss sex frankly is notoriously difficult, even aside from the additional complications of memory and composure.[4] It may be, therefore, that some elements of young adults' courtship and sex in the 1960s are unknowable or indecipherable. Several contemporary social surveys examined courtship and sex among young adults in the 1960s, though they predominantly considered courtship *or* sex rather than both.[5] This enabled anxieties and exaggerations about permissiveness to flourish as young adults' sexual practices became divorced from the context of their courtships and meant that some changes in courtship practices were missed because they did not account for changing sexual behaviour and *vice versa*. This arbitrary division precluded a holistic understanding of young adults' experiences since sex and courtship were experienced together and informed each other. This chapter therefore uses both types of contemporary survey alongside personal testimonies to show that courtship and sex were central to the experience and meaning of youth in 1960s England. Those experiences and meanings were deeply rooted in the socio-cultural context of the period and provide a convincing dismissal of myths of permissiveness and 'sexual revolution'.

THE LANGUAGE OF COURTSHIP

As Langhamer has shown, the language of courtship was contested in the mid-twentieth century, being contingent on age, location, class and gender and often influenced by cinematic ideals.[6] The Summer 2001 MOA directive asked respondents 'what does the word

[4] Schofield, *The Sexual Behaviour of Young People*, p. 4.
[5] For examples of this arbitrary divide see Carter, *Education, Employment and Leisure*; Carter, *Home, School and Work*; Willmott, *Adolescent Boys of East London*; Jephcott, *A Time of One's Own*; Schofield, *The Sexual Behaviour of Young People*; Schofield, *The Sexual Behaviour of Young Adults*; Gorer, *Sex and Marriage*; British Medical Association, *Venereal Disease and Young People*.
[6] Langhamer, 'Love and Courtship', pp. 179–181.

courtship mean to you?', and their responses reveal a particular 1960s terminology and understanding of courtship.[7] Most responses came from women and MOA respondents are often middle class, which may mean their terminology is not nationally representative. The number who used such language and that many were working class does suggest that it had broad appeal and usage, however. Many respondents rejected the term 'dating', citing it as American.[8] In particular, respondents often commented that 'courtship' was an old fashioned term that they did not use.[9] This implied that courtship in the 1960s was different to older practices; though there was variation in when they thought these older forms had existed with some pointing to only the 1950s while others saw 'courtship' as something their grandparents experienced.[10] This suggests that changes in the languages and practices of courtship did not shift evenly in England.

Many associated 'courtship' with a more formal and innocent, even non-sexual, relationship where a young man took a young woman out with a view to marrying her. As one woman born in 1949 put it, 'It seems to suggest something rather staid and formal… It suggests a man coming visiting and a shy but willing lady… who walk out together regularly until marriage is proposed.'[11] That many assumed 'courtship' involved an active man and a passive woman and that they thought it an out-dated term, suggests that the kinds of courtship they experienced as young adults in the 1960s featured more active roles for young women. A lack of men's voices in this directive makes this difficult to confirm, however. The rejection of the term 'courtship' and its association with the build-up to marriage also suggests that 1960s courtship was less formal and serious and did not inevitably lead to matrimony. It implied instead that boyfriends and girlfriends in the 1960s could be enjoyed as an end in themselves and not only as future husbands and wives.

[7] MOA, Summer 2001 Directive.
[8] MOA, Summer 2001 Directive, A1706.
[9] MOA, Summer 2001 Directive, B2728, C2053, D826, E2836, G2089, G2883, H1705, K798, P1796, S2207, T1843, W1813.
[10] MOA, Summer 2001 Directive, B2728, E743.
[11] MOA, Summer 2001 Directive, T1843.

Instead, respondents used three terms to describe three distinct stages of 1960s courtship: 'going out', 'going steady' and engagement.[12] As Alice said, 'In my day you "went out" with boys and were "going steady" if the relationship continued for a long time and then you got engaged.'[13] In the 1960s, therefore, 'courtship' was not one homogenous practice or experience but a process, though that process was not always linear. The terminology young adults used in the 1960s and their distinction between types of courtship implies that their courtship took on a new flavour, new gender roles and new purposes compared to the experiences of previous generations or even older siblings. It was no longer only a preparation for marriage, it did not need to be so 'proper', and began to offer a more active role for women. The next section examines the experiences of 'going out', 'going steady' and engagement in turn.

For ease, this chapter still uses the term 'courtship' to refer to pre-marital heterosexual relationships as a whole while remaining aware that it comprised different stages – 'going out', 'going steady' and engagement – because it provides a useful umbrella term for related but distinct experiences and institutions. Additionally, the term 'courtship' is one familiar to historians of both youth and the twentieth century so using it allows comparison and continuity with other periods, locations and age groups.

THE EXPERIENCES OF COURTSHIP

In the 1960s the vast majority of young adults courted and courtship was closely linked to common leisure activities, as it had been throughout the twentieth century.[14] Young adults' experiences of courtship – both emotional and material – shifted according to age, gender, the nature of a relationship and over time. Most relationships became more serious and committed with age and involved distinct gender roles, though these were being recast to a certain extent in the 1960s due to the economic climate and slowly evolving social mores. Love could be experienced in multiple relationships but was strongly associated with

[12] MOA, Summer 2001 Directive, A1706, E2836, G2089, W1813.
[13] MOA, Summer 2001 Directive, W1813.
[14] Todd, *Young Women, Work and Family*, p. 217.

marriage at a time when shifting emotional discourses prioritised love within heterosexual, companionate marriages.[15]

'Going out' meant casually seeing a boyfriend or girlfriend, often only for a short while and with little commitment, though 'going out' could progress to the more serious 'going steady'. In the 1960s, courtship usually began between 12 and 16 when young adults would start 'going out' with members of the opposite sex in couples rather than primarily associating with the same sex or only encountering the opposite sex in groups.[16] This was facilitated by the fact that most young adults worked and had disposable income by their mid-teens. Schofield noted, however, that young women often began 'going out' earlier than young men, and often had older boyfriends.[17] The experience, timetable and trajectory of courtship were therefore gendered. As discussed below, this was because in the 1960s courtship was often seen as more important for young women than young men since marriage remained many women's ultimate career.

In earlier youth young adults would often have several casual boyfriends or girlfriends consecutively or sometimes simultaneously. Schofield found that only 18 per cent of his respondents had had no other partner before their spouse, though 53 per cent had fewer than three previous partners and only 19 per cent had had over five.[18] Most young adults therefore 'tested the field' to some extent before marriage, and this was often through several 'going out' relationships before settling on a 'steady'. As Jephcott found, these early relationships were about having fun rather than about serious romance or expectations of marriage, while Willmott also noted that early relationships with the opposite sex tended to be short and have little impact on young men's daily lives.[19] As George put it: 'we would go out for a while and then not go out'.[20] Marilyn remembered having a 'couple of dates' with several young men from work before she had a more 'lengthy' exclusive relationship that

[15] Langhamer, *The English in Love*.
[16] Schofield, *The Sexual Behaviour of Young People*, p. 54; Carter, *Education, Employment and Leisure*, p. 164; Willmott, *Adolescent Boys of East London*, p. 40.
[17] Schofield, *The Sexual Behaviour of Young People*, p. 25.
[18] Schofield, *The Sexual Behaviour of Young Adults*, p. 187.
[19] Jephcott, *A Time of One's Own*, p. 86; Willmott, *Adolescent Boys of East London*, p. 43.
[20] Interview with George Connolly.

lasted a year, making the distinction between 'dates' and a 'proper boyfriend'.[21] Courtship could therefore involve relatively casual and flexible relationships entered into for fun rather than the future, indicating a shift from older forms of courtship where marriage was the goal.

Physical attraction was important in choosing a partner to 'go out' with. Alan was asked if he had in mind, as a young man, 'any particular kind of woman that you would fancy' and simply replied, 'well, obviously, good-looking.'[22] Similarly, one female Mass Observer, born in 1955, wrote that 'My perfect partner was someone… attractive but not necessarily conventionally good looking'.[23] Harold wryly commented that, as a young man, 'girls always liked me because I was fair haired and blue eyed'.[24] Several interviewees even suggested that attraction had a sensory effect. A female MOA respondent, born in 1945, remembered that 'I would have butterflies in my tummy' while she waited for her boyfriend to arrive.[25] Another, born in 1946, recalled the 'thrilling stab of luscious pain' she felt over first kisses and holding hands.[26] Attraction was a central and often exciting part of young adults' courtship in the 1960s because it determined what sort of partner you hoped to find and shaped how a young adult felt both emotionally and physically.

Young adults usually first met boyfriends and girlfriends through their leisure activities, meaning that courtship was closely linked to leisure. Often they would meet at dances, parties or youth clubs, and through mutual friends.[27] Some were set up on blind dates, suggesting that friends could play an instrumental role in courtship.[28] A few met through work, facilitated by the decreasing gender segregation of post-war workplaces.[29] Gorer found that working-class young adults tended to meet though work or leisure whereas middle-class young adults often met through school or college.[30] This reflects the fact that middle-class

[21] Interview with Marilyn Shaw.
[22] FSMA, Interview 152.
[23] MOA, Summer 2001 Directive, B2728.
[24] Interview with Harold Spencer.
[25] MOA, Summer 2001 Directive, C2579.
[26] MOA, Summer 2001 Directive, A1706.
[27] FSMA, Interviews 040, 043, 066, 093, 106, 137, 152; Interview with George Connolly.
[28] MOA, Summer 2001 Directive, H1745.
[29] FSMA, Interview 104.
[30] Gorer, *Sex and Marriage*, p. 212.

young adults were likely to remain in education longer. Gorer's finding also implies, therefore, that young adults tended to 'go out' with members of their own class.

Young men were generally expected to ask young women out, rather than young women taking the initiative. I asked Joan if girls ever asked boys to dance and she replied, 'No! Absolutely not!...you never ask a boy to dance', while Janet simply stated, 'No. We never did' to the same question.[31] This suggests some continuity with older forms of courtship, which assigned a more passive role to young women – though young women retained some agency as they could refuse an offer. Some women indicated this was beginning to change in the 1960s, however. Valerie was also asked whether she ever asked young men to dance and replied, 'I wouldn't do that. No, I was quite shy in them days', suggesting that she could have asked had she been more confident.[32] Of course, however, the confidence and entitlement required to ask someone to dance are themselves gendered. Elaine commented that she 'had to do all the running' after the young man who became her husband, suggesting that some young women did more actively pursue courtship.[33] Some of the gendered rituals surrounding courtship were therefore beginning to crumble in the 1960s as women assumed greater agency.

Paying for dates in the 'going out' stages of courtship was also often gendered. Young men often paid for girlfriends, though this was beginning to shift in the 1960s. Indeed, as Langhamer has noted, young women in mid-twentieth-century England were increasingly willing to pay as they gained greater financial independence and because it offered a way to control male behaviour.[34] While some young men continued to pay for courtship throughout the 1960s and into the early 1970s this practice was often concentrated earlier in the 1960s and within the first few dates. Carter's 1959 study found that many young men paid while one female MOA respondent, born in 1945, remembered that in the early 1960s 'I never used to

[31] Interview with Joan Canning; FSMA, Interview 034.
[32] FSMA, Interview 135.
[33] FSMA, Interview 012.
[34] Langhamer, 'Love and Courtship', p. 188.

pay for anything' because her boyfriend insisted.[35] However, women born in the later 1940s and 1950s, who began courting in the mid- to late 1960s, more often recalled paying for courtship or at least offering to. One MOA respondent, born in 1952, shared costs with her boyfriend by paying for alternate things, for example.[36] Some of the older gendered practices of courtship were therefore shifting in the 1960s as young women exercised their augmented social and economic independence.

The activities couples did while 'going out' were closely linked to the leisure activities young adults pursued outside courtship. Indeed, Langhamer's argument that leisure venues were central to courtship in mid-twentieth-century England holds true into the 1960s.[37] The cinema was particularly popular, as noted in chapter three, as it provided privacy.[38] Going to pubs, coffee bars, dances and parties was also popular.[39] Commercial venues featured much more frequently in 1960s courtship than in the interwar period and earlier when informal street-based monkey parades had been the most common courtship ritual.[40] Rising affluence and the increased availability of commercial leisure meant that monkey parades began to decline from the 1940s and had all but vanished by the 1960s – no social surveys or interviewees consulted here mentioned them.[41] Not all courtship activities were based on commercial leisure, however. Many couples, particularly if short on spending money, might simply go for walks or listen to records at home.[42]

Couples that were 'going steady' also did these activities together, meaning that some aspects were common across multiple stages of courtship in the 1960s. Couples often transitioned from 'going out' to 'going steady' in their middle or late teens and this indicated that a relationship had both longevity and exclusivity.[43] While this transition often maintained

[35] Carter, *Home, School and Work*, p. 167; MOA, Summer 2001 Directive, C2579.
[36] MOA, Summer 2001 Directive, G2089.
[37] Langhamer, 'Love and Courtship', pp. 182–183.
[38] Schofield, *The Sexual Behaviour of Young People*, p. 54; Carter, *Home, School and Work*, p. 298; Jephcott, *A Time of One's Own*, p. 69; FSMA, Interviews 043, 045, 128, 133.
[39] FSMA, Interviews 043, 045, 128, 122; Interview with George Connolly.
[40] Langhamer, 'Love and Courtship', p. 183; Davies, *Leisure, Gender and Poverty*, p. 83.
[41] Langhamer, *Women's Leisure*, p. 119; Fowler, *The First Teenagers*, pp. 107–108.
[42] Interview with George Connolly.
[43] Willmott, *Adolescent Boys of East London*, p. 45; Schofield, *The Sexual Behaviour of Young People*, p. 74.

the activities a couple pursued, it did signal significant changes in other aspects of their relationship.

First, young women particularly began to contribute financially once 'going steady'. As a female MOA respondent, born in 1950, commented: 'During the initial stages of a relationship the male was still expected to pay, but once established as a couple both partners contributed'.[44] This suggests that the initial phases of 'going out' were similar to older forms of courtship financed by young men, but that young women helped finance more serious 'steady' relationships, possibly because they felt more invested and secure in them. This shift over time and the course of a relationship to greater agency and financial contribution by young women is complex. It was perhaps still necessary for young men to 'win' young women's affection by paying earlier in the decade and in fledgling relationships, women's agency was perhaps more acceptable in more serious relationships and, as the decade progressed, women enjoyed increasing financial independence in a relatively affluent society. Multiple factors therefore influenced the gendered economics of courtship.

Second, the emotions experienced by young adults often evolved in 'steady' relationships. Attraction was no longer based only on aesthetics. Langhamer argues that the increasing importance of love after the Second World War was about desirable personal qualities as well as passion and physical attraction.[45] Indeed, many young adults were attracted to and became 'steady' with boyfriends and girlfriends because of their personalities. The Mass Observer who wanted an attractive boyfriend also wanted him to be 'confident, funny… someone with similar beliefs to mine, someone who made me laugh.'[46] Similarly, another female MOA respondent, born in 1950, wanted a partner 'who was fantastic looking' and had 'a strong sense of humour who was very intelligent and shared my interests and values.'[47] Gorer also found that young adults emphasised intelligence and tolerance alongside

[44] MOA, Summer 2001 Directive, G2883.
[45] Langhamer, *The English in Love*, pp. 24–30.
[46] MOA, Summer 2001 Directive, B2728.
[47] MOA, Summer 2001 Directive, E2836.

attractiveness as important qualities in a future spouse.[48] This suggests that 'steady' relationships were often expected to progress to marriage, so young adults only went 'steady' with partners who had desirable personalities as well as looks. This importance of a partner's personality reflects the increasing emphasis in the post-war period on companionate marriage, which idealised heterosexual relationships based on compatibility.[49]

'Steady' relationships were often the first in which young adults experienced romantic love. This reinforces Langhamer's argument that love became increasingly important during the mid-twentieth century since many young adults experienced it even before marriage.[50] However, most associated love only with serious relationships. Indeed, Gorer and Willmott both found that love was more likely to be experienced with increasing age.[51] Gorer found that 43 per cent of 16-20 year olds and 79 per cent of 21-24 year olds said they had been in love.[52] While young adults could experience love early in their youth it was more likely that they would do so in their later teens and early twenties when in more serious 'steady' relationships, reinforcing the connection between love and marriage since 'steadies' were more likely to become spouses, as discussed below.

The experience of love in 'steady' relationships was subjective, however. Different people understood and experienced love in different ways, demonstrating that cultural discourses are not interpreted or felt uniformly. For example, one female MOA respondent, born in 1946, felt that love necessarily involved a 'sexual element', while George emphasised 'the closeness and the bonding and sharing' even though he acknowledged that 'obviously there was a sexual element' too.[53] Others were unable to pin down a definition of love. Bert, who was born to a working-class single mother in London in 1949, was asked if he had loved the girlfriend he had as a young man. Bert replied, 'Yeah, I suppose I must have done to get

[48] Gorer, *Sex and Marriage*, p. 220.
[49] Langhamer, 'Love and Courtship', pp. 178–179.
[50] Langhamer, *The English in Love*.
[51] Gorer, *Sex and Marriage*, p. 270; Willmott, *Adolescent Boys of East London*, pp. 50–52.
[52] Gorer, *Sex and Marriage*, p. 270.
[53] MOA, Summer 2001 Directive, A1706; Interview with George Connolly.

engaged.'[54] This implied that Bert was unsure what love was or what it felt like – though this may be a product of forgetting since he was interviewed 20 years later – and that he therefore assumed he must have felt love since his relationship progressed from 'steady' to engaged. This implied Bert strongly associated love with marriage. It is also possible that some interviewees simply lacked the language to describe love, hence why many used sensory descriptions and analogies to approximate their feelings, as noted above. Despite this, young adults could feel love strongly. Harold recalled being dumped by one girlfriend: 'it was heartbreaking because I'd never loved anybody else even a little bit'.[55] Harold's wistful tone and that he recited a heartfelt poem strongly suggested that he had felt both love and heartbreak very deeply as a young man.

