ADOLESCENT SOCIALIZATION: SOME PROBLEMS OF INCURRENCY

by

DEANNA PAULINE CLEAVES
B.A., University of California Irvine, 1972

A THESIS SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF

MASTER OF ARTS

in the Department of

Anthropology and Sociology

We accept this thesis as conforming to the required standard

THE UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA
May, 1975
In presenting this thesis in partial fulfilment of the requirements for an advanced degree at the University of British Columbia, I agree that the Library shall make it freely available for reference and study. I further agree that permission for extensive copying of this thesis for scholarly purposes may be granted by the Head of my Department or by his representatives. It is understood that copying or publication of this thesis for financial gain shall not be allowed without my written permission.

Department of Sociology

The University of British Columbia
2075 Wesbrook Place
Vancouver, Canada
V6T 1W5

Date May 25, 1975
ABSTRACT

The following thesis takes as its data transcripts that were made from tape-recordings of several group therapy sessions between a therapist and five "problem" students. Portions of the transcripts are analysed with reference to the properties of specific units of speech, such as the properties of lists or the properties of categories, with a major emphasis on examining the social and organizational features that surround the interaction, and upon which the utterances are built, in an effort to discover the facilities that persons have available to them for making sense out of those utterances.

An attempt is made to show that (a) by reference to such units of speech, conversations between adolescents can be made intelligible and that (b) an analysis of such things is capable of explaining the interactional resources that adolescents must rely on when speaking with one another and with adults, without the use of classical childhood socialization notions.

The major issues given special attention are (1) occupational subclasses and the importance that they have with respect to the socialization process and, (2) the incumbency problems that adolescents have as a result of adult socialization notions.
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CHAPTER I</th>
<th>Introduction</th>
<th>1</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Footnotes</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CHAPTER II</td>
<td>Methodology and Materials</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Footnotes</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CHAPTER III</td>
<td>Adolescent Incumbency:</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>A Problem of Having to be Something</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Footnotes</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CHAPTER IV</td>
<td>Children's Occupational Dreams:</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Some Formal Qualities</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Footnotes</td>
<td>73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CHAPTER V</td>
<td>Occupations:</td>
<td>78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>A Retrospective View</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Footnotes</td>
<td>95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CHAPTER VI</td>
<td>Conclusion</td>
<td>96</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**BIBLIOGRAPHY**  
114

**APPENDIX**  
Conventions Used in Transcripts  
Transcript  
116  
121
ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I am deeply indebted to Roy Turner for the many hours of encouragement, suggestions, and helpful criticisms that he gave to me while this thesis was in the making.

I am also indebted to Harvey Sacks and Gail Jefferson for having introduced me to this method of investigation and to conversational analysis in particular while I was a student at the University of California at Irvine.
CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The following thesis shall be concerned with examining occupations as they relate to the process of socialization from adolescence into adulthood, by means of a body of conversational resources taken from group therapy sessions between a therapist and several teenage boys.

There will be an attempt to link the attainment of an occupation with the attainment of adulthood in such a way as to display that adulthood, which is seen to be the last of a series of biological stages, is not merely attained by letting persons grow up or by permitting things to take their course but adulthood involves orienting to things and experiencing and learning others in a way that will enable one to be recognized as responsible. That is, adulthood will be seen to involve various privileges and freedoms that can only be achieved if one takes the proper training to become a responsible adult such as by orienting to an occupation.

So, for example, it will become apparent that although there is no semantic reason why the question "What are you going to be when you grow up?" ought to be answered with an occupational
term, it is a request for such a term that categories such as teenagers are vulnerable to since those persons are expected to be doing the things now that will get them into occupations at a later date. That is to say, they are expected to be preparing to be adults by making serious decisions about an occupation, attending high school, and taking the proper courses that will enable them to achieve that occupation.

Thus, adolescents know that they are held responsible for occupations and for learning the things that will get them to be seen as responsible adults, and those things are a source of problems for them in that they may either have difficulty in making a decision on an acceptable occupation, where they are expected to make a decision at that stage, or they may find that, having made a decision about an occupation, they are now committed to doing the things that will get them into that occupation and subsequently are subject to being monitored by adults for their failure or progress.