Third, 'steady' relationships differed from the more casual 'going out' because, as Jephcott noted, 'going steady' could begin to become more future-oriented, though 'steadies' did not always become spouses.[56] Generally people had only one or two 'steadies', and many interviewees asserted that their first serious partner had been their future spouse, suggesting that many 'steadies' did become husbands and wives.[57] Of course, this may be a product of memory and composure to justify and legitimise their marriage, but their definitions are revealing of how 1960s young adults understood the stages of courtship. While 1960s courtship offered new, more informal experiences these were confined to earlier youth and the association of a 'serious' or 'steady' relationship with (future) marriage suggests that older models of heterosexual relationships retained some currency. George explained that in his earlier youth a serious relationship was a monogamous one, but once into his later teens seriousness involved 'an element of thinking ahead', suggesting that seriousness depended on age as well as the status of the relationship itself.[58] Seriousness could mean exclusivity but it could also mean thinking ahead to engagement and marriage. In this way, 'going steady' was

[54] FSMA, Interview 045.
[55] Interview with Harold Spencer.
[56] Jephcott, *A Time of One's Own*, p. 86.
[57] FSMA, Interviews 049, 093, 125, 152.
[58] Interview with George Connolly.

a stage of courtship in its own right, but one that was also linked to later stages in the heterosexual career.

Getting engaged was the most serious commitment a couple could make in the 1960s, short of marriage. Many became engaged in their late teens or early twenties as the average age of marriage was decreasing in the 1960s. Between 1956 and 1970 it fell from 26 to 24.6 for men and 23.5 to 22.5 for women.[59] This was influenced by several factors acting together. Full employment, rising real wages and stronger welfare provision meant young adults were more affluent than predecessors and enjoyed economic security in the 1960s.[60] Rapid house building, of both council and private stock, also meant that working- and lower middle-class people had greater access to improved housing. Young women increasingly expected to work until childbirth rather than marriage in the 1960s, further boosting young couples' affluence.[61] This meant young adults could marry earlier because they could afford to set up home earlier, indeed they were more likely than ever to become owner occupiers.[62] Many interviewees recalled saving once engaged to buy a house and in 1966 alone 444,000 new mortgages were approved.[63] Moreover, it is likely that social and emotional shifts encouraged early marriage. As discussed in depth below, more young people were having sex but marriage remained the only way to safely avoid prevailing sexual taboos. This perhaps prompted some to marry early to indulge sexual desires, particularly since people were reaching physical maturity earlier.[64] The changing post-war emotional landscape also encouraged early marriage by prioritising love over pragmatic considerations,[65] meaning that some couples may have married without secure finances or compatible personalities but because they felt an emotional connection.

[59] Weeks, *Sex, Politics and Society*, p. 252.
[60] Pat Thane, 'Family Life and "Normality" in Postwar British Culture', in Richard Bessel and Dirk Schumann (eds), *Life After Death: Approaches to a Cultural and Social History of Europe During the 1940s and 1950s*, (Cambridge, 2003), pp. 200–203.
[61] Thane, 'Family Life', p. 210.
[62] Burnett, *Social History of Housing*, p. 282.
[63] Burnett, *Social History of Housing*, p. 282.
[64] Weeks, *Sex, Politics and Society*, p. 252.
[65] Langhamer, *The English in Love*.

Certainly, many young adults got engaged after knowing their partner for a relatively short time. Schofield found that only 55 per cent had known their spouse for more than two years prior to engagement.[66] Once engaged, young adults waited, on average, between six months and two years to marry to save a deposit for a house, demonstrating that the 1960s were relatively affluent and that cohabitation remained taboo.[67] Engagement also changed the activities couples pursued as many reduced commercial activities and instead spent time together at home to save money for a mortgage deposit.[68] Engagement tended to see both young men and young women contributing financially (though not always equally) as both saved money and paid for dates. As one female Mass Observer, born in 1950, commented, 'we always shared the expenses… both of us were earning good money and saving for our future, it seemed only fair', suggesting that young women sought equality and shared responsibility in their relationships and futures and that their improved earning potential in the 1960s facilitated this.[69]

Some, usually young women, were prevented by their parents from marrying until they reached the age of majority at 21, showing that young adults, particularly young women, still experienced restricted independence in youth.[70] Not all engagements ended in marriage, however, and a small number were broken off. Tom, born in 1949 to a family that moved into the lower middle class in his adulthood, remembered that when he was 21 'We got engaged, but I just got bored with it, and that was basically it really… I just wasn't ready at all'.[71] Rodney did not marry his fiancé because 'we were too young… we just kept arguing over money all the time'.[72] Being able to end an engagement suggests that in the 1960s, young adults prioritised happiness and compatibility over simply being married. This reflects the rise

[66] Schofield, *The Sexual Behaviour of Young Adults*, p. 186.
[67] Schofield, *The Sexual Behaviour of Young Adults*, p. 186.
[68] Interview with Diana Allen; FSMA, Interview 026.
[69] MOA, Summer 2001 Directive, K798.
[70] Interview with Diana Allen; FSMA, Interview 147.
[71] FSMA, Interview 150.
[72] FSMA, Interview 043.

of companionate marriage in the mid-twentieth century and the increasing importance of having and keeping love within heterosexual relationships.[73]

Though many young adults were in serious relationships or engaged in the 1960s, cohabitation was uncommon. It was considered taboo likely because it provided the opportunity for pre-marital sex, which was also viewed unfavourably by many. Even if couples bought a house before marriage they often lived separately until or brought forward the wedding day.[74] However, as this chapter goes on to demonstrate, attitudes towards sex were slowly shifting in the 1960s, especially among young adults, and this meant that a few couples did cohabit. Yet, as one female Mass Observer, born in 1950, commented, 'Couples who were co-habiting were often coy about their living arrangements and several had other lodgers as a cover.'[75] George recalled living with his girlfriend before they married and not telling his parents to avoid opprobrium, though he also implied that his parents tactfully avoided the subject too: 'No questions were asked… that was how it was and we got away with it.'[76] Though practices were shifting for a few cohabitation was still generally taboo since many simply had to lie to their parents.

Love was strongly associated with marriage by young adults in the 1960s and being in love was central to the decision to get engaged. A female MOA respondent, born in 1948, wrote about the kind of partner she hoped to marry in her youth: 'the main thing was that we should love each other.'[77] Ann, when asked why she and her husband decided to marry, simply replied, 'Well, because we fell in love I suppose'.[78] Tom commented that 'I was the prominent factor for us getting married, because I was so much – well, blinded with love really', implying that his emotions prompted engagement and reinforcing how strongly young adults could feel love since Tom likened it to physical impairment. Similarly, Bert, as noted

[73] For in-depth discussion of both see Langhamer, *The English in Love*.
[74] FSMA, Interviews 060, 137, 147.
[75] MOA, Summer 2001 Directive, G2883.
[76] Interview with George Connolly.
[77] MOA, Summer 2001 Directive, C1713.
[78] FSMA, Interview 004.

above, 'suppose[d] I must have' fallen in love to get engaged.[79] Love was therefore understood as a precondition of marriage and being sufficiently in love often provided the impetus to get engaged. Moreover, love was a valuable and intimate emotion since it was often reserved only for the most serious and committed relationships.

However, as Langhamer demonstrates, love cannot be disentangled from more pragmatic considerations that also shaped heterosexual romantic relationships throughout the twentieth century.[80] This explains why many described their love for their partner or spouse in terms of having 'clicked' or 'hit it off', implying not only love and attraction but also compatible personalities.[81] As one Mass Observer put it, in a period that idealised companionate marriage good relationships were about 'commonality rather than love'.[82] Alan commented that in his youth he 'wouldn't want to marry someone from a higher social group… because the husband is basically the provider', suggesting that he would choose partners based on their class to fulfil what he saw as the ideal masculine role, though others may have courted within the same class to ensure they had more in common through shared socio-economic backgrounds.[83] Alan's comment also implies that older gendered ideals were not completely eradicated in the 1960s. Rodney broke off an engagement in his late teens ''Cos she said "look, you're not getting on, you're not earning enough money, I want to get a house." We just kept arguing over money all the time', implying that love alone was not enough for a relationship as financial security was also necessary.[84] Indeed, earlier in the century many, young women in particular, had also sought partners based on financial security meaning this was a long-standing desire.[85] Judith recalled loving her husband because he 'handed over the money and didn't get drunk', implying she chose a partner who would contribute to the family, likely due to her experiences with her own father who was

[79] FSMA, Interview 045.
[80] Langhamer, *The English in Love*, p. 59.
[81] FSMA, Interviews 009, 026, 043.
[82] MOA, Summer 2001 Directive, D2824.
[83] FSMA, Interview 152.
[84] FSMA, Interview 043.
[85] Todd, *Young Women, Work and Family*, p. 221.

often drunk and provided inadequate money for the household.[86] Pragmatic decisions on partners could therefore be influenced by previous life experiences. Ultimately, though young adults' serious romantic relationships and understandings of marriage were centred on love, pragmatic considerations of class, gender, economics and personality also shaped their expectations and choice of partners.

Courtship was central to the experience of youth in 1960s England since the vast majority of young adults experienced heterosexual relationships and it was closely bound up with their leisure activities. Courtship was made up of a series of different relationships – 'going out', 'going steady' and engagement – which contained distinct differences as well as common elements. In the 1960s, courtship was changing in line with other socio-cultural shifts. Earlier stages became focused on informality and fun rather than simply on marriage, though many still ultimately aimed to marry and viewed courtship as preparation for this. The gendered roles and rituals of courtship were beginning to shift in the 1960s as young women gained greater social and economic agency. Courtship was also an emotional experience; it involved attraction and love as well as more pragmatic considerations. Love, though difficult to articulate or describe, became increasingly important but was most strongly associated with marriage, suggesting that the mid-century emotional revolution often upheld rather than challenged pre-existing conceptions of respectable and legitimate relationships. Ultimately, while 1960s courtship took on new stages, practices, meanings and roles it remained shaped by older gendered ideals and expectations of marriage.

COURTSHIP AS LEISURE AND WORK

As demonstrated above, the times, spaces and activities of young adults' courtship and leisure overlapped in the 1960s. Courtship was therefore a form of leisure – especially when it was the more informal 'going out' relationship, which was often pursued simply for enjoyment. As chapter four demonstrated, many young adults (particularly young women) saw less of their friends and more of their partner once courting, making courtship their primary form of

[86] FSMA, Interview 054.

socialisation. How far courtship was a form of leisure was, however, slightly gendered. Langhamer has argued that courtship was central to young women's leisure throughout the early and mid-twentieth century because boyfriends often paid for them, which mitigated their lower earnings.[87] Though this practice was shifting in the 1960s, young women still earned less than young men and the economics of courtship could still provide access to leisure for them in earlier youth. It is also possible that courtship legitimated young women's access to leisure since a boyfriend could act *in loco parentis*, thereby allaying parents' concerns, as discussed in chapter three.

Young adults actively understood courtship as a form of leisure because they used the language of leisure to describe courtship. Sandy was asked 'what was a good night out' in her youth, and replied that it could include doing dancing 'with a group of girls… or if you were going out with a boyfriend, you know, there's so many different types of enjoyment'.[88] Dennis suggested that a good night out consisted of 'Probably about ten pints and a woman'.[89] Valerie, when asked what she used to do on nights out, recalled 'all sortsa [sic] things… chasing the boys', once again associating leisure with courtship and even suggesting that courtship was the purpose of some leisure activities.[90] Bill also commented that 'what would make your night was meeting a girl'.[91]

However, as Langhamer has argued, courtship blurs the lines between leisure, pleasure and work.[92] In the 1960s, courtship involved work, particularly for young women, as well as leisure because it was not only pursued for enjoyment but also to fulfil the heterosexual career by finding a spouse.[93] This gendered difference reflects the restricted roles and opportunities for women outside of marriage in the 1960s, though it was slowly becoming more acceptable for married women to work. Marriage remained the 'ultimate' or

[87] Langhamer, 'Leisure, Pleasure and Courtship', p. 278.
[88] FSMA, Interview 099.
[89] FSMA, Interview 104.
[90] FSMA, Interview 135.
[91] SFL, Interview with Mr M10L.
[92] Langhamer, 'Leisure, Pleasure and Courtship', p. 270.
[93] Langhamer, 'Leisure, Pleasure and Courtship', p. 278; Schofield, *The Sexual Behaviour of Young People*, pp. 25–26.

at least expected career for young women, meaning they often took courtship in youth more seriously than young men.[94] Indeed, while most men were also expected to marry, being an unmarried man was less unacceptable and legitimate male identities and roles could be derived from paid employment. Courtship was therefore work for both young men and young women because it was at least partly a search for a spouse. This work was gendered, however, as the stakes were higher for young women.

Attraction was central to courtship, as noted above, and this required work on the body. Fashion and cosmetics were increasingly available from the interwar years, so adorning the body for courtship was not new in the 1960s.[95] However, in the context of rising affluence and high-street mass production, fashion became cheaper and more available to young adults in the 1960s.[96] One female Mass Observer, born in 1947, noted that 'I would spend all Saturday afternoons in rollers ready to do my hair after tea' for dates.[97] Her recollections imply that young women put significant time and effort into attracting young men. Indeed, as McRobbie has shown, 1960s young women's magazines portrayed fashion and beauty as necessary to facilitate romance.[98] As Pearl & Dean noted, young women spent more on clothes and cosmetics due to the influence of media aimed at them, meaning these magazines contributed to making courtship a form of work.[99] Abrams found that less than four per cent of young women used no cosmetics, with almost all using face powder and lipstick, 40 per cent using nail varnish and 35 per cent using mascara, suggesting that beauty routines were widespread.[100] Cosmetic use was subject to change over the 1960s, however, as fashions shifted, meaning that eyeliner became more popular in the late 1960s as did foundation, whereas lipstick and face powder lost their appeal.[101] Young adults (presumably predominantly young women) spent £15 million per year on cosmetics and £120 million per

[94] Langhamer, 'Love and Courtship', p. 179.
[95] Todd, 'Young Women, Work and Leisure', p. 803.
[96] Carol Dyhouse, *Glamour: Women, History, Feminism*, (London, 2010), pp. 113–118.
[97] MOA, Summer 2001 Directive, H1703.
[98] Angela McRobbie, *Jackie: An Ideology of Adolescent Femininity*, (Birmingham, 1978), pp. 37–44.
[99] Pearl & Dean Ltd., *The Young Market*, p. 29.
[100] Abrams, *The Teenage Consumer*, p. 11.
[101] Pearl & Dean Ltd., *The Young Market*, p. 31.

year on women's clothes in 1959, meaning that personal appearance was a huge industry.[102] It involved work to find, buy and use these products for courtship.

Young men also put in significant time and effort to attract young women. Jephcott noted that both young men and young women spent 'a lot of steady thought, discussion and money' on clothes and cosmetics.[103] Young men spent £45 million annually on clothes, which, though not as much spent by young women, was high and equated to 3s 6d per week per person.[104] Several interviewees recalled using fashion to enhance their courtship prospects. Jack used to buy clothes because 'I wanted myself to sort of look more fashionable and attractive to girls'.[105] Harold recalled the fashionable suits and beetle crusher shoes he bought as a young man: 'it was the fashion and the girls loved it.'[106] Preparing the body for courtship was gendered because young women were more pressured to do so, but this work was still undertaken by both sexes. Dressing up or spending time on one's appearance meant courtship included elements of work in the 1960s since this required time and effort and was done to attract members of the opposite sex rather than just for personal enjoyment.

Like many other aspects of young adults' lives in the 1960s, courtship blurred the boundaries between work and leisure, though this blurring was gendered. Courtship was leisure because it overlapped with the times, spaces and activities of leisure and could be pursued simply for enjoyment, as more casual forms of 'going out' often were. But courtship was also work because it involved time and effort to prepare the body and was often pursued to find a spouse. Ultimately, young adults' lives in the 1960s cannot easily be divided into 'leisure' and 'work' because their experiences blended the two.

[102] Abrams, *The Teenage Consumer*, p. 10.
[103] Jephcott, *A Time of One's Own*, p. 91.
[104] Abrams, *The Teenage Consumer*, p. 10.
[105] Interview with Jack Draper.
[106] Interview with Harold Spencer.

THE EXPERIENCES OF SEX

Thane has argued that pre-marital sex among the working classes was not uncommon throughout the twentieth century.[107] Yet the 1960s has a reputation for being the decade in which pre-marital sex became a widespread phenomenon. However, contemporary social surveys and personal testimonies challenge this assumption. They reveal that the attitudes and practices surrounding pre-marital sex were shifting gradually over the 1960s but not radically or in a linear fashion. Young adults often lacked knowledge about sex, respectability remained of paramount importance, and older, more conservative and often gendered standards persisted. Nevertheless, sex was central to courtship for many young adults and changes in practice and attitude being neither linear nor radical meant it occupied a shifting and complex position in their lives.

In the 1960s many young adults were relatively uneducated about sex and where sex education existed it was often of poor quality.[108] Though schools increased provision post-war, sex education remained limited and there was no official guidance on teaching human reproduction until 1968.[109] Davis has argued that Victorian secrecy and reticence around sex cast a long shadow into the 1960s because interviewees for her work on post-1945 motherhood reported having little sex education.[110] Indeed, between the 1940s and 1960s, sex education was seen as a solution to venereal disease and as a way to promote marriage and the family so was often moralistic rather than factual.[111] Several interviewees recalled gaining most of their knowledge about sex from school, but school sex education was not always relevant or useful.[112] William, for example, recalled that after a talk at his school about venereal disease, 'I thought VD was in the air!... So I was no more enlightened obviously.'[113] Schofield found that 86 per cent of young women and 47 per cent of young men received sex

[107] Thane, 'Unmarried Motherhood', p. 13.
[108] Schofield, *The Sexual Behaviour of Young Adults*, pp. 22–36.
[109] James Hampshire and Jane Lewis, '"The Ravages of Permissiveness": Sex Education and the Permissive Society', *Twentieth Century British History*, 15.3 (2004), p. 294; Davis, 'Sex Education and the Preparation of Girls for Motherhood', p. 671.
[110] Davis, 'Sex Education and the Preparation of Girls for Motherhood', p. 676.
[111] Hampshire and Lewis, 'The Ravages of Permissiveness', p. 294.
[112] FSMA, Interviews 034, 106.
[113] Interview with William Woodsford.

education at school, though provision varied widely.[114] This also suggests sex education was gendered, with young women perhaps receiving more since they were expected to police and prevent pre-marital sex in a way young men were not. However, schools often only taught basic biology that was not always immediately relatable and emotional aspects were rarely explored.[115] As Alice recalled, 'Sex education at school was limited to the life cycles of rabbits and frogs… so that was no help.'[116]

Generally, young adults learned little about sex from their parents.[117] Schofield found that 67 per cent of young men and 29 per cent of young women received no information from parents, again suggesting that it was considered more important to educate young women about sex.[118] Sex education at home was also gendered since mothers usually delivered it, which possibly explains why more daughters received information since mothers may have found it easier to advise girls. However, it was often an uncomfortable discussion. Cerys remembered that her mother 'was always embarrassed telling me things', while Sylvia's mother 'had a job telling me about the facts of life, I had to spare her the misery and tell her I knew all about it.'[119] This suggests that talking about sex was still relatively taboo in many families and also implies that mothers had little knowledge to offer. Again, parental information was often moralistic rather than factual. Many (particularly young women for whom the consequences were more tangible and detrimental) recalled simply being cautioned against pre-marital pregnancy. Often such advice was ambiguous, cementing young adults' lack of knowledge. Richard was given a book on sex by his mother aged 14 but 'She didn't go into details… told me to be careful. That was about it.'[120] Sandra echoed many female respondents when she recalled being told to '"look after yourself" and we had to work out what look after yourself meant!'[121]

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[114] Schofield, *The Sexual Behaviour of Young People*, p. 102.
[115] British Medical Association, *Venereal Disease and Young People*, p. 60.
[116] MOA, Summer 2001 Directive, W1813.
[117] FSMA, Interviews 034, 053, 066, 137.
[118] Schofield, *The Sexual Behaviour of Young People*, p. 99.
[119] FSMA, Interviews 016, 147.
[120] FSMA, Interview 106.
[121] SFL, Interview with Mrs S6L.

A few learned about sex through friends or from experience. Winston recalled gaining rudimentary information from school and nothing from his parents, instead commenting that 'It was just a matter of hearsay', which often led to bragging and misinformation.[122] Cerys, because of her mother's embarrassment, 'learnt a lot just through my own experience, like, after I got married', implying that some young adults were not fully informed about sex even once married.[123] Overall, young adults were poorly informed about sex. Yet Schofield noted that they were often acutely aware of this and many wanted more sex education, perhaps because they felt ill-equipped to understand and confront increasing rates of pre-marital sex.[124] While sex was becoming more common and acceptable among young adults, they had been and were still educated in a relatively conservative climate. The 1960s did not herald a revolution in sexual knowledge or education.

There was also no 'revolution' in young adults' sexual behaviour in the 1960s, as many still did *not* have pre-marital sex. Schofield found in his 1965 survey that only 20 per cent of young men aged 15-19 and 12 per cent of women aged 15-19 had had sexual intercourse, though those aged 17-19 were more likely to have had sex than those aged 15-17, suggesting that sexual experience was linked to age.[125] Sylvia described how her earlier relationships were not 'a sexual relationship, a kiss and a cuddle, a quick fondle… but nothing serious.'[126] Similarly, Charlie's experiences with early girlfriends were 'just holding hands and kissing'.[127] Many refrained from sex on logistical grounds, though they implied they would have had sex given the opportunity. Young adults often had nowhere private to experiment sexually since most lived with their parents. Jim recalled that 'It's actually quite difficult if you don't have a place of your own', while one female Mass Observer, born 1947, 'had little opportunity to have sex, we both lived with our parents, neither of us had a car so it

[122] SFL, Interview with Mr L5B.
[123] FSMA, Interview 016.
[124] Schofield, *The Sexual Behaviour of Young People*, pp. 125–127.
[125] Schofield, *The Sexual Behaviour of Young People*, p. 29.
[126] FSMA, Interview 147.
[127] FSMA, Interview 137.

was a bit difficult to find places to do it', meaning she remained a virgin until marriage.[128] It is possible, however, that as more young adults attended house parties with peers and went away on holiday without parents they gained increasing opportunities to have pre-marital sex over the course of the 1960s.

Some simply thought pre-marital sex and its consequences wrong, meaning there was no simple, permissive shift in attitudes during the 1960s. Some refrained because of the very real fear of pregnancy, discussed more below. More young women than men expressed this rationale, reflecting the gendered double standards and opprobrium surrounding illegitimate pregnancies in the 1960s. Joan commented that 'that was the danger, not having sex but getting pregnant', implying that, for some, sex itself was not taboo but pre-marital pregnancy was.[129] Indeed, generally more young women noted they did not have sex on principle, likely because virginity was more prized for them than for young men, suggesting that attitudes were gendered. Those born earlier in the cohort were more likely to disagree with pre-marital sex, suggesting that shifts in attitudes occurred over time. For example, Donna, born in 1942, was a virgin on marriage, suggesting pre-marital sex had been taboo for her, but described her ten-year-younger sister as 'a different generation… she believed in free sex'.[130] However, the shift towards more permissive attitudes and practices was not linear. Some young adults born later in the cohort still eschewed premarital sex on principle, demonstrating that more conservative ideals persisted into the 1970s. One female Mass Observer, born in 1948, wrote that 'sex was not on the agenda and wouldn't be until after marriage', meaning that she did not have sex until at least 1973.[131] Not all young adults in the 1960s were having sex, therefore, due to principle, fear of the consequences, the nature of a particular relationship and logistical constraints.

However, that many young adults did not have sexual intercourse in the 1960s does not mean they had no sexual experience. Some experimented with masturbation though few

[128] SFL, Interview with Mr R1P; MOA, Autumn 2005 Directive, C1832.
[129] Interview with Joan Canning.
[130] FSMA, Interview 013.
[131] MOA, Summer 2001 Directive, C1713.

talked about this, which may be a product of embarrassment rather than meaning it was uncommon.[132] Kissing and petting were common among courting couples, often progressing to greater intimacy as a relationship developed. One female MOA respondent, born in 1948, noted how kissing was allowed only on the second date and that 'petting wasn't allowed until a couple of months into the relationship.'[133] Schofield found that 72 per cent of female respondents and 54 per cent of male respondents had experienced French kissing, while over half had experienced breast stimulation over clothes, and 37 per cent of young men and 33 per cent of young women had experienced genital stimulation.[134] These sexual experiences were a negotiated territory between boyfriends and girlfriends. In particular, young women often felt the need to police these activities to prevent them escalating to intercourse, again reflecting the gendered strictures that affected women more sharply. One female Mass Observer, born in 1955, noted that 'There was a lot of tactical understanding about "petting". It was usually ok to touch above the waist… but not below'.[135] Additionally, many were frustrated by their lack of sexual intercourse. One female Mass Observer, born in 1946, wrote that 'I think the need to abstain from full sex was the biggest run on as one was continually frustrated so the slightest touch was almost painful', suggesting that many had sexual desires even if they could not indulge them for any one of many reasons.[136] Not having sexual intercourse was a complicated choice in the 1960s, but it did not preclude other sexual activities.

Only 20 per cent of young men aged 15-19 and 12 per cent of young women age 15-19 in Schofield's 1965 survey had had sex, suggesting that though some young adults had intercourse there was hardly a permissive or promiscuous revolution in the 1960s.[137] Schofield also found that half of those having sex did so fewer than ten times a year, while Gorer found that only 11 per cent of unmarried young adults had had more than three sexual

[132] MOA, Autumn 2005 Directive, B3252, B3438, K798, L1002.
[133] MOA, Summer 2001 Directive, C1713.
[134] Schofield, *The Sexual Behaviour of Young People*, pp. 26–28.
[135] MOA, Summer 2001 Directive, D2824.
[136] MOA, Autumn 2005 Directive, M3408.
[137] Schofield, *The Sexual Behaviour of Young People*, p. 29.

partners, again dispelling myths of promiscuity.[138] However, Schofield's 1973 follow-up study with some of his original respondents at the age of 25 found that 79 per cent of young men and 67 per cent of young women who were now married had had pre-marital sex, with only 21 per cent having waited until marriage for sex.[139] This suggests that the likelihood of having sexual intercourse increased with age (thus likely with the increasing seriousness of a relationship) and that the incidence of pre-marital sex increased as the 1960s progressed.[140] Young men were more likely to have pre-marital sex than young women – reflecting gendered doubled standards – and though none of the contemporary surveys completely squared the circle of who young men were therefore having sex with, Schofield suggested young men might exaggerate and young women might disclaim how much sex they had.[141] Church-goers and those with strict parents were less likely to have pre-marital sex but those who were better educated were more likely to have pre-marital sex, while middle-class young adults (particularly young women) were also slightly more likely to have pre-marital intercourse.[142] This implies that age, gender, class, religion, parental authority and change over time conditioned sexual attitudes and practices. A significant number of young adults had sex before marriage in the 1960s but it was not a universal experience. Consequently, it is difficult to speak of a 1960s sexual revolution among young adults.

Schofield's study also showed that 15 per cent of young women and 41 per cent of young men first had sex with a 'steady', while 37 per cent of young women and 39 per cent of young men first had sex with their fiancé.[143] He also found in his later study that 27 per cent of married young people had only ever had sex with their spouse.[144] Young adults were therefore not promiscuous as most only had intercourse with a relatively serious partner. Again this was gendered since women were less likely to have sex in a less secure 'steady' relationship than young men, reflecting contemporary double standards that were more

[138] Schofield, *The Sexual Behaviour of Young People*, p. 86; Gorer, *Sex and Marriage*, p. 214.
[139] Schofield, *The Sexual Behaviour of Young Adults*, pp. 161–162.
[140] Schofield, *The Sexual Behaviour of Young People*, pp. 144–148.
[141] Schofield, *The Sexual Behaviour of Young People*, pp. 29, 39, 86.
[142] Schofield, *The Sexual Behaviour of Young Adults*, pp. 139–148, 168.
[143] Schofield, *The Sexual Behaviour of Young People*, p. 164.
[144] Schofield, *The Sexual Behaviour of Young Adults*, p. 161.

lenient about pre-marital sex for men. Indeed, as Willmott noted, sex was considered more respectable if a couple were engaged or nearly so, implying that when young adults did have pre-marital sex they were keen to make this as respectable as possible.[145] When asked if people generally waited until marriage for sex in the 1960s, David replied, 'Almost! Until they were engaged!', while one female MOA respondent, born in 1947, wrote that 'Once we were engaged and alone at night… we allowed each other more physical contact', suggesting that the intention to marry conferred legitimacy and respectability.[146] Those who did have multiple sexual partners tended to be male, again reflecting contemporary gendered double standards. As Richard put it, 'most of the blokes… used to sleep around… Not so much the girls… unless like I say, they was going out with one of the lads in the group.'[147] Permissive and promiscuous behaviour was only experienced by a minority and was heavily gendered.

Schofield argued that young women were more likely to have sex for love, whereas young men were more likely to have it out of curiosity or lust.[148] These gendered attitudes suggest that older ideas that women should be virgins on marriage and that sex was only acceptable in marriage lingered in the 1960s and made young women cautious of having sex with someone they were unlikely to marry. If they loved their partner (or were engaged) however, they felt more secure and therefore more willing to have sex. This suggests that the trend towards young marriage in the 1960s aided the rise of pre-marital sex as more young adults were in serious relationships in their teens and early twenties.

Nevertheless, whether or not young adults only had sex for love, many had active sexual desires in the 1960s. Indeed, many young adults had sex simply because they wanted to or because waiting until marriage was too frustrating. Unfortunately, mainly women explained their rationales for having pre-marital sex and so young men's voices are obscured, though they likely had similar reasons. Moreover, these women's voices are important in showing that sexual desire was not only a male experience. One female MOA respondent,

[145] Willmott, *Adolescent Boys of East London*, p. 151.
[146] Interview with David Canning; MOA, Summer 2001 Directive, H1703.
[147] FSMA, Interview 106.
[148] Schofield, *The Sexual Behaviour of Young People*, p. 64.

born in 1948, had sex with her fiancé two months before they married in 1970; she described them both as 'champing at the bit… we both had the hots for each other!… obviously we couldn't have waited much longer'.[149] Many commented that they had not felt bad for having pre-marital sex. Alice felt that 'it was right and good and not shameful or sinful in any way.'[150] Though the relationships and emotions young adults deemed suitable for sex were gendered, many chose to have pre-marital sex. This shows that not only were attitudes beginning to soften in the 1960s, but also that young adults were deeply sexual and increasingly willing to indulge this.

Very few young adults, according to the material studied here, were pressured into sex. This suggests that it was predominantly an active choice, though this may be due to the under-recording of traumatic memories. Those who were pressured were usually women. This implies that some boyfriends could be forceful and that women still possessed less agency than men. Being pressured could also be exacerbated by a lack of sexual knowledge. For example, Ellen, born in 1952, was 17 when her fiancé became 'sexually aroused by kissing me he told me that I had to help him or he would be in agony. I didn't understand… So I let him penetrate me… Well after that he wouldn't take no for an answer'.[151] Ellen did not know enough to counter her boyfriend's false assertion and so was pressured into sex, which left her feeling powerless to refuse him subsequently. Others felt pressured into sex less by a partner and more due to the assumption that having sex was now normal. As one female Mass Observer, born in 1952, put it, she had sex because 'I wanted to know what it was that everyone talked about in such glowing terms'.[152] This suggests that (often hyperbolised) discourses of the 'swinging sixties' and sexual permissiveness could have a powerful effect on young adults' behaviour by making them want to experience sex for themselves. As Sam

[149] MOA, Autumn 2005 Directive, C1713.
[150] MOA, Summer 2001 Directive, W1813.
[151] MOA, Autumn 2005 Directive, D156.
[152] MOA, Summer 2001 Directive, N1552.

Brewitt-Taylor has suggested, 'myths' of 1960s sexual revolution helped create rather than reflect behavioural change.[153]

In his later study, Schofield found that 89 per cent of those who had had pre-marital sex found sex enjoyable.[154] Young adults were perhaps encouraged to have and enjoy sex by the emphasis on self-fulfilment and self-enjoyment that modernity offered.[155] This suggests that many were morally and psychologically comfortable with pre-marital sex and that attitudes towards it had softened among young people by the later 1960s. Moreover, though young men were perhaps more likely to orgasm, female sexual pleasure was also important.[156] One female MOA respondent, born in 1952, recalled having orgasms and that her sex life with one boyfriend 'was very unsatisfactory for me as he suffered from premature ejaculation'.[157] Another, born in 1946, recalled 'my first orgasm, and that was just so mind blowingly amazingly wonderful. My boyfriend said "I've been waiting ages for that to happen for you."'[158] Women were therefore aware of their own sexual pleasure. Moreover, some boyfriends sought to make sex enjoyable for their girlfriends. Overall, young adults in the 1960s were often positive about their sex lives, suggesting that it was an enjoyable and pleasurable experience, likely facilitated by their increasing acceptance of pre-marital sex as normal. Indeed, Schofield argued, pre-marital sex was becoming common enough to be seen as an act of conformity.[159] Sex was therefore an increasingly important and common part of courtship for many young adults in the 1960s. It was still not a universal experience, however, and having sex was a personal choice, conditioned by gender, age, the status of a relationship, and the continued influence of older, more conservative ideals.

Young adults' sexual practices were therefore shifting in the 1960s, which implies that attitudes towards pre-marital sexual activity were also changing. However, there was not a linear move in behaviours and values towards simple progressiveness or permissiveness.

[153] Brewitt-Taylor, 'The Invention of the Sexual Revolution'.
[154] Schofield, *The Sexual Behaviour of Young Adults*, p. 172.
[155] Hughes, *Young Lives on the Left*, p. 4; Conekin, Mort, and Waters, 'Introduction', p. 10.
[156] Schofield, *The Sexual Behaviour of Young People*, p. 66.
[157] MOA, Summer 2001 Directive, N1552.
[158] MOA, Autumn 2005 Directive, A1706.
[159] Schofield, *The Sexual Behaviour of Young People*, p. 248.

Sexual double standards weakened but did not disappear and many men still expected virgin brides.[160] Frances remembered 'often being very angry about what I perceived as double standards from the men'.[161] Though reflexive about it at his interview in 2015, Jack remembered that in the early 1970s 'boys always expected girls to be virgins. And actually, when my wife to be confessed, 'cos she told me she was a virgin at first… I actually felt sort of gutted and disappointed' even though he also noted that 'it was essential' for young men to have pre-marital sex.[162] Indeed, though women began to reject double standards by having and enjoying pre-marital sex they still cared about 'respectability' and usually reserved sex for serious relationships. Consequently, and as Schofield argued, attitudes perhaps changed more than behaviours, though this chapter has shown that not all attitudes shifted either.[163]

Cook has argued that the Pill changed women's attitudes towards sex in the 1960s by decoupling sex and reproduction and therefore fuelled the increase in pre-marital sex.[164] However, the lived experiences of young adults in the 1960s suggest otherwise. The Pill was only available to married women between 1961 and 1967 so changes in young adults' sexual behaviour, which were occurring before 1967, cannot be solely attributed to contraceptive advance. Young women often relied on young men to provide contraception; reducing how much agency they had in its uptake and effect.[165] Additionally, young adults did not universally use contraception. Their substandard sex education meant many lacked knowledge about contraception and relied on withdrawal.[166] While Gorer found that 25 per cent of sexually active young adults never used contraception, Schofield put the figures closer to 61 per cent of young women, and 25 per cent of young men.[167] Moreover, contraception was not always easily obtainable.[168] As one Mass Observer, born in 1955, described the late

[160] Schofield, *The Sexual Behaviour of Young Adults*, p. 194; British Medical Association, *Venereal Disease and Young People*, pp. 37–39; Langhamer, *The English in Love*, p. 140.
[161] SFL, Interview with Mrs H9P.
[162] Interview with Jack Draper.
[163] Schofield, *The Sexual Behaviour of Young Adults*, pp. 130–131.
[164] Cook, 'The English Sexual Revolution', p. 120.
[165] Schofield, *The Sexual Behaviour of Young People*, p. 107.
[166] Interview with Diana Allen; MOA, Summer 2001 Directive, C1832, H1705, N1552.
[167] Gorer, *Sex and Marriage*, p. 216; Schofield, *The Sexual Behaviour of Young People*, p. 106.
[168] Schofield, *The Sexual Behaviour of Young Adults*, pp. 100–101.

1960s and early 1970s, 'The pill was not freely available to girls of our age then and other contraceptives were hard to come by too'.[169] Using contraception could also cause anxiety, as Joanne, born in 1955, recalled: 'we talked about sex and decided I should go on the "pill" however I was frightened to go to my doctor in case my mum and dad found out.'[170] Even into the later 1960s and early 1970s when Joanne was a young woman, pre-marital sex remained sufficiently taboo that obtaining contraception risked social and parental opprobrium, which may have further inhibited young adults' usage. Since they were not widely understood or used and remained shrouded in taboo, contraceptives therefore had little impact on the changing sexual behaviour of young adults in the 1960s.