It is hoped that the presentation and analysis of this material will reveal a complex process of socialization that is both mutual to adolescents, as category members of a society, and interactionally achieved among all of its members. The intention is that the reader will gain additional insight into the process of socialization as an interactionally achieved
phenomenon and also, perhaps, enable the reader to view the process as a system of problem-solving for insiders who are expected to allow themselves to be socialized and, therefore, are expected to be displaying signs that they are but who find that, nevertheless, they do not entirely accept those social notions and who find that they are not looked upon as full-fledged members of their society.

It may be helpful to present here a few concepts about the terms adolescence and adulthood in order to clarify the above.

The stages of childhood, adolescence, and adulthood and the expectations that each calls forth, appear to be a recent cultural invention of the seventeenth century. Apparently, prior to that time there were only two such stages, those of child and adult. For example, Aries states that:

In the course of the seventeenth century a change took place by which the old usage was maintained in the more dependent classes of society, while a different usage appeared in the middle class, where the word 'child' was restricted to its modern meaning. The long duration of childhood as it appeared in the common idiom was due to the indifference with which strictly biological phenomena were regarded at the time; nobody would have thought of seeing the end of childhood in puberty. The idea of childhood was bound up with the idea of dependence. The words 'sons', 'varlets' and 'boys' were also words in the vocabulary of feudal subordination... It was above all with Port-Royal and with all
the moral and pedagogic literature which drew its inspiration from Port-Royal (or which gave more general expression to a need for moral discipline which was widely felt and to which Port-Royal too bore witness), that the terms used to denote childhood became common and above all modern.

Children were frequently viewed as incompetent adults since, in actuality, they were required to begin work in the factories and on farms at an early age, to be fit for war, and to take on numerous other adult tasks and responsibilities. Thus, in terms of an adult, they were often incompetent due to inexperience and size, and the passing from one stage to another was less marked by age and biological changes as it was marked by the social class that one was in, the competence with which one performed the duties of that class, and the educational background one had.

With the invention of adolescence, which focused heavily on biological changes, the stages became clearly marked by age and each came to have its own set of expectations. Children were no longer viewed as incompetent adults since they, by definition, encompassed a much younger age bracket and a more helpless one and they were biologically incapable of being adults, and an increasing number of laws prohibited them from being given the responsibilities of their elders.

Adolescence came to be viewed as both a physical and
social transition from childhood to adulthood and with the marking of the three stages came a complex standardization of cultural beliefs surrounding them. These beliefs commonly include such notions as that the development of the child occurs through a progression of stages and parents are considered to be important influences on that development. Consider the following statement by Whiting:

The central concept of the child as a potential involves beliefs about the inheritance of characteristics, beliefs about the influence of parental training on the child, beliefs about the influence of the social environment and education, and beliefs about stages and norms.3

Therefore, it is taken for granted by members of the society that the duty of the elders is to help the child to realize his good aspects and to curb his bad aspects, where bad aspects such as spoiledness, laziness, nervousness, rebelliousness, and discipline problems are reflective of the parent and put him at fault. Whiting accepts the view that the display of bad aspects by children casts a poor reflection on the parent when she speaks about a typical American community in the following:

Social control is indirect, in the form of gossip, avoidance, or exclusion. No adults publicly criticize another to his face. Criticism of someone to one of his friends or relatives is with the expectation that it will
be passed on. Children do not have the hesitation of adults to use direct criticism. Lack of industriousness is one concern of gossip, criticism, or informal social control. Pressure is exerted against parents of children who are disrespectful to adults, deviate from community values, or destructive of property.²