Schofield found that 20 per cent of the women and 16 per cent of the men he interviewed aged 25 in the late 1960s had been involved in a pre-marital pregnancy.[171] Pre-marital pregnancy was not simply a 1960s phenomenon but had a diverse history throughout the twentieth century.[172] Though attitudes were beginning to soften towards pre-marital sex, reproduction was generally still considered acceptable only within marriage in the post-war period. Consequently, as Schofield found, 51 per cent of young men and 70 per cent of young women feared pre-marital pregnancy.[173] One female Mass Observer, born in 1948, referred to it as 'probably the gravest sin that a teenage girl could commit in my day'.[174] This moralistic fear and shame attached to pre-marital pregnancy had also concerned young women in the interwar period.[175] By the 1960s, however, getting pregnant outside of marriage was seen as detrimental not only to a young woman's reputation but also to her opportunities. Sandy commented that getting pregnant before marriage in the 1960s would have 'ruined your life really… before it's even started', implying that having children young and outside marriage was detrimental in a period of increasing opportunity for women in education, employment

[169] MOA, Summer 2001 Directive, B2728.
[170] MOA, Summer 2001 Directive, C2888.
[171] Schofield, *The Sexual Behaviour of Young Adults*, p. 134.
[172] Thane, 'Unmarried Motherhood', p. 12; Roberts, *A Woman's Place*, p. 75.
[173] Schofield, *The Sexual Behaviour of Young People*, p. 108.
[174] MOA, Spring 1993 Directive, T842.
[175] Szreter and Fisher, *Sex Before the Sexual Revolution*, p. 115; Langhamer, *Women's Leisure*, pp. 114–123.

and economic stability.[176] The consequences of pre-marital pregnancy were, however, heavily gendered. As one female Mass Observer, born in 1955, put it: 'The girl is always made out to be the bad one. The boy was never treated as badly as the girl. The girls were made to feel shame and disgust. Boys were just being boys.'[177] Even into the late 1960s and early 1970s, therefore, gendered double standards punished pre-marital sex and its consequences differently for young men and young women. Given that young women stood to lose more and attract greater shame through pre-marital pregnancy it is unsurprising they feared this more than young men and that it inhibited sex for some.

However, while pre-marital pregnancy remained taboo throughout the 1960s, attitudes were beginning to soften. Langhamer has argued that attitudes towards pre-marital pregnancy were never uniform, and this is also reflected in Thane's work on the earlier twentieth century.[178] A 1964 BMA report also suggested that attitudes towards pre-marital pregnancy were softening by the mid 1960s, while McWhinnie's 1967 study of unmarried Scottish mothers found that, though pre-marital pregnancy remained a crisis for many, tolerance was increasing.[179] Several interviewees also noted this relaxing of attitudes during the 1960s. Michael commented though, that young women still took the blame rather than young men,

> it wasn't as bad as it had been, they were sort of looked down on, not as a sort of loose woman and all the rest of it, I think had occurred maybe ten years before my time… it was just starting to become more acceptable as something that didn't quite destroy the rest of your life.[180]

Marilyn recalled that when she became pregnant outside marriage her parents were pragmatic and understanding, suggesting a more tolerant attitude, though that she married her boyfriend possibly allayed their concerns. Marilyn implied, however, that her boyfriend's parents were very upset on more moral grounds, implying that attitudes had not changed universally.[181]

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[176] FSMA, Interview 099.
[177] MOA, Autumn 2005 Directive, C1191.
[178] Langhamer, *The English in Love*, pp. 142–143; Thane, 'Unmarried Motherhood'.
[179] British Medical Association, *Venereal Disease and Young People*, p. 50; McWhinnie, *Unmarried Mothers*, p. 9.
[180] SFL, Interview with Mr P5B.
[181] Interview with Marilyn Shaw.

Most young adults married once they discovered the pregnancy – particularly since abortion was illegal until 1967.[182] This very probably contributed to the declining average age of marriage in the 1960s since more young adults were having sex, contraceptive knowledge and access were limited, and marriage remained the respectable solution. In 1960, 56.2 per cent of legitimate live births had been conceived pre-maritally; this rose to 57.1 per cent by 1965 and 57.9 per cent by 1970.[183] These figures likely reflect both the increasing popularity of marriage and the increase in pre-marital sex during the 1960s as well as demonstrating that marriage was the favoured – though not universal – solution to pregnancy. Some remembered that pregnancy had simply sped up the process of getting married since the couple already intended to wed. When asked how he felt about his girlfriend getting pregnant, Chris replied that 'it just sort of accelerated the process' of them getting married.[184] This reinforces the fact that many young adults were only having sex in serious relationships with a 'steady' or fiancé since they were already thinking of marriage when the pregnancy occurred.

As Schofield noted, abortion was more likely among middle-class women, reflecting their greater access to the procedure economically and through a potentially more liberal culture than that of the working classes.[185] In 1968 around half of the 22,100 legal abortions performed were on single women, though it is difficult to assess how this compares to earlier in the period when abortion was illegal and numbers are difficult to establish.[186] Nevertheless, even into the early 1970s illegitimate pregnancies usually resulted in marriage and it was not until 1980 that abortion or illegitimate birth were the most common outcomes of a pre-marital pregnancy.[187] Very few interviewees or MOA respondents recalled abortions or adoptions, not simply because these were less common but perhaps also because they were more traumatic (and sometimes illegal) making them harder to discuss. Alice recounted her friend's illegal abortion: 'Her awful plight and the horror of the abortion… left our whole group in shock and

[182] FSMA, Interviews 038, 106, 128; Interview with Marilyn Shaw.
[183] David Coleman, 'Population and Family', in A.H. Halsey and Josephine Webb (eds), *Twentieth-Century British Social Trends*, (Basingstoke, 2000), pp. 52–53.
[184] FSMA, Interview 038.
[185] Schofield, *The Sexual Behaviour of Young Adults*, p. 144.
[186] Coleman, 'Population and Family', p. 50.
[187] Coleman, 'Population and Family', p. 54.

vowing never to get into the same situation', while another Mass Observer, born in 1954, felt that her abortion aged 18 'had affected me in many ways, mostly negatively.'[188] Pregnancy outside marriage in the 1960s was therefore not uncommon, but nor was it a symbol of promiscuity. It was often dealt with conservatively through marriage and double standards that penalised women more than men. Despite this, attitudes were beginning to soften as unmarried mothers gained better welfare support after the war and became more socially accepted.[189] The 1960s were a period of change in attitudes and practices surrounding pre-marital pregnancy, but getting pregnant could still be traumatic and disruptive, particularly for young women. Young adults were, therefore, fully justified in fearing pre-marital pregnancy.

This section therefore offers two conclusions that, at first glance, seem in tension with each other. First, there was no sexual revolution among young adults in the 1960s. Second, pre-marital sex was increasing among young adults in the 1960s. To resolve this tension we must understand that while young adults' sexual attitudes and behaviours were changing in the 1960s, they were not changing *radically*. Incorrectly seeing the 1960s as a moment of sexual revolution ignores that fact that pre-marital sex happened before the 1960s and had been changing gradually over time, as this chapter has noted. Instead, the 1960s was a moment of flux in which young adults were at the forefront of increasing, if not linear, moves to a greater acceptance of pre-marital sex while older, more conservative expectations and standards had not been completely eroded.

Indeed, young people were highly aware that the 1960s was a period of change. Angela commented on the 'pressure not to challenge old social ideals [which] created a twilight zone, forcing a kind of silent complicity, a hypocrisy which was at odds with the image of sexual enlightenment associated with this era', eloquently identifying the clash of old and new values and practices and the tension this created for young adults.[190] Angela's comments suggest that young adults were unable to see the 1960s as a period of sexual revolution because their behaviours were constrained by older ideals. Joe thought that the

[188] MOA, Summer 2001 Directive, W1813; MOA, Autumn 2005 Directive, O3436.
[189] Thane, 'Unmarried Motherhood', pp. 21–26.
[190] MOA, Summer 2001 Directive, G2883.

1960s 'was the time of experimentation… I think the older folks would look down like all the barriers were being broken', pointing to generational shifts in attitudes during the 1960s; though as chapter four showed there was no outright generational conflict and many young adults retained relatively conservative views on sex.[191] Jack's comments imply that different generations understood changes in sexual practice differently in the 1960s. He therefore suggested that young adults in the 1960s did not see the period as one of sexual revolution because while they were 'experimenting' they personally did not see this as being radical.

As chapter one argued, people's understandings of the 1960s are influenced by popular memories that emphasise sexual revolution and generational conflict. However, as this chapter has demonstrated, people are highly capable of reflecting on their own lived experiences to critique these popular discourses, as both Angela and Jack did. Moreover, by analysing young adults' lived experiences in the 1960s, this chapter has shown that both attitudes and practices surrounding sex *were* shifting as older and newer values tussled for dominance. Attitudinal shifts were not radical, however, and did not always map neatly onto behavioural changes, which were hardly promiscuous either. The 1960s was, therefore, not a period of sexual revolution for young adults. Change was not linear and remained bounded by older sensibilities. Crucially, young adults themselves did not see their attitudes and behaviours as radical. Nevertheless, more young people were having and enjoying pre-marital sex, making it a central part of 1960s courtship. Myths of 'sexual revolution' circulating at the time may have encouraged some young adults to have sex in the 1960s, though many are able to retrospectively critique these exaggerated discourses. Trends towards early marriage, a slow weathering of gendered double standards, increasing emphasis on romantic love and increasing opportunities for time away from parents also likely enabled or encouraged young adults to experiment with pre-marital sex. Their experiences of this were, however, not uniform, being conditioned by age, gender, relationship status, and level of sex education.

[191] Interview with Joe Knight.

THE MEANING OF COURTSHIP

Courtship was an important part of young adults' daily lives in the 1960s. It was also central to the meaning of youth because partaking in courtship allowed young adults to develop and perform youthful identities and to gain a sense of belonging and self-validation. Courtship was also central to the meaning and purpose of youth because, as a preparatory stage before marriage, it shaped the (gendered and aged) experiences of youth by looking forward to later stages in the life cycle. Courtship therefore gave youth in the 1960s a meaning and identity as a discrete stage of the life cycle, but it also conferred meaning on youth as one part of that life cycle inherently connected to future stages.

Schofield documented social pressure among young adults to have boyfriends and girlfriends in the 1960s.[192] Consequently, courting allowed young adults to enhance their social status and therefore be validated as a young adult by offering a sense of belonging to a youthful generational group. For instance, one female Mass Observer, born in 1955, 'was desperate for a boyfriend… so I could tell my friends' in her early teens.[193] Shirley remembered that 'I went out with one lad, for about 12 months aged approximately 17, but I didn't particularly like him… I think it just became a habit really', suggesting that simply having a boyfriend and the routine of courting could be more important than genuine attraction or love, particularly earlier in youth.[194] Jack asserted that 'girlfriends probably gave you an element of status', while George noted that 'all my friends… they tended to be nearly always in a relationship', implying that courtship was expected and thus an act of conformity.[195] Having a boyfriend or girlfriend therefore instilled a sense of belonging because courtship was a common and central component of youthful activities and experiences.

For young women courtship could also confer greater independence. As one Mass Observer noted: 'it gave you a sense of independence from your parents, in particular your

[192] Schofield, *The Sexual Behaviour of Young People*, p. 25.
[193] MOA, Summer 2001 Directive, B2728.
[194] FSMA, Interview 125.
[195] Interview with Jack Draper; Interview with George Connolly.

father who didn't dare criticise you once you were seriously courting because another, unknown force thought you were perfect… You became an important person in your own right.'[196] Young women found it harder to establish independence from their parents during youth because of their gender, but courtship could facilitate a more adult status (although it can also be seen as a transfer of control from the father to the boyfriend) because it was a decisive move away from childhood and a marker of impending marriage and adulthood. Courtship facilitated young women's independence in the 1960s by enhancing their adult status and therefore lessening parental control.

Courtship was also important in the 1960s because it led to marriage. Although not all couples married, courtship was a preparation for the future, as Langhamer has argued, making youth a preparation for adulthood.[197] Indeed, though many, particularly in their early youth, often pursued courtship for fun rather than to find a spouse marriage was very much on the horizon for young adults in the 1960s given decreasing average ages of marriage and a socio-economic landscape that facilitated and promoted marriage. As Weeks put it, 'Marriage more than ever was "an almost inevitable step in the transition to adult life", the essential gateway to independence, social status, sexual gratification and children, slotting people into their "rightful places as adults in society."'[198] In her study of school leavers in the late 1950s, Veness found that 94 per cent of young women and 69 per cent of young men wrote about marriage as part of their essays on their expected futures, suggesting that marriage was considered inevitable by many.[199] Willmott and Schofield also found that over 90 per cent of their interviewees wanted to marry (often at a young age), though that marriage was a more immediate prospect for young women given contemporary gendered expectations.[200] Graham was born in 1944; his father was a tailor and his mother a housewife. He commented that 'in those days it was just automatic, you saved up and got married', while George stated that it

[196] MOA, Summer 2001 Directive, H1703.
[197] Langhamer, *The English in Love*, pp. 143–145.
[198] Weeks, *Sex, Politics and Society*, p. 257.
[199] Veness, *School Leavers*, p. 26.
[200] Willmott, *Adolescent Boys of East London*, pp. 46–47; Schofield, *The Sexual Behaviour of Young People*, pp. 123, 164.

was normal to be 'propelled into early marriage' in the late 1960s and early 1970s.[201] Donna stated that 'we just accepted that you got engaged and got married, it was part of life, you know.'[202] One female MOA respondent, born in 1946, even commented that 'the object [of courtship] was to find someone to settle down with.'[203] Courtship was important to young adults in the 1960s because it prefigured future marriage.

The expectation and importance of marriage was often more significant for young women since marriage remained the primary way women achieved an adult identity and was considered their ultimate career.[204] Trish 'never wanted a career… I always wanted to sort of settle down and have a family'.[205] Sylvia commented that 'I was one of the last to get married' in her friendship group, 'I used to worry a bit… it was me dreams in those days… walk down the aisle', while when asked if she expected to marry Elaine said, 'I hoped I would. I didn't want to be left on the shelf.'[206] Young women's fear of never getting married meant that courtship was important in terms of finding a partner and in facilitating their successful fulfilment of the heterosexual career and attainment of an adult female identity.[207] Courtship was important to young women because it prefigured adulthood and gave a purpose to their youth. This explains why young women often became more serious about courtship earlier than young men given the greater importance marriage held for young women.

While the vast majority of young men also wanted and expected to marry, they often wanted to do so later than many young women since they could derive adult purpose and identity from paid employment rather than marriage. Men often expressed this by noting that, in their youth, they wanted to have fun before settling down into marriage. Bert commented that, as a young man, he thought 'I'll get married one day but… I'll sort of do what I want to do first'.[208] Ed similarly noted that,

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[201] FSMA, Interview 156; Interview with George Connolly.
[202] FSMA, Interview 013.
[203] MOA, Autumn 2005 Directive, M3408.
[204] Langhamer, 'Love and Courtship', p. 179; Langhamer, *The English in Love*, pp. 169–170.
[205] FSMA, Interview 093.
[206] FSMA, Interviews 147, 012.
[207] Davis, *Modern Motherhood*, p. 181.
[208] FSMA, Interview 152.

> You could see marriage looking up. You could see the family situation… I thought – well if I don't go out and make an effort, I'm going to get involved in that same sort of process and I really wanted to go out and pick up a few storms here and there before I settled down.[209]

Young men therefore saw youth and courtship less as a preparation for marriage and more as a fun and free stage of life. Indeed, Carter's respondents often saw marriage as ending their independence and many hoped for a few years of freedom first.[210]

Some young women could also want a period of freedom before marriage, as both Carter and Schofield noted.[211] Kathy broke off one relationship aged 19 because 'he was talking about getting married… I realised I didn't want to… I wanted to be free and do different things', though she married another boyfriend aged 22 in 1968.[212] The understanding of youth as a fun stage before adulthood and marriage was gendered, however, and more often expressed by young men. This was because marriage was less important to their overall careers and identities whereas marriage provided identity, independence and a purposeful role for women. So while youth could be a period of fun and relative independence for women, economics and cultural expectation surrounding marriage rendered it more a period of preparation for adulthood than it was for young men.

Overall, courtship and sex were central to the lived experiences, meanings and identities of youth in 1960s England. Courtship was closely bound up with young adults' leisure but also contained elements of work. Most young adults had boyfriends or girlfriends during their youth but the nature of these relationships varied with age; moving from the informal 'going out' through the more serious 'going steady' to engagement and marriage – though a relationship could collapse at any stage. The experiences and rituals of courtship were often gendered, though this was beginning to change. The emotional experience of courtship depended on the nature of a young adult's relationship. Attraction to both looks and personality was very important and love became increasingly central, but both existed

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[209] FSMA, Interview 026.
[210] Carter, *Education, Employment and Leisure*, pp. 165–166.
[211] Carter, *Education, Employment and Leisure*, pp. 165–166; Schofield, *The Sexual Behaviour of Young Adults*, p. 125.
[212] FSMA, Interview 128.

alongside more pragmatic considerations. While pre-marital sex became more common there was no sexual revolution in either attitudes or practice among young adults in the 1960s. Indeed, many young adults did not have sex and those who did often did so within relatively conservative frameworks that maintained many gendered double standards, frowned upon pre-marital pregnancy and meant most only had sex within serious relationships. Nevertheless, many young adults enjoyed sex, demonstrating both their agency and ability to reject discourses they disliked. However, many young adults were relatively uneducated about sex and contraceptives, meaning that as well as no revolution in practice or attitude, there was also no revolution in sexual knowledge in the 1960s.

CHAPTER SIX

THE MEANING OF YOUTH

In the 1960s youth was a touchstone for the hopes, fears and changes in society, but this was an understanding largely created and disseminated by those in authority and the media.[1] Psychologists and psychoanalysts saw youth as a period of stress while sociologists perceived it as a period of crisis and socialisation.[2] Again, however, these are the perceptions of experts. Historians have not yet examined what youth meant to 'ordinary' young adults in the 1960s. This chapter addresses this by asking three questions: what did youth mean as a stage in the life cycle in the 1960s? What did youth mean as an experience in the 1960s? What does youth mean at the point of recollection for those remembering their 1960s youth?

Michael Anderson has argued that there was a 'normal' life cycle in the 1960s and 1970s.[3] This implies that particular meanings and experiences of certain life cycle stages also became common. Indeed, during the post-war period, youth as a life cycle stage became more clearly delineated as the average age of marriage fell, youth culture spread across the country and affluence increased, which also created more uniform experiences and meanings.[4] Springhall has convincingly argued that youth is not just a psycho-biological state but a historically specific, socially and culturally defined stage of life in which young people have particular roles.[5] Todd has similarly noted that youth is a subjective life stage, open to political, economic, social and cultural contestation.[6] The meanings of youth in the 1960s are, therefore, historically specific, shaped by contemporary experiences and by the social, political, cultural and economic landscape of the 1960s.

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[1] Osgerby, 'Postwar Media Representations of Youth', pp. 322–323; Davis, *Youth and the Condition of Britain*, pp. 1–2.
[2] Davis, *Youth and the Condition of Britain*, pp. 2–3.
[3] Anderson, 'The Emergence of the Modern Life Cycle', pp. 69–70.
[4] Langhamer, 'Leisure, Pleasure and Courtship', p. 271.
[5] Springhall, *Coming of Age*, p. 8.
[6] Todd, 'Breadwinners and Dependents', p. 58.

Youth was a distinct stage in the life cycle in the 1960s but had flexible and subjective boundaries. Generally, it can be understood as the period between starting paid employment and getting married. As an experience in the 1960s, youth had three common meanings: a period of gaining and exercising independence, a period of fun, and a period of preparation for adulthood. These meanings were shaped by age, gender and the socio-economic landscape and indicate that youth has multiple, subjective meanings as well as common themes. Youth is still meaningful many years later for those who were young adults in the 1960s because it remains an integral part of their selfhood. Overall, the meanings of 1960s youth are produced by an interaction of personal experience (played out against the socio-economic landscape of the period) and popular memories and 'knowledge' of the 1960s and its youth culture.

This is explored here predominantly using personal testimonies. I actively asked my interviewees to reflect on the meanings of youth so their responses are especially illuminating. Mass Observation responses are also useful because the nature of the directives encouraged writers to be reflexive and comparative about youth. Of course, these testimonies are all retrospective. But this is useful because it allows the meanings of youth to be historicised and studied for change over time, and exposes the relationship between experience, memory and selfhood. Contemporary social surveys and responses to the YWP offer important insights into how young adults understood youth during the 1960s but are constrained by their research questions which gave little or no space to understanding youth as a concept or identity rather than an experience.

YOUTH AS A STAGE IN THE LIFE CYCLE

Understanding what youth meant as a stage in the life cycle during the 1960s requires determining when a person became a young adult and when they stopped being one. It can be easy for historians to impose boundaries between life cycle stages and assume these are solid and distinct. However, personal testimonies show that youth is an ambiguous concept; its start and end points marked by multiple and sometimes contradictory metrics. Youth, like all

stages in the life cycle, is flexible, complex and subjective. Nevertheless, personal testimonies do reveal common understandings of youth as a stage in the life cycle among many working- and lower middle-class young adults in the 1960s.

I asked my interviewees when they felt they had become a young adult. Some pointed to starting paid employment as the beginning of youth. Jack simply laughed at the question and said 'work', David replied 'When you leave school I suppose. When you start having earning power of some sort', while Joan said, 'I suppose you'd say when you start work'.[7] Carter found that three quarters of his respondents felt that starting work made them independent and grown up, suggesting this is not just a retrospective assessment.[8] Moving from school to work was an obvious and significant transition in the 1960s, and was mapped onto young adults' understanding of the life cycle. Indeed, as chapter two demonstrated, entering paid employment signalled greater maturity, responsibility, and independence both economically (through wages) and socially (through increased social freedoms and status). School was associated with childhood, whereas work offered more (though incomplete) adult status, meaning that starting work marked the transition from childhood to youth for many. Being a young adult in the 1960s therefore denoted a particular relationship to, experience of, and benefits derived from the labour market.

Others, slightly tautologically, felt they became young adults when they started participating in youth culture during the 1960s. George commented that 'I think I was already a teenager before I was in my teens… from about the age of 9 or 10 I'd certainly become aware about teenage culture… like the rock 'n' roll, the music, the fashions, the style, the way of talking'.[9] When asked when he felt he became a young adult, Joe replied, 'Going on 12 I would think, becoming a teenager because I was doing… the top twenty recording that's what teenagers do.'[10] Marilyn thought she had become a young adult when she met 'up with the

[7] Interview with Jack Draper; Interview with David Canning; Interview with Joan Canning.
[8] Carter, *Education, Employment and Leisure*, p. 23.
[9] Interview with George Connolly
[10] Interview with Joe Knight

twins… As I say they were much more advanced than I was.'[11] These two female friends initiated Marilyn into fashion, music and boyfriends, signalling her transition from childhood to youth. Many felt they became young adults when they began activities they understood as 'typical' of young adults, though, of course, this is influenced both contemporaneously and retrospectively by popular images of 1960s youth culture. Moreover, these comments suggest that participating in youth culture offered young adults a sense of belonging, as discussed in chapter three. Being a young adult was, therefore, also about performing, experiencing and participating in a certain lifestyle and culture.

Some understood their youth as having begun at a particular age. Diana felt she became a young woman at '14, 15… once, I don't know, you've grown up, once menstruation starts', though she also began work at the relatively common age of 16 so her experiences were similar to most.[12] This implies that some understood youth biologically, with puberty and menses marking the transition from childhood. Historians often use cultural rather than biological markers to define age groups, but Diana's comments show that puberty was an important symbol of youth, perhaps particularly for young women. Others associated youth with a particular age because it marked their entry to youth culture. Both Marilyn and Joe suggested they became young adults aged about 12, for example, based on when they first participated in youth culture.[13] This suggests that many people understood youth as a stage in the life cycle defined by particular ages and physical states as well as by certain lifestyles. It also suggests they understood youth as starting at a particular moment rather than being reached through a gradual transition. Some of my interviewees may have been influenced to locate the start of youth at a particular age because I sometimes used the terms 'young adult' and 'teenager' interchangeably to better enable my interviewees to understand which stage of life I was referring to. As 'teenage' tends to cover the ages between 13 and 19, some interviewees may have suggested their youth began at a particular age because they picked up more on the term 'teenager'. Interestingly though, not all those who felt their youth began at a

[11] Interview with Marilyn Shaw.
[12] Interview with Diana Allen.
[13] Interview with Marilyn Shaw; Interview with Joe Knight.

specific age chose 13, reinforcing that biology and participation in youth culture more than a shared understanding of 'teenage' informed their answers.

Moreover, those who specified a particular age at which they entered youth often picked ages younger than that at which they left school. Therefore, while this thesis only considers young adults who had left school, many considered themselves young adults *before* starting paid employment. This suggests that starting work is not the *only* useful marker of the beginning of youth, though many certainly saw it as the boundary between childhood and youth. In the 1960s, therefore, youth did not necessarily begin at the same moment for everyone since defining oneself as a young adult is subjective and can be measured using multiple metrics. Nevertheless, most understood youth as beginning in the mid-teens and paid employment and participation in youth culture were crucial to this as they marked a distinct departure from the experiences, spaces, identities and status of childhood by offering greater social and economic independence. Despite these nuances, this thesis has still taken entering paid employment as the beginning of youth for three reasons. First, starting work and receiving a full-time wage was the first point at which most working- and lower middle-class young people could really participate in youth culture. Second, most working- and lower middle-class young people left school for employment at a similar age in the 1960s, providing a useful and common divide. Third, entering paid employment was seen as the beginning of youth by many people and is easier to pinpoint than the point at which someone began to participate in youth culture.

The YWP asked respondents what they thought made someone an adult and I asked my own interviewees the same question. A small number of YWP respondents said that adulthood began when a person entered paid employment. One 17-year-old male apprentice engineer answered the question 'what sort of things make a boy become an adult' with 'Earning – getting a wage packet every week', while a 19-year-old female comptometer operator replied to the same question about girls by simply commenting, 'Being at work.'[14] This suggests that work is key to understanding and defining stages in the life cycle, but that

[14] YWP, Interviews B227, E17.

there is flexibility over which stages it denotes. Indeed, more thought paid employment marked the start of youth rather than adulthood, suggesting that working and earning alone were not usually enough to give full adult status. Moreover, seeing paid employment as the beginning of adulthood was gendered. Young men cited this more than young women, reflecting gendered work trajectories in the 1960s which still prized marriage as the ultimate career for women, and the fact that paid employment conferred greater independence and status upon young men, as chapter two examined.

Most YWP respondents saw marriage and having children as marking the beginning of adulthood because this required the shouldering of significant responsibility for a household, paying rent or a mortgage, and caring for others. Many potentially also saw this as the beginning of adulthood as it provided greater independence since the young adult would no longer be under the parental roof or control. When asked what made boys and girls adults, one 16-year-old male shop assistant replied, 'Being tied down to a family and having a lot of worries', while a 16-year-old female factory worker thought adulthood started 'when she's married + got kids'.[15] Many of my interviewees echoed this. When asked when she became an adult, Marilyn replied, 'Probably when I got married… you've got responsibility, you've got a baby to look after', while Jack pointed to 'I think probably marriage I would say, particularly at [having] children. That significantly changed things.'[16] Similarly, David thought he became an adult when 'you've got children and you've got to be a little bit responsible and pay the mortgage'.[17] Caring for others and meeting financial obligations featured prominently in interviewees' definitions of adulthood. This suggests that youth was a liminal period in the 1960s in which a person was not entirely dependent on their parents but had not yet had to assume responsibility for others.

Given that those who pointed to marriage and parenthood as the beginning of adulthood were born between 1940 and 1955, this suggests that these were markers of adulthood from the late 1950s through to the early 1970s at least. Certainly, in their 1971

[15] YWP, Interviews A807, D984.
[16] Interview with Marilyn Shaw; Interview with Jack Draper.
[17] Interview with David Canning.

survey, Pearl & Dean noted that people underwent significant changes in lifestyle and spending habits upon marriage, reinforcing that life after marriage was substantially different.[18] It is not, therefore, surprising that many saw marriage as marking the beginning of a new stage in the life cycle. In particular, marriage was associated with assuming new responsibilities – for mortgages, spouses and children – making it distinct from youth, which was, logically therefore, characterised by freedom and a lack of responsibility. Many understood marriage as marking the transition from youth into adulthood because it significantly changed their lifestyle and daily experiences and brought new responsibilities and independence from the home and family.

Responsibility and independence were also seen as signifiers of adulthood more generally. One 16-year-old male trainee motor mechanic thought adulthood was determined by being 'Given a sense of responsibility.'[19] Likewise, a 19-year-old salesman thought a boy became an adult 'When he starts taking on responsibility' and a 16-year-old female factory worker thought adulthood was marked by 'Acting sensible'.[20] An 18-year-old male clerk thought that adulthood entailed 'Independence, having to think for self'.[21] More young men than women saw adulthood as characterised by independence, however, pointing to the fact that adult women did not always enjoy full independence from their husband despite having gained independence from their parents. Further, though many pointed to increased independence and responsibility as marking the start of adulthood, they were often vague on what these entailed apart from the link with marriage and parenthood or when these were gained if it was not through marriage. This suggests that during the 1960s many young adults were not entirely sure what being an adult involved or quite when they would become one. This again implies that the boundaries between life stages were flexible and ambiguous. It also suggests that interviewees who later pinpointed marriage as the start of adulthood may have been influenced by hindsight that made them more certain than they would have been

[18] Pearl & Dean Ltd., *The Young Market*, p. 10.
[19] YWP, Interview A642.
[20] YWP, Interviews B25, D502.
[21] YWP, Interview B103.

about the transition during the 1960s. Nevertheless, in seeing adulthood as characterised by responsibility and independence, YWP respondents implied that they understood youth as being defined by a lack of responsibility and incomplete (through growing) independence. Ultimately adulthood was defined not by age, but by role, lifestyle, responsibility and marital status.

The YWP also asked respondents whether they considered themselves to be adults at the time of interview. Only a small number felt that they were, usually due to paid employment, interactions with older people and because they considered themselves mature.[22] Many suggested they were adults in some ways but not in others, implying that youth was a transitional phase. One 19-year-old salesman said he was 'On the way to being' an adult, while a 17-year-old male management trainee replied 'I suppose I am in a way but I still like a bit of fun.'[23] One 16-year-old female factory worker noted that 'I'm a teenager… I'm not an adult + I'm not a child', and an 18-year old female hosiery worker commented that 'I think of myself as a teenager… I think teenagers get more fun.'[24] These comments suggest that youth was very different to adulthood (particularly because it entailed more fun) but also contained some elements that were adult-like, such as paid employment. Moreover, they imply that youth was in some ways a preparation for adulthood but also that it was a very separate stage of life to adulthood. This makes the relationship between life stages fuzzy and complex. Adulthood, youth and childhood are inherently linked but also separate. During youth, young adults were often acutely aware that they were in an in-between stage where they were becoming adults but that this also constituted a life stage in its own right with its own roles, lifestyles and meanings.

When the experiences and understandings of 'ordinary' people are analysed it becomes difficult to establish any concrete boundaries between childhood and youth, youth and adulthood. Nevertheless, patterns are discernable. Entering paid employment was a significant marker of the beginning of youth, though age and participation in youth culture

[22] YWP, Interviews A218, D8.
[23] YWP, Interviews B25, B114.
[24] YWP, Interviews D750, E893.

were also important. Adulthood was often defined ambiguously as a period of responsibility and independence, premised sometimes on paid employment but more usually on marriage and parenthood. Consequently, and remaining mindful of these nuances, youth in the 1960s can most usefully be defined as the stage of life between entering paid employment and getting married, which roughly translates into the ages between 15 and 22-24.

YOUTH AS A LIVED EXPERIENCE

In the 1960s, young adults consciously saw themselves as part of a distinct generation and, for them, youth as a lived experience had three overlapping and sometimes contradictory meanings. It was a time of fun and freedom, a time of growing independence, and also a time of preparation for adulthood. A variety of different factors including economics, gender and age shaped these meanings. Ultimately, therefore, while these three meanings of youth were common among young people, the exact meaning of youth remained subjective. Moreover, there is some tension in these three meanings. In particular, 1960s youth can be understood as a preparation for adulthood or as a standalone stage in the lifecycle unconnected to future stages. However, these seemingly contradictory meanings do not have to be problematic. Instead, youth in the 1960s was a complex category composed of a variety of lived experiences and multiple, historically contingent meanings.

Youth was a particularly meaningful stage in the life cycle during the 1960s because young adults saw themselves as part of a distinct generation living in a specific moment. In the 1993 MOA directive on 'Growing Up' several respondents referred to 'my generation', meaning people who were young adults during the 1960s.[25] One male respondent, born in 1946, wrote that 'we thought of ourselves as a really smart generation, and superior to the previous generation', suggesting that not only did young adults feel a collective belonging in the 1960s but also that they were different to previous generations.[26] George noted that his generation were those born in the 'baby boom, of the post war period', firmly locating their

[25] MOA, Spring 1993 Directive, W1813, M1593.
[26] MOA, Spring 1993 Directive, M1593.

youthful experiences in the 1950s and 1960s and suggesting that their lives were shaped by a particular historical moment.[27] This sense of belonging to a distinct and particular generation was facilitated, as demonstrated in chapter four, by the fact that during youth young adults increasingly socialised with peers rather than family.

As the introduction to this thesis outlined, during the 1960s several factors made young adults both more visible and cohesive as a generation. This amplified how meaningful youth was since it created a sense of identity and belonging. In particular, affluence afforded young adults greater spending power and encouraged the market to produce and advertise goods to them on an unprecedented scale.[28] Young adults thus became increasingly visible as a distinct generation through their consumer choices. Indeed, specific fashions were increasingly aimed at young adults. Laurie and Michael Brake have both argued that shared fashions helped spread youth culture in the 1960s and, by acting like a uniform, created social cohesion and a sense of belonging among young people.[29] In the 1960s young adults were also increasingly visible and cohesive due to shared (though not always identical) experiences in work and leisure, as demonstrated in chapters two and three. Indeed, as Simon Frith has argued, growing up at a particular time means that people share experiences that differentiate them from older and younger generations.[30] Young adults themselves recognised that they were part of a specific generation who were young at a specific time. The meanings they attached to youth were therefore both historically contingent and based on shared experiences and a sense of belonging that could mask the many variations and fractures in young adults' lived experiences.

For many, youth in the 1960s was about gaining and exercising independence both socially and economically. Indeed, as Frith has argued, youth is about the movement from childhood dependence to adult independence.[31] In particular, many thought paid employment afforded them greater independence as young adults in the 1960s. As chapter two

[27] Interview with George Connolly.
[28] Abrams, *The Teenage Consumer*, p. 3.
[29] Laurie, *The Teenage Revolution*, p. 50; Brake, *Comparative Youth Culture*, pp. 11–12.
[30] Frith, 'The Sociology of Youth', p. 308.
[31] Frith, 'The Sociology of Youth', p. 304.

demonstrated, it gave young adults greater economic and social independence by providing wages and by offering a more adult status that translated into increasingly relaxed parental controls. Hanmer noted that, for her respondents, being a worker was seen to offer greater independence than had been experienced as a school student, while Carter found that work gave young adults a sense of both dignity and freedom.[32] Joan remarked that earning money 'was good because you got your independence then' and Bill noted that moving from tipping up to paying board 'was really a very big thing because it meant that that child was going to become financially independent.'[33] This suggests that wages were key to the independence gained through paid employment as they provided spending money, a sense of self worth, and less dependent relationships with parents. Chapter three also showed that young adults gained increasing independence in and through their leisure activities. For example, George described his youth as being characterised by 'a tremendous amount of freedom… all the freedoms we wanted' since he was allowed to pursue the activities and friendships that he liked.[34]

Several interviewees and MOA respondents recalled challenging older values during their youth, implying that theirs was an independent generation in outlook and attitude. As Alice put it, the 1960s 'was a time of immense change when a whole generation called into question the actions, attitudes, life styles and perceptions of those who'd gone before them'.[35] Another female Mass Observer, born in 1951, wrote that 'In every age, the younger generation has sought to establish its differences from the older generation – that is part of what "growing up" is all about.'[36] She suggested that seeking independence by establishing distinct values is a universal part of youth rather than one exclusive to the 1960s. Joe suggested that his generation had challenged older values by commenting that 'compared to the older generation we were more free spirited… there was a feeling in my generation of

[32] Hanmer, *Girls at Leisure*, p. 26; Carter, *Education, Employment and Leisure*, pp. 97–98.
[33] Interview with Joan Canning; SFL, Interview with Mr M10L.
[34] Interview with George Connolly.
[35] MOA, Spring 1993 Directive, W1813.
[36] MOA, Spring 1993 Directive, H1745.