It is also a widely accepted belief that the potential of the child will not be realized if the child does not acquire the requisite skills through education, so various means are employed by the parent and other adults as the child moves from one stage to another to check out his progress in that direction. However, although persons continue to learn until they die, it is believed that the potential becomes gradually actualized or "set" as the child grows so that eventually he will become a "type".⁵ Therefore, it is advocated that the child's potential ought to be discovered as early as possible in order to determine the proper mode of education as well as to discourage undesirable traits. This perspective is nicely summarized in the following statement:

The belief that the potential is in part concealed leads to great emphasis on techniques for the discovery and disclosure of the child's potential...Divining for the potential is highly developed in the community. There are, of course, the formal tests for intelligence, personality and achievement, but there are also more subtle techniques, such as informal questioning of the child or observing his behavior for clues. Clues include such things as the child showing a special interest in something, or doing something particularly
well. After the potential has been divined parents and teachers feel more secure in taking a particular course of action in the training of the child. It is felt that strong influences must be exerted against traits which do not go well together.

According to many childhood socialization researchers a parent, in an effort to guide the child in the proper direction and establish a degree of security within himself, seeks the potential of the child by informal questioning and observation of the child's behavior. The parent treats childhood and adolescence as stages of life that will prepare the child with behavior mechanisms so that he will be competent to interact in day to day situations with his peers and which will eventually enable him to interact as a full-fledged adult member. Such guidance from the adult is frequently met with opposition from adolescents who neither readily agree to the kinds of influence that they are receiving nor agree to the point at which they are believed to become adults. Consider the following statement by Whiting:

The age which seems to produce the most anxiety in parents is that of early puberty. At this time the child has to cope more actively with his sexuality and from various reports he is rarely able to get the approval of his parents in this respect. In most families a barrier to free speech grows up at this time between parents and children. Parents have to relinquish a good deal of
control over their children and they usually do so with anxiety.

Therefore, the period of adolescence is often viewed as a troublesome stage in so much as there are conflicts between the adolescent and his parents and, while the parent has a feeling of responsibility for the adolescent, he is faced with the worry of whether he is properly directing his developmental process. It is advocated that:

Parents often react to having children as they would to any responsibility. Parents come to feel they are victimizing their children, being uncertain about whether they are doing the best for the child. Anxieties are alleviated by finding out what the child's potential is insofar as this is possible. A feeling of responsibility and a certain amount of lack of success in training a child may lead to anxieties about their own inadequacies which leads them to force the child into certain channels of development. Stage notions allow comfortable explanations for the behavior of the child.

Thus, biological facts served to historically separate the stages of development but, alongside the recognition of those facts came a set of cultural definitions which could, in turn, change historically again.

Where today psychologists would have us recognize the developmental stages as a product of historical biological
changes within the organism, the society itself has imposed cultural definitions on that knowledge so that the biological facts have become secondary to the cultural definitions that serve everyday life and are taken-for-granted.

In essence, every society member is under the grip of that knowledge and though, perhaps, some of it is well-founded the result is that children and adolescents find themselves to be in an adult world which recognizes them as half-fledged members who are not taken too seriously since they are believed to be incapable of speaking for themselves as they are not yet adults and are not yet able to make good judgements.

Children are labeled as "just going through a stage" or as "having a bad day" when they do not conform to adult expectations of common norms and they find themselves to be heard unseriously when they propose things beyond those that are defined for their developmental stage such as occupational intentions or lifestyle preferences. Adolescents discover that they are not seen by adults as individuals but that they must live with the society's definitions of what they must be like. They are culturally viewed as going through an anxious and problematic period and if they have unusual or no occupational ambitions or see an alternative route to observe their goals, they are
assumed to be experiencing those problems rather than having insight into themselves and their lives and being able to competently make decisions for themselves.