"woah, look at all the modern things!"'[37] He suggested that by embracing opportunity young adults in the 1960s had asserted a kind of independence that was forward looking, optimistic and even adventurous. Certainly, these memories of challenging the status quo may be influenced and exaggerated by popular memories of a permissive and progressive 1960s. As chapter one demonstrated, people can reject popular memories of the 1960s that do not reflect their own lived experiences, but these popular memories nevertheless shape how people understand their youth in the period. Put simply, people may not have overtly challenged established values in their youth or led a permissive lifestyle, but they can still understand the 1960s generally as being about change and permissiveness. Youth in the 1960s was therefore about gaining independence not simply in material terms, but also from older values and attitudes. Indeed, as chapter four argued, these differing values between the generations should be seen as assertions of independence rather than evidence of generational conflict.

However, independence was not absolute during youth. How much independence a young adult enjoyed, as shown in chapters two, three and four, was dependent on age, gender, wages, and parental control. Instead, youth was a period in which independence was gradually increased. Older young adults – particularly young men – enjoyed more independence in terms of curfews and restrictions than their younger counterparts and many young women. While Abrams has argued that young women in the 1960s could embrace more opportunities and independence than their mothers, this does not mean they enjoyed these to the extent that their brothers did.[38] Indeed, Vivian recalled that 'I felt very much aggrieved that my older brother who was allowed to do things which I wasn't allowed to do, because I was told well he is a boy it's different. Very much resented that.'[39] As chapters two and three demonstrated, young women were also less economically independent since they tended to earn less than young men. Moreover, even when young women began to court seriously in their later teens and early twenties, and so move away from some parental control, they were still not fully independent since boyfriends often assumed supervisory

[37] Interview with Joe Knight.
[38] Abrams, 'Liberating the Female Self', pp. 68–70.
[39] SFL, Interview with Mrs L5B.

roles, as chapter five demonstrated. The meaning of youth as a period of growing independence in the 1960s was therefore conditioned by age and gender.

Youth as a period of growing independence was not an exclusively 1960s phenomenon, however. Springhall has defined youth between the late nineteenth and mid-twentieth centuries as a period of semi-dependency on parents and adults.[40] Davies, Fowler, Todd and Langhamer have all shown that young adults enjoyed increasing social and economic independence in the early and mid-twentieth century and that many understood youth as a period of freedom.[41] Yet while youth had long been characterised by the attainment and augmentation of independence, this was heightened in the 1960s due to the increasing affluence of young people and the fact that their challenges to established authority were more vocal than before – though possibly only because the media exaggerated the extent of sub- and countercultural rebellion and generational conflict. In other words, some of what made 1960s youth seem more independent than previous generations was the very 'myth' of the 1960s and its youth culture and this may have influenced people's retrospective assessments of their own youths. Nevertheless, in the 1960s many working- and lower middle-class young adults certainly did gain *real* social and economic independence – though age, gender, wages and parental control determined its extent.

Many also understood youth in the 1960s as a period of fun with few responsibilities and as unconnected to future adulthood. As Frith has argued, youth in mid-twentieth-century Britain was about leisure and pleasure.[42] When asked how he would sum up the 1960s, Joe replied, 'enjoyable and a laugh a minute… Yeah just a ball, a laugh a minute'.[43] Marilyn responded to the same question by saying that it was an 'absolutely fantastic time'.[44] Chapter three demonstrated that leisure helped to define youth as a period of fun in the 1960s and, as chapter four demonstrated, friends were often central to these experiences of fun. Not only

[40] Springhall, *Coming of Age*, p. 3.
[41] Davies, *Leisure, Gender and Poverty*, pp. 82–83; Fowler, *The First Teenagers*, p. 167; Todd, 'Young Women, Work and Leisure', p. 791; Langhamer, *Women's Leisure*, pp. 49–50.
[42] Frith, 'The Sociology of Youth', p. 311.
[43] Interview with Joe Knight.
[44] Interview with Marilyn Shaw.

was youth culture associated with dances, pop music, fashion and coffee bars in the media, but the majority of working- and lower middle-class young adults regularly experienced these activities as part of their daily lives and often thoroughly enjoyed doing so. Horn has hypothesised that all generations think their youth was the best time of their lives and a period of enjoyment, which, if true, would again imply that youth in the 1960s was not unusual in being characterised as a period of fun.[45] However, once again, structural factors intensified how much fun young adults experienced in the 1960s as well as reducing the amount of responsibility they were expected to shoulder.

For example, Diana had few chores as a young woman because 'I can always remember my mother saying "you'll have enough to do of your own" once married.' [46] This separated youth from adulthood, particularly for young women, making the former a period of no responsibilities in comparison to the latter. Indeed, during the 1960s, as chapter two showed, many young adults had fewer domestic responsibilities than predecessors and some had none at all. This meant that young adults had more leisure time and so saw their youth as a period of fun and little responsibility. This was particularly relevant to young women who had often shouldered significant domestic labour earlier in the century, meaning that in the 1960s the idea of youth as a period of fun levelled out between men and women. It also suggests parents understood youth as a period of fun and freedom in the 1960s because they reduced their children's chores, as Todd and Young have argued.[47] Relative affluence meant that young adults in the 1960s were more able to pursue commercial leisure, as chapter three demonstrated. Moreover, since most lived at home and families as a whole benefitted from increasing affluence, young adults had little financial responsibility. Their wages were less crucial for subsistence and so they often retained a greater proportion as spends. Moreover, the low average age of marriage in the 1960s, as discussed in chapter five, compressed youth at the upper end and intensified the pressure for it to be a period of fun before settling down

[45] Horn, *Juke Box Britain*, p. 7.
[46] Interview with Diana Allen.
[47] Todd and Young, 'Baby-Boomers to "Beanstalkers"'.

into married life, particularly for young men because marriage was less central to their identities. As Joe put it, 'I did not want to be married… I just want[ed] to have fun'.[48]

Many interviewees commented or implied that youth in the 1960s was a period of fun because it was characterised by a lack of responsibility. Hanmer noted that the young women she studied could pursue many different leisure activities because they had relatively few responsibilities.[49] When asked to sum up what it was like being a young adult in the 1960s, David replied, 'It was a good time… no responsibilities, sufficient money to do what I wanted to do, good group of friends'.[50] Similarly, when asked what the best thing about being a young adult had been, Joan replied, 'no responsibilities… you didn't have to work to pay a mortgage or anything then.'[51] In some ways, therefore, youth in the 1960s was defined and given meaning by what it was not. Of course, interviewees' hindsight may have encouraged them to overemphasise the carefreeness of youth, but, as shown, most did enjoy a lack of responsibility in the 1960s. For many, youth meant a period of fun and freedom without the responsibilities they associated with future adulthood. Youth was therefore understood as a distinct stage of the life cycle with its own lifestyle and meanings, separate from both childhood and adulthood. This meaning of youth was derived from the activities and experiences young adults had in the 1960s, particularly in terms of their leisure and friendships, which were, in turn, made possible by the social and economic climate of the period.

For many, youth in the 1960s also meant preparation for adulthood. Indeed, as Frith has observed, youth is a time of socialisation into adult roles.[52] Many contemporary social surveys understood 1960s youth in these terms and depicted it as a life cycle stage requiring close supervision to ensure a successful transition to adulthood.[53] The surveys' depictions of

[48] Interview with Joe Knight.
[49] Hanmer, *Girls at Leisure*, p. 26.
[50] Interview with David Canning.
[51] Interview with Joan Canning.
[52] Frith, 'The Sociology of Youth', p. 357.
[53] Barron Mays, *The Young Pretenders*; Bazalgette, *Freedom, Authority and the Young Adult*; Chesser, Davey, Gorer, Maclure, Nichols and Watson, *Teenage Morals*; Goetschius, *Working With Unattached Youth*; Prince, *Teenagers Today*; Veness, *School Leavers*.

youth as a preparation for adulthood were influenced by contemporary social anxieties in the 1960s about the family and delinquency at a time when young adults were touchstones for the hopes and fears of society. In the surveys, it was usually the author rather than the voices of the young adults they studied that painted youth as a period of preparation for adulthood. Some Mass Observers and some of my interviewees, however, also understood youth as preparation for adulthood. This suggests that such an understanding is usually only held retrospectively by those who were young adults in the 1960s. Of course, this is impossible to test for certain given that the interview schedules and research notes of most of the contemporary surveys no longer exist.

Interviewees who did suggest youth in the 1960s was about preparing for adulthood tended to point to courtship and marriage as examples. Though many young adults were apprehensive about settling down too quickly and curtailing youth as a period of fun, some, as chapter five demonstrated, were thinking ahead to marriage. One male MOA respondent, born in 1947, wrote that, aged 18, 'rather than go to university, I wanted to start earning so that we could save up to get married.'[54] When asked to sum up the 1960s, Marilyn commented that 'all you wanted to do basically was have a boyfriend… and to be married.'[55]

However, this understanding of youth was aged, gendered and influenced by memory. Many possibly only saw youth as a preparation for adulthood retrospectively once they had already married and experienced the shift in responsibilities this necessitated. Second, young adults tended to see youth as a preparation for adulthood and marriage only in their late teens and early twenties when courtship became more serious. Third, it was predominantly young women who conceived of their youth in this way since, as chapter five noted, marriage remained the 'ultimate' career for women. However, Carter suggested that the young women he surveyed expected to have control in their marriages and for their husbands to help domestically.[56] This implies that young women hoped to carry forward into

[54] Mass Observation Archive, University of Sussex (MOA), SxMOA2/1/79/3, Autumn 2006 Directive, S3035.
[55] Interview with Marilyn Shaw.
[56] Carter, *Education, Employment and Leisure*, pp. 165–166.

marriage the independence and agency they had gained in youth, influenced by contemporary rhetoric surrounding companionate marriage and their desire to live different lives to their mothers.[57] Though some young women understood youth as a period of preparation for adulthood, therefore, they did not expect marriage to undo the freedoms and opportunities they had experienced as young adults.

Youth could also be understood as preparation for adulthood in other ways in the 1960s. In particular, as chapter two explored, paid employment gave young adults a more adult status and can be seen as a preparation for and introduction to a lifetime of work. Even the (albeit reduced) chores and domestic tasks young adults undertook, particularly for young women, can be seen as teaching them the skills necessary to maintain a home successfully as adults. Yet that increasing numbers were exempt from chores and that these tasks were often less onerous than earlier in the twentieth century means that understandings of youth as preparation for adulthood could be subordinated to understandings of it as a period of fun. Moreover, as chapters two and three demonstrated, youth gave young adults their first experiences of balancing contributions to the family economy with their own spending and saving, which may have offered some preparation for more complex financial management in adulthood.

Ultimately, as a lived experience, youth in the 1960s had multiple and sometimes contradictory meanings. It was a period of attaining and exercising independence, a standalone period of fun, and a period of preparation for adulthood. Youth took on these meanings in the 1960s due to the socio-economic landscape of the period. Though these meanings could contradict each other, this is not problematic. Instead, it indicates that the meaning of 1960s youth was multiple and subjective. Indeed, what youth meant to any one individual at any given moment was shaped by age, gender, economics and their relationship with their parents. Nevertheless, youth in the 1960s did contain some important shared experiences and trajectories and so was commonly understood as a period of relative independence, a period of fun, and as a preparation for adulthood

[57] Abrams, 'Mothers and Daughters', pp. 69–70; Davis, *Modern Motherhood*, p. 180.

YOUTH IN CONTEXT

The meanings youth had as both a stage in the life cycle and an experience in the 1960s were historically contingent, shaped by the socio-economic landscape of the 1960s. The meanings of youth are also historically contingent on an individual and epistemological level. Indeed, as chapter one demonstrated, even where people contradict popular images of the 1960s because their own experiences do not match up to them, those generalisations still shape their understanding of the period. The 'knowledge' people who were young adults in the 1960s have about that period therefore structures their memories of and the meanings they attach to youth. But this is not simply nostalgia or simple acceptance of popular discourse and to see it as such is dismissive. It is instead a system of knowledge – certainly not immune to critique as chapter one shows – where the present and past interact to shape understandings of the meanings, experiences and context of 1960s youth. This is what Ben Jones calls the difference between experience as lived and experience as reflected upon.[58] Over time, the 'everyday' material experiences of youth people had in the 1960s become a narrative shaped not only by those original experiences but also by socio-political trends, events and discourses.[59]

Many interviewees and MOA respondents saw youth culture as central to the 1960s in England and thought that youth culture had been a defining part of their young adult experiences. When recalling her memories of youth in the late 1960s, one Mass Observer, born in 1954, pointed to 'A very rich youth culture, particularly in the sphere of music'.[60] Marilyn had been eager to leave school at 15 because it was 'the era of… rock and roll… you just wanted to be out and dancing… jiving and buying records', again highlighting the appeal of a youth culture centred around pop music in the 1960s.[61] George noted that he had 'become aware about teenage culture' as young as nine or ten and had thought 'how wonderful and how exciting. It must be wonderful to be a teenager', suggesting that youth culture was not

[58] Ben Jones, *The Working Class in Mid-Twentieth-Century England: Community, Identity and Social Memory*, (Manchester, 2012), p. 6.
[59] Jones, *The Working Class in Mid-Twentieth-Century England*, pp. 4–6.
[60] MOA, Spring 1993 Directive, B2197.
[61] Interview with Marilyn Shaw.

only visible and widespread but also enticing.[62] When asked to sum up the 1960s, Jack commented that 'there was [sic] these major changes particularly in the sort of youth culture and the pop scene', implying that part of the appeal and visibility of youth culture in the period was its novelty and innovation.[63]

These people were young adults during the 1960s so it is unsurprising that youth culture is central to their understanding of the period. Their association of the 1960s with youth culture is also strengthened by the fact that youth culture became more visible than ever before in the period. As Laurie noted in his 1965 essay, *The Teenage Revolution*, during the 1950s and 1960s there was a nationwide communication of youth culture as young people across the country came into contact with each other physically, through new media technologies and through shared fashions and styles.[64] Davis, Donnelly and Fowler have also argued that youth culture gained increased prominence and visibility from the 1950s onwards through media and commercial attention.[65] Though popular memories of youth culture do not accurately describe all the lived experiences of many young adults in the 1960s, young adults' leisure activities often were similar to those depicted in popular images. For many, therefore, it was not difficult to see their own youth as similar to the ideas of 1960s youth culture and to understand it as a period of fun, excitement and freedom. These understandings of youth as being about fun and freedom are therefore derived not only from the experiences people had as young adults in the 1960s, but also from the way they understand the zeitgeist of the period.

When asked to sum up the 1960s in general interviewees also drew on six other key themes: freedom, affluence, full employment, progress, post-war optimism and challenges to established values. This 'knowledge' about the 1960s shaped the meanings respondents attached to their youths. One woman, born in 1954 characterised the 1960s as 'the era of consensus on full employment', while another, born in 1952 noted that the 1960s were a time

[62] Interview with George Connolly.
[63] Interview with Jack Draper.
[64] Laurie, *The Teenage Revolution*, pp. 11–12.
[65] Davis, *Youth and the Condition of Britain*, pp. 1–2; Donnelly, *Sixties Britain*, p. 36; Fowler, *Youth Culture in Modern Britain*, pp. 133–135.

when 'the attitudes of previous generations… [were] questioned'.[66] Jim commented that, in the 1960s, 'everything seemed to be great, there was more money around, there was more freedom… a sense of rebellion against the old ways'.[67] Jack saw the 1960s as a period of change in youth culture but also in women's liberation and the material conditions of the working classes through building programmes: 'They demolished the centre of Birmingham… what it was doing was giving people a fresh start'.[68] Marilyn also thought the 1960s had been a period of change: 'there's more technology… a lot of stuff was coming over from America… people were more independent… women were starting to slightly get a little bit better'.[69] George described the 1960s as 'a tremendous surge of newness' and thought that 'the baby boom of the post-war period… was the most blessed generation… free healthcare, free education, free university education… and all of those wonderful post-war benefits'.[70]

These comments, particularly George's, echo Steedman's famous quotation: 'I would be a very different person now if orange juice and milk and dinners at school hadn't told me in a covert way, that I had a right to exist, that I was worth something.'[71] Those who were young adults in the 1960s saw the period as one of opportunity, empowerment, comfort, affluence and security for themselves and the working and lower middle classes more generally. Indeed, Todd has argued that the twentieth century is about the working class gaining increasing political and economic power.[72] She sees the 1950s and 1960s as the high point of this as 'working-class heroes' in literature and film epitomised the fact that working-class life was becoming more valued; suggesting that 'those who came of age in the late 1950s and early 1960s were particularly affected as they believed that they deserved a better life than their parents' due to full employment, the welfare state and rising affluence'.[73] Seeing the 1960s as characterised by freedom, affluence, full employment, progress, post-war

[66] MOA, Spring 1993 Directive, C2295, C2677.
[67] SFL, Interview with Mr R1P.
[68] Interview with Jack Draper.
[69] Interview with Marilyn Shaw.
[70] Interview with George Connolly.
[71] Steedman, *Landscape for a Good Woman*, p. 122.
[72] Todd, *The People*.
[73] Todd, *The People*, pp. 236–237.

optimism and challenges to established values therefore shaped the way people understood their experiences and the meanings they attached to youth. In particular, that they experienced the increasing social, political and economic comfort, importance and status of the working class meant those who were young adults in the 1960s viewed youth and the 1960s positively. Characterising the 1960s as a period of affluence and full employment allowed interviewees to see their youth as about economic independence. Seeing the challenging of older values and freedom as key themes of the 1960s allowed interviewees to understand their youth as being about the extension and exercise of social independence. Depicting the 1960s as a time of increased opportunity, optimism and excitement allowed them to view their experiences as characterised by fun.

Interviewees and MOA respondents also developed their meanings of youth by comparing their memories and experiences of life as young adults in the 1960s with the present day. Generally, this comparison was unfavourable to the present. Responses to the MOA Spring 1993 directive on 'Growing Up' are particularly useful here as the directive directly asked respondents to compare their own experiences with the present and even told respondents that it had been motivated by current media attention on youth violence and delinquency.[74] This naturally prompted Mass Observers to compare the 1960s with the 1990s, and provides insight into how understandings of one's own youth are shaped by the interaction of present concerns and 'knowledge' of the past.

Some saw young adults in the 1960s as more respectful and less trouble than present counterparts. One female MOA respondent, born in 1945, wrote that 'it does seem more of us behaved ourselves better years ago'.[75] Another, born in 1948, commented that 'the old rules were still in place' when she was a young adult while referring to 'gangs' of young adults in the present who 'terrorize' local people, suggesting that her own generation had been better behaved.[76] One female respondent, born in 1951, felt that 'respect for authority has declined', implying that her own generation had been more compliant and less rebellious, while Joan

[74] MOA, Spring 1993 Directive.
[75] MOA, Spring 1993 Directive, B2170.
[76] MOA, Spring 1993 Directive, C1713.

similarly felt that her generation had been 'vastly different from today's teenagers… Because we had standards you see'.[77] Ironically, during the 1960s young adults were presented as delinquent and disrespectful by the media and authority but in later life people of that generation then criticised present-day young adults in the same way. This suggests, as Springhall has argued, that social anxieties about youth recurred throughout the twentieth century.[78] Nevertheless, by seeing their own generation as more respectful and less rebellious than present young adults, interviewees and MOA respondents implied that their youth meant adherence to rules and principles of respectability. In doing so they challenged ideas of 1960s generational conflict because they saw themselves as closer to their elders behaviourally and attitudinally than present-day young adults were to them.

Others suggested that the 1960s was a time of freedom and innocence compared to the present. One female Mass Observer, born in 1948, wrote that 'I feel the world is a less safe place than when I grew up' while another, born in 1954, explained that she felt children in the 1990s had less freedom to go out by themselves in comparison to her own experiences in the 1960s.[79] Similarly, when asked to compare the 1960s to 2015, Marilyn commented that 'I think it's a more dangerous world [today]. A much more dangerous world really', noting that fights between Mods and Rockers paled in comparison to being 'frightened to bump into anybody these days'.[80] In retrospective personal testimonies, seeing one's childhood as inhabiting a more innocent time is a common trope. Thomson and Helgren have both shown how interviewees often feel that childhood and youth are not what they used to be and have argued that this nostalgia can help anchor the interviewee's identity.[81] Indeed, by suggesting that 1960s youth entailed more freedom and safety than the present, interviewees were able to evidence and legitimise their understanding of 1960s youth as being about freedom, independence and fun. It also gave them a sense of place and time, which in turn reinforced

[77] MOA, Spring 1993 Directive, H1745; Interview with Joan Canning.
[78] Springhall, *Youth, Popular Culture and Moral Panics*.
[79] MOA, Spring 1993 Directive, C2079, C2295.
[80] Interview with Marilyn Shaw.
[81] Thomson, *Lost Freedom*, pp. 1–2; Helgren, 'Oral History Narratives, Nostalgia and Girls' Safety'.

how far they felt part of a particular generation that experienced youth at a particular historical moment.

A few also saw young adults in the present as more pressurised than they had been in the 1960s. One female Mass Observer, born in 1950, commented that 'I'm glad I'm not a teenager in the 90's [sic], but was one in the 60's [sic] instead. Teenagers these days seem to be under more pressure in some ways, particularly as regards their exams and schoolwork' and because of high youth unemployment.[82] Similarly, Sylvia noted that in the present (late 1980s) 'kids are so disenchanted, they come through here with no jobs', again pointing to the high youth unemployment of the 1980s as a reason why present-day youth compared unfavourably to the 1960s.[83] In seeing the present as a more difficult period in which to be a young adult, youth in the 1960s, by comparison, could be seen as being about fun and freedom. Consequently, the meaning of youth is not derived only from past experiences, discourses and memories, but is also shaped by comparing these with the present.

Indeed, Jones and Todd have both examined how changing political, economic and social circumstances shape people's interpretations of the past. Todd reflects on the fact that 'the stories people offer us about the past are framed by the context in which they are told', which means that her respondents' memories of the post-war years were shaped by having lived through and with the legacy of the Thatcherite removal of full employment, affluence and a comprehensive welfare state.[84] Jones similarly argues that it is unsurprising people consider the mid-twentieth century a 'golden age' given the aftermath of the 2008 economic crash as well as the political and social upheaval of the 1980s and 1990s.[85] Many of the respondents in this thesis were similarly affected because they gave their life histories or wrote for Mass Observation between the late 1980s and mid-2010s. Jones also discusses how change over time results in not only different experiences of being working class, but

[82] MOA, Spring 1993 Directive, K798.
[83] FSMA, Interview 147.
[84] Todd, *The People*, p. 5.
[85] Jones, *The Working Class in Mid-Twentieth-Century England*, p. 208.

different understandings of class.[86] The same is true of understandings of age. Those who were young adults in the 1960s see youth as having had a particular meaning in that historical moment that no longer exists for young adults in the 1980s, 1990s or mid-2010s due to changes in political, economic and social circumstances. The meanings people attach to their youths within retrospective personal testimonies are therefore shaped by social, economic and political shifts that have occurred since the 1960s. Given their understanding of the 1960s as something of a 'golden age', it is unsurprising that the upheavals from the late 1970s onwards reinforce their understanding of 1960s youth as about fun, freedom, opportunity and a lack of responsibility.

Overall, the meaning of youth is not only based on the experiences people had as young adults. It is also shaped by the passage of time, people's 'knowledge' of the 1960s, and their comparison of this with the present. In other words, memories of youth and the 1960s play an important role in shaping the meanings of youth. The meanings of youth are therefore historically contingent in three ways: through the structural factors that shaped experience at the time, through the popular images of the 1960s that affect people's memories and 'knowledge', and through subsequent historical shifts that are then compared to the 1960s. In particular, assumptions of the 1960s based on youth culture and an optimistic post-war moment are central to shaping the multiple meanings of youth as a period of fun, freedom and relative independence. Of course, this 'knowledge' of the 1960s is partly mythical, based on popular memories that do not always accurately portray the lives of 'ordinary' people. Nevertheless, as chapter one demonstrated, while people can actively critique these popular images, such images have significant power and influence. Representations (both contemporary and subsequent) of the 1960s and its youth culture are not therefore completely divorced from the experiences, memories and meanings of youth, though they must always be examined critically. Instead, while these representations can be critiqued, they play a critical role in shaping both the memories and meanings of youth and, as this thesis has shown, do sometimes reflect the real lived experiences of young adults in the 1960s.

[86] Jones, *The Working Class in Mid-Twentieth-Century England*, pp. 202–208.

MEMORY AND THE SELF

Since memory plays an important role in shaping the meanings of youth, those meanings are necessarily subjective and changeable over time. Nevertheless, as this chapter has shown, there are common themes and general meanings of youth held by many. Moreover, how a person thinks about their youth shapes their present self, as chapter one demonstrated. This section examines how reflexive interviewees are about the processes of memory and analyses why youth is important to the life stories of many of those who were young adults in the 1960s. As Todd has put it, 'The significance of youth is grounded not only in its distinctiveness as a life stage, but also in the ways youthful experience informs adult identity and memory.'[87]

Some interviewees and MOA respondents were acutely aware of the processes and tricks of memory inherent in their recollections of youth. Alice wrote that 'I suppose my memories are coloured by the excitement of growing up and becoming more independent. Those years felt exciting and colourful'.[88] Alice assumed her youth was an inherently exciting time because it involved gaining independence and took place in an exciting historical moment, though she acknowledged that these assumptions potentially altered her analysis or created selective recollection. I asked Marilyn if how she thought about her youth had changed over time and she replied,

> I think we all look through life with rose coloured glasses, don't we?... obviously I'm saying to you I've had a lovely childhood, I'm sure sometime over that time there must have been… fall outs or aggravation… But, like, I can never remember… I'm sure if I'd had a bad time… I would have remembered it.[89]

Marilyn acknowledged that the passage of time can flatten, warp and even erase memories, yet she stood by her conviction that her youth had been positive because she felt confident that had it been significantly otherwise she would have remembered this. George acknowledged that popular memories of the 1960s as a period of liberation were 'clearly illusory' and that 'you have kind of rose tinted sort of spectacles to look back on', but still

[87] Todd, 'Breadwinners and Dependents', p. 61.
[88] MOA, Spring 2003 Directive, W1813.
[89] Interview with Marilyn Shaw.

asserted that 'it's a great period… I still think it was a great period to be alive.'[90] Despite critiquing popular images of the 1960s because his own experiences were different, George still felt his youth was fun, exciting and that the 1960s were generally, if not absolutely, characterised by change and progress.

As chapter one suggested, people recall their youths in certain ways, influenced by both popular memories and personal experience, to achieve composure. The above examples demonstrate, however, that people can be highly reflexive about these processes and about why they remember the 1960s and their youths in certain ways. Yet even the more reflexive interviewees stand by understandings of youth in the 1960s as a period of fun and freedom. This not only implies that youth *did* entail and mean these things in the 1960s, but also shows how important these meanings are to individuals who hold them as 'true' even when critical of their construction. People who were young adults in the 1960s are, therefore, not passive in their negotiation of popular memories of the period or in how and why they understand their youth in particular ways. Yet, while they can be critical, the meanings they attach to their youth are still linked to popular images of youth and the 1960s because these are powerful discourses and because they do bear some relation to lived experiences.

For many who were young adults in the 1960s, their youth remained an important part of their identity and selfhood many years later when they were interviewed. Indeed, when asked when they thought they became an adult, several of the people I interviewed joked that they were not adults but were still young adults. George laughed and said, 'I think there's an awful lot of the teenage George still in here, y'know!' while Diana laughed and replied, 'I haven't!'[91] When asked 'when do you become an adult?' David replied, 'Oooh never!' before stating that it was when you acquired a mortgage and children. David also noted that he still regularly met up with friends made while he was an apprentice and that on their last reunion 'we were instantly apprentices… I went over to the bar to order a round of drinks and the

[90] Interview with George Connolly.
[91] Interview with George Connolly; Interview with Diana Allen.

barman said "what are all you old folk on about?", "what's he mean, old folk!?"'[92] David, Diana and George all implied that they did not feel like old, retired men and women despite the fact that all were in or nearing their 70s in 2015 when I interviewed them. Instead, they still felt like their young adult selves and could easily slip back into that self. In some respects, therefore, they *were* still young adults. Indeed, this may have been a protective mechanism to assert their self worth given that, as Thane has argued, older people are often overlooked and undervalued in modern England.[93]

Bugge and Osgerby have argued that youth culture, since the post-war period, is no longer the preserve only of the young as marketers aim products and services at those who *feel*, or want to feel, young.[94] In some ways, therefore, since the mid-twentieth century youth has become less, or at least not wholly, age bound and more a state of mind and a lifestyle. Indeed, as one female Mass Observer, born in 1955, put it in when asked to define stages of the life cycle, 'I think that you are as young as you feel. Youth is an attitude of mind'.[95] In the same directive, a male respondent, born in 1946, wrote that 'I am reliably informed by my wife that I have never been young', implying that his attitudes and demeanour were 'old' rather than youthful and that youth is, consequently, a state of mind and type of behaviour rather than only an age.[96] Moreover, as Springhall has argued, youth (meaning the age-bound period between 15 and 22-24, rather than the psychological state) is the stage of life in which people learn who they are.[97] As such, the identities and selfhoods people developed as young adults in the 1960s stay with them throughout their subsequent lives, meaning that oral history interviewees can still feel like the same person they were as a young adult 50 years previously. This persistence of a youthful identity is further legitimised by the marketization of youth that Bugge and Osgerby identify.

[92] Interview with David Canning.
[93] Pat Thane, *Old Age in English History: Past Experiences, Present Issues*, (Oxford, 2000), pp. 1–2.
[94] Bugge, 'Marketing to Youth in Britain', p. 189; Osgerby, 'Youth Culture', p. 127.
[95] MOA, Spring 1993 Directive, C1191.
[96] MOA, Spring 1993 Directive, M1593.
[97] Springhall, *Coming of Age*, p. 3.

Consequently, their youth is hugely meaningful and significant to people who were young adults in the 1960s because it remains part of who they are and can alleviate increasing feelings of marginalisation in old age. Though they may have meant it jokingly, the above comments suggest that the young adult they once were in the 1960s remains an important component of many interviewees' present self and identity. This means that while the life cycle is a series of consecutive stages, we also need to think about how those stages collapse into the present stage to shape and inform it. In other words, historians must consider how childhood and youth are not simply precursors to the adult but are an integral, formative and ever-present part of the adult. As chapter one demonstrated, acknowledging this interconnectedness within the life cycle can help us uncover why people remember their youths in certain ways to achieve composure and can aid our understanding of why subsequent life experiences affect memories of youth.

CONCLUSION

This chapter has revealed several different influences on the way people experience and remember their youths and on the meanings they attach to it. The experiences they had in the 1960s (themselves conditioned by age, gender, class and parental relationships), the socio-economic landscape of the period, their 'knowledge' of the 1960s, and a comparison of their own youth with the present all interact to shape what youth means to those who were young in 1960s England. For people who were young adults in the 1960s their experiences, memories and meanings of youth are therefore historically contingent and inherently subjective. Nevertheless, despite this subjectivity and the fact that the lived experiences of 1960s youth were diverse, there were common elements to their experiences and many agree upon common meanings of youth.

As a stage in the 1960s life cycle, youth had flexible and subjective boundaries at both ends. It was commonly seen to begin with the start of paid employment and to end when the responsibilities of adulthood were acquired through marriage and parenthood, though age and participation in youth culture were also important markers of youth. In the 1960s, youth

therefore roughly covered the ages between 15 and 22-24 for working- and lower middle-class young adults. Those who were young adults in the 1960s saw themselves as part of a distinct generation that experienced youth within a distinct historical moment. As an experience, 1960s youth was a period of gaining independence both economically and socially; a stand-alone period of fun with little to no responsibilities in comparison to adulthood; and a period of preparation for adulthood, particularly in terms of the gendered roles and identities formed through paid employment, domestic chores and courtship. Though these meanings contradict each other slightly, this is not problematic. In the 1960s, youth could simply mean different things to different people of different genders at different ages. It was a varied, diverse and complex stage of life resulting in a variety of overlapping and sometimes contradictory meanings.

Gender played an important role in shaping the experiences and meanings of youth in the 1960s. So far, historians of youth have drawn out how gender affected young people's everyday experiences and material lives, and how it drove socially and culturally constructed roles and expectations for young men and young women.[98] None have yet considered how gender affects the memories and meanings of youth. As this chapter has shown, however, because young adults' lived experiences were gendered – particularly in terms of wages, parental control and the importance of courtship – the meanings of youth were conditioned by gender. Young women were less likely to see youth as centred on independence than young men, but more likely to see youth as a preparation for adulthood in terms of courtship. Nevertheless, many of the meanings of youth did apply to both young men and young women even if to different extents. This was facilitated by the increasing social and economic opportunities for young women in the 1960s that encouraged them to lead lives different to those of their mothers. Understanding 1960s youth therefore requires historians to examine how youth is fractured by gender, but also how shared age produced experiences, meanings and memories that cross gendered divisions.

[98] For example, see Osgerby, *Youth in Britain*; Langhamer, *Women's Leisure*; Davies, *Leisure, Gender and Poverty*; Todd, 'Young Women, Work and Leisure'.

The meanings and experiences of youth in the 1960s are also inherently tied to questions of class. As Todd has argued, the post-war period was as close to a 'golden age' as the working classes got in twentieth-century Britain.[99] This gave the working classes the ability to speak for themselves, power to improve their lives and a sense of security. Young adults, particularly in the 1960s, were prime beneficiaries of full employment, relative affluence, the welfare state, new technologies and mass production that helped the working classes more generally. Experiencing these benefits first-hand and coming to see them as the defining characteristics of the period meant that people who were young adults in the 1960s viewed their youth positively. Their youth came to mean a period of freedom, fun, and a lack of responsibility. The story of 1960s youth, therefore, must be understood hand-in-hand with the story of the post-war working classes. Indeed, the majority of those seen as 'typical' 1960s young adults were working class. However, youth and class are not the same thing. In the 1960s, lower middle-class young adults had many of the same experiences as their working-class counterparts but with important differences, particularly in education and employment. The meanings of youth as about fun, independence and preparation for adulthood could, therefore, cut across class boundaries because there is not clear water between the experiences of the working and lower middle classes.

Most importantly, this chapter has examined the relationship between experience, memory and selfhood. It has shown that experiences condition memory and that memory is central to selfhood. Selfhood is not formed only by material experiences, therefore, but also by how these experiences are understood and remembered at different points in the life cycle. People therefore embody memory and it becomes part of the self. Consequently, when we think about youth we must consider not only the experiences people had between the ages of 15 and 22-24 in the 1960s, but also how people maintain and develop their relationship to these experiences and broader representations of youth throughout their lives. As the final section of this chapter showed, people who were young adults in the 1960s embody their youth throughout their lives in a particularly strong way. Many were acutely reflexive about

[99] Todd, *The People*, chapters 7-12.

how memory and popular discourse affect the meanings they attach to their youth and the 1960s, but often still felt that youth was part of their present self as well as a past stage in the life cycle. This is because, as Springhall has argued, youth is the period in which identities are formed.[100] It is also because the young adults of the 1960s came of age in a brief 'golden age'. They therefore understood their youth as a positive, fun, and opportunity-laden period; it was the best time of their lives. They are also the generation whose youth has been most widely mythologised and even idolised. These popular memories of 1960s youth culture therefore influence how important people see their youth in the 1960s as being, even though they do not necessarily passively accept such images.

Ultimately, examining the meanings of 1960s youth allows this thesis to go further than previous studies into post-war youth by looking beyond representations and lived experience to memory and selfhood. It has shown that what it meant to be a young adult in the 1960s and what being a young adult in the 1960s continues to mean after the fact are both historically contingent and subjective. Despite this, common meanings of youth exist and can bridge fractures in experience caused by gender and class. It shows that youth is not just a material experience or a static stage in the life cycle, but an important component of the self. It has also revealed the complex interplay between experience, popular discourses and personal memories that gives youth – indeed any stage in the life cycle – its meaning.

[100] Springhall, *Coming of Age*, p. 3.