The plight of the adolescent and child is in some ways, perhaps, to be compared to that of the former mental patient who, upon returning to the society with possibly all of his faculties intact, finds that he must live with the society's definitions of what he must be like. That is, his utterances and actions are constantly monitored for defectiveness according to the norm and, therefore, he becomes incompetent to decide what is best for himself since any unusual whim or preference will be observed by others as a mental defect. Statements that he makes about his previous problems such as that he could not find a job that he liked or could not get along with his family, which for adolescents would be observed as normal occurrences of their developmental stage, yet as problems to be overcome are, for the ex-mental patient, diagnosed as all a part of his ill condition. 10

Adolescents possibly are not unlike former mental patients in one respect in that they see their problems not necessarily as psychological but, instead, as a result of how they are pushed, molded, guided, and harassed by the society around them. Accordingly, they see themselves as like normal
persons who have problems but problems that will later on get turned into things such as that rents are too high, jobs are hard to get, cars are expensive, and other problems of the world that are nothing special or unique but merely are problems of their stations in life, occupations, and so on. That is, they are proposing their problems as being normal for persons in their age grade.

It increasingly becomes apparent that adolescence can be talked about with reference to biology, physiology, maturation and development with a total disregard to the experience of that status by its incumbents where, perhaps, it would be equally as interesting to assume the perspective of how, for incumbents of some age status, incumbency for them is their problem and not the typical notions that the standard literature would have us believe.

To briefly return to an initially made comment of this thesis, it will be the perspective taken to view the process of socialization for adolescents, not as it is perceived by adults as 'general knowledge', but as it is perceived by the incumbents themselves as a dilemma in terms of problems of management and dealing with adults. That is, in so much as adolescents are not heard to complain that they need limits set by their elders or
That they are biologically or physiologically immature but, instead, complain that they are being bothered by parents, teachers, and the police, and that their lifestyle preferences are treated in such a way as to lead them to mask them, then socialization for adolescents can be seen to be a system of problem-solving for insiders who are expected to go through the socialization process but who, nevertheless, fail to accept many of the notions that the process entails.

The focus will be on examining the ways in which the classical and widely held views toward childhood socialization that I have been mentioning have turned out to be a problem for those who are the incumbents of a category to which those views are directed.

By investigating utterances taken from a naturally occurring conversation, various utterance parts will be seen to have the character of capturing a specific theme in the talk as well as be seen to stand for several issues. Those issues will be discussed and, insofar as the utterance parts are responded to as logical, ordinary, and unproblematic by the participants, we will ask how it is that those utterances get generated by an adolescent, what provides for the sense of those utterances, and what do the utterances amount to.
FOOTNOTES


2. What is meant by the "invention of adolescence" in the history of childhood socialization is aptly discussed by Philippe Aries in *Centuries of Childhood*, Knopf, New York, 1962, Chapter 1.


5. Here, Whiting is referring to a "type" as a set personality that has little further hope of change or development, and which can enable persons to classify another person. For example, Whiting states that types can be classified as such by being dominated by a certain trait e.g. "He is a hard worker", "He's the sneaky type, quiet about everything and a trouble-maker", and "He won't harbor a grudge, he's very open".


7. This point is nicely summarized in the following quote to be found in Michael Banton's book, *Roles- An Introduction to the Study of Social Relations*, Travistok Publications, London, 1965, p. 99:

   This variation in the age at which childhood gives place to adulthood is the source of some of the strains that accompany adolescence in industrial societies. Young people insist that they are physically mature and well able to look after themselves, and that at work as in other situations outside the home they are already treated as adults. Why,
they ask, should not their parents treat them as adults? Often their parents have different ideas about the stage at which it is appropriate to treat someone as fully adult, and they are subject to pressures pulling in the opposite direction. Emotional stresses may make it difficult for a woman to accept that her role of mother is to be curtailed, and older people often feel morally obliged to combat what seems to them the laxity of the new generation.