CONCLUSION

This thesis has provided the first in-depth analysis of young adults' lived experiences in 1960s England. It draws upon the methodologies of historians of the interwar period and earlier who have used a lived experience approach in their studies of youth to reveal the richness and diversity of everyday life. In doing so, this thesis complements other post-war lived experience studies, such as those by Davis on motherhood and Langhamer on love, but, for the first time, turns attention to young adults.[1] A lived experience methodology centres the experiences and voices of working- and lower middle-class young adults to build a better picture of their lives and their agency, and of society, class, gender and generation in 1960s England. Looking at lived experience from young adults' own perspectives has also allowed this thesis to interrogate and challenge many of the myths about youth in the 'swinging sixties'.

This social history approach has been combined with a cultural approach to examine the relationship between lived experience, memory, selfhood and discourse. Crucially, this thesis has examined how 'ordinary' young adults perceive, negotiate and use popular discourses about the 1960s, both in the past and the present, and how this affects their memories and sense of self. In this way, this thesis has treated discourse not as some detached superstructure but as part of everyday experience and selfhood; not as some unchallengeable given but as a set of ideas open to critique and manipulation. This thesis therefore offers two distinctly new approaches to the study of post-war England and Britain more widely. First, it takes a lived experience approach to understand youth in the 1960s. Second, it examines the relationship between those lived experiences and discourse, memory and selfhood.

This thesis also offers a new approach to the history of post-war youth through the sources it has used. Some of the contemporary social surveys this thesis analyses have been

[1] Davis, *Modern Motherhood*; Langhamer, *The English in Love*.

used by historians before, but here new questions have been asked of them and the voices of the young adults they surveyed are prioritised. Moreover, this is one of the first times the unpublished YWP has been used in any historical study. This thesis has also made extensive use of archived oral histories and MOA responses, again asking new questions of them and revealing new findings. It has also used nine new oral history interviews that I conducted. These interviews focus closely on youth in the 1960s, covering gaps in other sources and offering in-depth discussions of the relationship between experience, memory and popular images. Using these sources together gives individual stories and voices context and meaning because they can be assessed within an overall picture of youthful experience across the country and throughout the period.

EXPERIENCE

Taking youth as the period between leaving school and getting married – roughly from the age of 15 to 22-24 in 1960s England – this thesis has examined young adults' lived experiences in work, leisure and personal relationships. It has shown that many experiences were common across the country and across the period.

The 1960s were a period of full employment, rising real wages, and a buoyant youth labour market. Most working- and lower middle-class young adults left school at or near to 15 to enter paid employment. Young men often hoped to become apprentices to skilled trades, young women favoured shop or clerical work – and, ultimately, motherhood – while many hoped to avoid working in factories. Young adults often made friends at work, relationships with bosses were generally good, and trade unions seem to have been of little importance. Wages were tipped up or paid as board into the family economy, though these were less crucial to subsistence than earlier in the century. Crucially, most young adults were broadly satisfied with their jobs and changed them infrequently. Many young adults also worked in the home, though they were usually expected to contribute less domestic labour than their predecessors. Overall, working offered young adults increased socio-economic independence through the wages they earned and the more adult status being employed commanded.

Leisure was central to young adults' lives in the 1960s and became more accessible due to their rising disposable incomes. Commercial entertainments were particularly popular, though young adults also enjoyed watching television, listening to music on records and pirate radio, playing sport, going shopping, having parties and meeting friends. Generally, young adults enjoyed decreasing parental restriction and control over the course of their youth, though many still had to abide by curfews. Many felt entitled to leisure because they were full-time workers and because youth was seen as a pre-eminent period of leisure and fun. Certainly, many enjoyed their leisure and this helped shape the meaning of youth as a period of fun in the 1960s. Enjoying common or 'typical' leisure activities and associating with peers during these also helped young adults develop and perform a young adult identity which gave them a sense of belonging to a particular generation in a particular historical moment.

Most young adults lived at home until marriage, so relationships with family were central to their lives in the 1960s. Relationships with siblings could be close or more distant depending on age, shared interests and the depth of their emotional bond. Some young adults took on proto-parental roles in relation to their siblings, but those who did shouldered less responsibility than the 'little mothers' of the earlier twentieth century. Relationships with parents were often close and affectionate, though mothers and fathers often occupied gendered parental roles, and only a very small number had poor relationships. Most accepted and respected parental authority. Tensions with parents were not evidence of intractable generational conflict but a product of young adults trying to gain and assert greater independence as they progressed through youth.

Friends were central to experiences of youth in the 1960s as they offered a way for young adults to learn, develop and perform a young adult identity and to gain independence from the family. Young adults generally made friends with people of similar ages and backgrounds and of the same sex; though friendships shifted when young adults began courting. Friendship offered companions to share leisure with and mitigate the boredom of

work as well as emotional and physical support. Young adults were also highly discriminating about friendship, distinguishing between simple 'acquaintances' and friends.

Courtship was also central to young adults' everyday lives in the 1960s. Most began courting in their early to mid-teens, though 'courtship' itself was a term they rarely used. Young adults progressed through several stages of courtship: 'going out', 'going steady' and engagement, which usually, though not always, led to marriage. Courtship was based on both physical attraction and emotional bonds, with many recalling having experienced love. Courtship often took place in the times and spaces of leisure and thus helped to define youth as a period of fun. It was, however, also closely linked to marriage and finding a spouse and so also marked youth out as a period of preparation for adulthood. Pre-marital sex became more common among young adults over the 1960s, but there was no sexual revolution. Most young adults were also relatively uninformed about sex and contraception.

However, these common experiences of youth were fractured by a variety of other factors. Gender, class, education, location and age all shaped the experiences of youth in the 1960s. There was no singular youth culture in the 1960s, therefore, but instead a diverse range of lived experiences. While being young meant many aspects of young adults' lives were similar, youth was not a homogenous group or experience.

Gender shaped the occupations young adults held, the wages they received and the aspirations they harboured for their future careers. Gender also shaped leisure activities young adults pursued and the amount of parental restriction they faced. Sexual double standards persisted within courtship. The meanings of youth were also gendered. Young women were more likely to see youth as a period of preparation for adulthood, particularly from their later teens, because marriage remained their expected career and the primary way in which they could achieve adult independence. Young men were more likely to emphasise youth as a period of independence and fun since they enjoyed greater independence, more disposable income and could derive adult identities from employment rather than marriage.

Class and education affected the jobs young adults had, how much they earned, and their likelihood of attending further education. Young adults tended to mix with friends and

romantic partners of the same class. Middle-class young adults were slightly more likely to have sex than their working-class counterparts. However, class had relatively little effect on the experience or nature of young adults' relationships. Working- and lower middle-class young adults also shared similar leisure pursuits. Many understood youth as a period of fun and independence because they understood the 1960s from a working-class perspective, seeing the period as one of opportunity and security due to full employment, welfare and rising living standards, though many meanings and experiences of youth could also cut across class boundaries.

Place determined jobs and leisure venues available to young adults. Many young adults travelled for their leisure; though gender, age and economics affected how far an individual had the means and permission to travel. Relationships with friends were often based on proximity and might dissolve if a friend moved further afield or changed jobs. Generally, however, the experiences of young adults were similar across England, though more research is needed into the experiences of youth in Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland. The spaces young adults occupied were also important to the experiences and meanings of youth in the 1960s. Sharing common leisure venues allowed young adults to develop and perform a young adult identity and to feel part of a particular generation.

'Youth' is a relatively wide age range, spanning from those in their mid-teens to those in their early to mid-twenties. Age – or position in that range – affected young adults' earnings and the types of leisure they pursued. As young adults aged they enjoyed decreasing control by parents and greater social independence as friends rather than family became their primary reference point. Courtship became increasingly serious with age, often even displacing friendships, and sex was more likely to happen among older couples. As young adults reached their later teens and early twenties the meaning of youth also began to shift. It moved from being primarily about gaining independence and having fun to being a preparation for adulthood as plans and expectations began to turn towards marriage.

The 1960s was a period of change and continuity, both of which shaped young adults' lived experiences. In particular young adults were in the vanguard of changes in sexual

practice and attitudes, though there was no sexual revolution. Over the course of the 1960s, opportunities increased for young women; young adults increasingly entered administrative, clerical and engineering occupations; young adults' position within the family economy shifted; leisure horizons were expanded; and young adults' emotional worlds changed. However, throughout the 1960s, more conservative attitudes also persisted, gendered double standards and restrictions did not disappear entirely and many of the experiences young adults had in work, leisure and personal relationships in the 1960s were similar to those of their predecessors in the interwar years and earlier. Ultimately, between the late 1950s and early 1970s, young adults therefore had many similar and common experiences. But in this period the socio-economic and cultural landscape of Britain was changing and so being a young adult at the start of the period was, in some important respects, different to being one at the end.

By examining young adults' lived experiences in the 1960s, this thesis has refined some of the structures social historians use to understand daily life. In particular, it has shown that the distinction between work and leisure is not solid, but blurred, shifting and subjective. This thesis has also challenged popular myths and stereotypes about youth in the 'swinging sixties' by instead revealing how young adults' lives were lived at a moment of negotiation between new and old, conservative and liberal attitudes and behaviours.

The times, spaces and activities of work and leisure often overlapped for young adults. This builds on Langhamer's study of women's leisure in the mid-twentieth century.[2] Indeed, many young adults experienced forms of leisure such as practical jokes and listening to music in their workplaces. Others pursued leisure activities that contained elements of work such as tinkering with cars, working in nightclubs or beautifying the body. Courtship in particular contained elements of both work and leisure: it was pursued for fun but was also about finding a suitable spouse. Ultimately, 'work' and 'leisure' need to be examined and understood from the perspective of those being studied. This shows that, far from being rigid and separate categories, work and leisure were fluid and overlapping in the post-war period.

[2] Langhamer, *Women's Leisure*.

Examining young adults' experiences in the 1960s also challenges myths of 1960s affluence, subculture, generational conflict and permissiveness. Some young adults, particularly apprentices, were low-paid, others relied on parents to supplement their incomes and many had to save and prioritise their spending, particularly when saving for marriage. While some adopted sub- or countercultural styles and music tastes, most were not truly subcultural in their politics. Only a very small minority took drugs in the 1960s. Tensions between young adults and parents were not a symptom of intractable generational conflict, but a product of young adults trying to assert independence as they progressed from childhood to adulthood. Pre-marital sex became more common and less taboo, but there was no absolute permissive shift or sexual revolution in the 1960s and many conservative attitudes and behaviours surrounding sex persisted. The 1960s were therefore not a period of dramatic and linear change, but a period of flux and negotiation between older, more conservative and newer, more liberal mores and practices.

MEMORY AND SELFHOOD

This thesis has examined how popular images of a 'swinging sixties' relate to the experiences young adults had in the period. This shows that while some elements of the 'swinging sixties' popular memory do reflect lived experience – especially in terms of leisure – many elements are not accurate representations of everyday life. Consequently, people are critical of popular images in light of their lived experiences, showing that people have significant agency in evaluating cultural discourses. Nevertheless, when recalling their youths retrospectively, people who were young adults in the 1960s still draw upon popular memories of the period as these shape their understandings of youth and the 1960s more broadly, even if they ultimately reject them. People also recall their youths in a way that enables them to create a composed life narrative and self in the present, meaning that a few accept instead of reject popular images of the 'swinging sixties' to achieve such coherence. Consequently, subsequent life events and the passage of time affect how a person remembers their youth and how they articulate those memories as part of a bigger portrait of their self and life. Moreover,

discourses about the 'swinging sixties' remain powerful frameworks that shape people's understanding of youth and the 1960s as well as of themselves.

Memory and selfhood are therefore closely linked. They are also particularly important for those who were young adults in the 1960s because though their lived experiences were often diverse, young people in the 1960s were united by a shared sense of being part of a distinct generation at a distinct moment in history. They understood themselves as occupying a distinct stage of life defined as a period of fun, independence and preparation for adulthood. Youth is as much an internal identity as it is an experience or a stage of life. This sense of belonging was of huge importance to young adults in the 1960s because their young adult self remains part of their present self and identity even well into retirement. This shared sense of generation and historical moment came from having some experiences in common and from having experienced their youth at a time of opportunity and security that particularly benefitted young people. Their memories of lived experience, combined with popular recollections of what life was like in the 1960s, therefore shaped what youth meant for those who had been young in the 1960s well into the 21st century.

Experience, memory and selfhood are therefore closely linked and mutually inform each other. Lived experiences inform memories of youth, which in turn shape a person's selfhood. That sense of self, however, also affects the way people remember experiences lived as a young adult. Consequently, selfhood is not created only by experiences but also by how those experiences are remembered over time and within the context of cultural discourses and popular memories. People embody memory and it becomes part of the self. To fully understand youth in the 1960s, we must therefore look at experience, memory and selfhood together, as this thesis has done. Only by doing so can we understand how the experiences of young adults determined what youth meant, how this shaped their identities and selfhoods, and what role the particular socio-economic landscape of the 1960s had in this.

YOUTH AS A CATEGORY OF HISTORICAL ANALYSIS

Overall, this thesis has shown that the experiences of youth in 1960s England are historically contingent, shaped by the socio-economic and cultural landscape of the 1960s. It has also shown that the experiences of youth contain common patterns and meanings but are, ultimately, fractured and diverse rather than homogenous. Class, gender, economics and location all shaped the day-to-day lives of working- and lower middle-class young adults. Age also shaped young adults' experiences in the 1960s. This thesis has shown that historians need to look *within* age ranges and life cycle stages, rather than assuming they capture a homogenous group. Indeed, life cycle stages are not static but people move *through* them.

This thesis has also re-established post-war young adults as historical *actors* rather than historical subjects. It has demonstrated that their experiences, memories and selfhoods are rich and complex. While they may not have had the political power to be agents of huge change, they were agents of some change. Shifts in gender roles and family roles, fashion, music, the emotional worlds of friendship, sex and heterosexual relationships had young adults at their very centre in the post-war period and the 1960s in particular. The lives of young adults in the 1960s were not 'swinging' and were often instead relatively mundane, but they were interesting and important not only for young adults but also for the broader political, social and cultural trajectory of the later twentieth century.

Taking youth as a category of historical analysis therefore offers much to other histories of the post-war period and later twentieth century. It also raises many questions. First, and most importantly, this thesis has been unable to consider race within young adults' experiences in the 1960s due to a lack of material. This is, however, a significant omission and a future study into race, youth and lived experience is needed. It may require the creation of sources through a systematic search for interviewees and other personal testimonies from people of diverse ethnicities. Second, many contemporary social surveys on youth in the post-war period pathologised young adults. Due to a lack of space, this has not been examined fully here but this question would also merit a future investigation to shed further light on representations of youth. Third, this thesis has examined young adults' experiences on a broad

(if unrepresentative) national scale to uncover general similarities and differences. Further studies would benefit from taking a local approach to look at the effect of place and space more closely, and the lived experience youth histories of Wales, Scotland and Ireland remain to be fully explored.

More broadly, this thesis has offered insights into wider questions historians are currently debating about the post-war period and later twentieth century in Britain. By demonstrating that young adults were highly sociable outside the home and that friends rather than family were often their primary reference point, this thesis has disrupted the narrative of increasing insularity and privatism among post-war working-class families. It suggests that working-class communities continued to thrive among the younger generation at least (indeed, that these communities were not rigidly class based since they also contained lower middle-class young adults) and that the importance of the family likely varied with age and life cycle stage. The current focus on married adults and parents as representatives of the lifestyles and changes within the working classes as a whole post-1945 is therefore misleading.

This thesis has also offered insights for the burgeoning emotional histories of post-war Britain. By showing that young adults developed close emotional bonds with friends, this thesis expands our understanding of what love could mean beyond romantic attachments and what socio-economic shifts facilitated this. It implies that the post-war emotional revolution involved more than just a change in conceptions of romantic love. More research into post-war sibling relationships is needed, but that many siblings had a friendship-like relationship also suggests that emotional shifts were occurring, influenced by affluence, changing demographics and shifting family roles.

By challenging myths of young adults as sub- and countercultural rebels, this thesis paves the way for future histories of youth in the later twentieth century. It shows that a focus on the 'ordinary' and lived experience has much to offer and that popular images of youth are often only loosely related to reality. This raises the question of how far late 1970s punks, 1980s New Romantics, 1990s lads and ladettes and even the chavs of the 2000s really capture

what it meant to be a young adult at those moments. It suggests that youth is more than sub-culture. It implies that the meanings of youth lie instead in everyday experiences shaped by the contemporary socio-economic landscape and that those experiences cannot be easily generalised as they are inherently fractured by age, gender, class and location. Instead of examining how youth was perceived and represented in 1960s England this thesis has uncovered what it was like to be a young adult and how that experience shaped the self. Future histories of youth in other periods would greatly benefit from similarly seeing young adults as actors not subjects.

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009	043	079	133	162
011	045	093	135	
012	049	095	137	
013	053	101	141	
016	054	104	147	
024	057	106	150	
026	060	117	152	
034	063	119	156	
038	064	125	158	

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Mr F2L	Mr P5B	Mr Y1P	Mrs L5B
Mr G6P	Mr R1P	Mrs A3L	Mrs P3L
Mr G7P	Mr T4B	Mrs B10P	Mrs P5B
Mr H7L	Mr W7B	Mrs G7P	Mrs R1P
Mr L5B	Mr W7P	Mrs H9P	Mrs S6L
Mr M10L	Mr W8P	Mrs L3L	Mrs T4B

University of Leicester, Young Worker Project

Interview Schedules:

A1	B25	C25	D8	E17
A134	B32	C31	D62	E57
A218	B72	C56	D145	E64
A273	B78	C61	D183	E115
A329	B103	C77	D250	E198
A352	B114	C80	D265	E208
A376	B140	C86	D295	E217
A397	B147	C98	D363	E270
A438	B155	C101	D408	E309
A462	B170	C125	D502	E346
A472	B179	C126	D517	E361
A512	B192	C140	D599	E383
A554	B207	C370	D613	E422
A616	B216	C371	D663	E429
A662	B227	C397	D707	E462
A642	B249	C417	D746	E464
A764	B251	C434	D750	E510
A775	B254	C447	D828	E550
A788	B271	C463	D868	E605
A794	B278	C471	D907	E656
A807	B295	C478	D911	E757

A840	B304	C485	D941	E769
A866	B305	C503	D966	E781
A877	B340	C538	D984	E883
A944	B359	C544	D1022	E893

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