10. Erving Goffman makes some interesting comparisons between adolescents and mental patients when he casts doubt on the degree to which some psychotic symptoms can be considered as evidence of illness in the following quote which comes from his book, Interaction Ritual- Essays on Face to Face Behavior, "Mental Symptoms and Public Order", Anchor Books, Garden City, New York, 1967, p. 141:

Given that many psychotic symptoms are instances of situational impropriety, we must ask whether all situational improprieties are instances of psychotic symptoms. If this were the case we would have a sociologically grounded way of differentiating psychotics from other people. But, obviously, there are many situational improprieties apparently unconnected with mental disorder. There is the unman-nerly conduct of the cultural alien, the arrogant, the eccentric, the insolent, the vicious, the celebrant, the intoxicated, the aged and the youthful.
CHAPTER II

METHODOLOGY AND MATERIALS

Although the world of adolescents and children is typically studied from the adult's perspective which tends to construe the adolescent's language and actions as not yet sensible and as something which must be dropped in order to enter the logical, real world of adults, that is, relying on the adolescents' interpretive competencies but treating them as incompetent and even creating situations for the disclosure of that incompetency, it will be the intention here to perceive adolescents not as devious or partly socialized or as learning to be complete, rational, social, mature, competent and self-governing adults, unless they are "acting like children", but as cultural strangers who, perhaps in some ways, are not unlike political prisoners or inmates of mental hospitals in that they are socialized involuntarily and must learn to orient to the adult world, which has interests in sustaining, sanctioning, and imparting ethics upon its interests in the adolescent world.

In so much as communication rests on the interpretive abilities of the participants, then the dilemma that adolescents face in terms of dealing with adults and problems of management
can also hold as a dilemma for some adults, not because like adolescents they discover that they are expected to become socialized or find that they fail to accept the notions that the process entails, but because they sometimes must relate to adolescents as persons who understand the adolescent dilemma and as adults who have already absorbed the system, such as the therapist must in group therapy among teenagers.

The analyses presented in this paper deal specifically with group therapy transcripts and attempt to find a natural orderliness to some everyday social actions. These transcripts were made from tape recorded group therapy sessions and all recordings took place with the consent of the patients involved and in as natural a situation as possible. Each transcript constitutes a period of one therapy session and duplicates what was said in as near a verbatim and timed account as was technically possible to produce. That is, all pauses, speech overlaps, extraneous sounds, and word stresses are included as part of the complete transcript and, in its production, no paraphrasing, condensing or coding procedures were employed.

Now, it is a basic but important premise of this thesis that by analysing the utterances of the transcripts as instances of natural interaction that occurred during a conversational
encounter, it is possible to learn both about the organization of language and about the social organization of specific settings and encounters while also enabling the discovery of the more general and unchanging features of the conversational resources that members must rely upon in order to understand one another and conduct their daily affairs. That is, members of the society solve problems by way of accomplishing activities through their conversations such that, if those activities are treated by analysts as the methods that members use when building talk around one another, a great deal can be learned about the social organization of that society and about the structure of language in itself. Consider the following remark by Turner which emphasizes the availability of all activities as data but which suggests that language has long been a neglected topic:

It is increasingly recognized as an issue for sociology that the equipment that enables the "ordinary" member of society to make his daily way through the world is the equipment available for those who would wish to do a "science" of that world. This might be formulated as the sociologist's "dilemma", but only so long as a notion of science is employed that fails to recognize the socially organized character of any enterprise, including the enterprise of doing science. A science of society that fails to treat speech as both topic and resource is doomed to failure. And yet, although speech informs the daily world and is the sociologist's basic
resource, its properties continue to go almost unexamined. Linguistic models have had some recent influence on the development of sociolinguistics, but it is still not at all clear that any specifically linguistic properties of talk can be related to central sociological concerns. If we take sociology to be, in effect, "a natural history of the social world", then sociologists are committed to a study of the activities such a world provides for and of the methodical achievement of those activities by socialized members. 4

The naturally occurring interactions and activities that will be the subject of inquiry in this thesis are not typically the data used in the research of adolescent socialization. In general, researchers of adolescent socialization have analyzed the conversations of cultural members in an effort to develop information about stages and norms, child rearing practices, and family counseling while failing to take notice of the properties of organized speech which underlie the everyday, conditional actions that take place between adolescents and adults. The almost total disregard of analyses that deal with the problems that adolescents have when talking with adults or other adolescents is nicely stated by Speier in the following:

The reader accustomed to the conventional paradigm in childhood socialization will not find hypothetical inquiries about "socialization influences and aims," nor problems in the social-structural basis
for the child's "internalization of norms," etc. He will find, instead, that the interactional orientation to childhood organization will supply a frame of reference that precludes the posing of such abstract problems, and that in fact such problems as are found in the classical formulations will be dissolved and replaced by a whole new set of analytic considerations. In searching out the procedural properties of children's conversational interactions, a vast variety of studies in childhood social organization could be attempted, encompassing parent-child interactions in everyday household activity, adult-child interactions in other families' homes, in public places, in schools, or interactions exclusively among children themselves. Children's exclusive contacts constitute problems of study in what might be called the organization of "children's culture," and as such open up a wholly new sociological domain.

With this perspective as an approach to the data it becomes evident that what I previously referred to as classical notions about socialization in terms of stages of development will be disregarded as a possible method of study in favor of a study of occasioned and situated activities i.e. the ways in which adolescents manage a conversation and create a social situation, that will revolve around the very problem of their incumbency as adolescents. It is hoped that such a study will cast doubt on the notion of stages as a sole means for understanding the adolescent and his problems as well as refute the notion that adolescents are less than competent to make sound
interactional decisions.

Needless to say, although the materials are conversational and organized around group therapy sessions, the data can be treated as displaying a more general conversational competency that adolescents and other "partly unsocialized persons" depend upon both to create and identify their joint membership within the culture and use to deal with the problems of having that membership.

In so much as the data can be a means for depicting the pursuits and interests of everyday conversationalists and the procedures that they must rely upon to get through the course of their conversations, the analyses can be treated as descriptions of the ways by which conversationalists display that they are being socialized for all practical purposes while also maintaining a distinct membership among themselves.

A general assumption here has been that the materials bear out a social and conversational orderliness and, if that is so, it is because they are orderly to the conversational society and enable its members to make analyses of their own and act upon a common understanding. It is advocated that:

In indefinitely many ways members' inquiries are constituent features of the settings they analyze. In the same ways, their
inquiries are made recognizable to members as adequate-for-all-practical-purposes... In the actual occasions of interaction that accomplishment is for members omnipresent, unproblematic, and commonplace. For members doing sociology, to make that accomplishment a topic of practical sociological inquiry seems unavoidably to require that they treat the rational properties of practical activities as "anthropologically strange." By this I mean to call attention to "reflexive" practices such as the following: that by his accounting practices the member makes familiar, commonplace activities of everyday life recognizable as familiar, commonplace activities; that on each occasion that an account of common activities is used, that they be recognized for "another first time"; that the member treat the processes and attainments of "imagination" as continuous with the other observable features of the settings in which they occur; and of proceeding in such a way that at the same time that the member "in the midst" of witnessed actual settings recognizes that witnessed settings have an accomplished sense, an accomplished facticity, an accomplished objectivity, an accomplished familiarity, an accomplished accountability, for the member the organizational hows of these accomplishments are unproblematic, are known vaguely, and are known only in the doing which is done skillfully, reliably, uniformly, with enormous standardization and as an unaccountable matter.

While I have only briefly discussed the manner in which this thesis has been conducted, giving background information into both the data employed and the perspective with which it has been analyzed, I admit that this study is far from encompassing the multitude of issues that surround an inquiry into adolescent socialization and an inquiry into the methods that members of a
society use when speaking with one another. I have chosen to analyse the data as an analyst and as a cultural member rather than to provide a formal methodology upon which those analyses are built. It is primarily my intention to propose an alternative to the typical notions of childhood socialization. In this respect I would like to agree with Speier when he says that "socialization is the acquisition of interactional competences".?
FOOTNOTES

1. These transcripts were recorded in the nineteen-sixties in Southern California and are used under the permission of Harvey Sacks. The recordings took place over a series of five Saturday morning sessions and involve a student therapist and five high school problem students. The therapist was known to the adolescents as a student who was working on his doctorate in psychology. The various students have been sent to the therapy sessions by authorities rather than by personal choice for one of the following reasons:

a. Being an underachiever in terms of grades in school but having the potential to get passing marks or better in terms of test materials.

b. Having been expelled from school one or more times.

c. Having parental or teacher problems, e.g. talking back.

d. Missing or leaving classes at school.

e. Delinquency, e.g. smoking, drinking, driving cars fast, breaking the law by robbing, speeding, etcetera.

f. Being involved in schoolground or other fights.

2. It could be argued by some that when a therapist records a group therapy session with the consent and knowledge of his patients, an artificial situation has been created, since both patient and therapist are aware of the taping and because the therapeutic situation is conducted with various intentions and procedures. To those persons, I suggest a reference to Roy Turner, "The Ethnography of Experiment", The American Behavioral Scientist, April 1967.
3. I am indebted to Harvey Sacks and Gail Jefferson for introducing me to this perspective while I was a student at the University of California at Irvine. Any misinterpretation of it is purely my own. Such a perspective can be contrasted with what Douglas calls the "absolutist perspective on society" which, as a classical sociological perspective, suggests that the actions of persons are independent of the specific situations in which they occur because they are determined by something outside of the person's committing the actions and outside of the situation. This concept can be found and more elaborately explained in Jack Douglas', *Understanding Everyday Life- Toward the Reconstruction of Sociological Knowledge*, Chicago, Aldine Publishing Company, 1970, London, Routledge, and K. Paul.


CHAPTER III

ADOLESCENT INCUMBENCY:

A PROBLEM OF HAVING TO BE SOMETHING

The following chapter will include a portion of the transcript that we ought to pay careful attention to in that it has some features that are both problematic and interesting.

If we look carefully at the transcript we will discover a few utterance parts that appear to have a cognitive connection and that presumably sound both mundane and logical to the reader as well as to the speakers involved. That is, over the course of the conversation it is possible to make sense of the utterance parts as well as to determine the reasons for their generation. These utterance parts include the following fragments: "I don' wanna be nothin." He says, (utterance #5), "He says that he wants to be something he knows what he wants to be... (utterance #7), and O-oh I just wanna be a bum out in the- out in the forest... (utterance #9).

We will want to ask how it is that a teenager can propose to another teenager that another says that he does not want to be anything when, in fact, he wants to be something.
That as an initial problem will raise a few additional questions in that first, that utterance is treated by its recipient as both logical and commonplace and second, since that utterance has cognitive connections with other utterances, presumably we will want to know how it gets raised on this occasion. That is, what provides for the sense of those pieces of talk such that they sound reasonable and are unproblematic to the persons involved and to us as readers of those utterances when we could just as easily dismiss the logic of such statements to the fact that these teenagers are, after all, only teenagers who might perhaps be illogical at times or to the fact that in another social situation those utterances would not make sense?¹

What is the occasion on which the talk gets raised such that "I don' wanna be nothin." is both arrived at and captures a specific theme in the talk and what kinds of interactional resources stand behind the utterances of the talk so as to provide for their reasonableness? These are some of the problems and issues that I hope to draw attention to and solve in the course of this thesis.²

This will become lucid if we proceed by taking a look at the transcript itself. Keeping these questions in mind, let us now look at the following several utterances taken from a
session that has already begun. Roger, Ken, and Jim are three students who, prior to this exchange, have been talking about being pushed by their parents to enter certain occupations. Dan, the therapist, is presiding:

1. Roger: You're not interested in cars, you're not interested in sports, you're not interested in mechanics, // you're not-

2. Jim: Well I'm interested in it, but I don't feel that I sh'd-that I wanna go into the field,

3. Roger: Are you scared to go into something?

4. Jim: No,

5. Roger: That's the way my brother feels y'know I had t'push him y'know h-he ( wasn't really ) whole-hearted. "I don' wanna be nothin." He says.

6. Jim: (( clears throat ))

7. Roger: Well y'see, it's not a very realistic approach really. He says that he wants to be something he knows what he wants to be, but it's not a very realistic thing.

8. Roger: So he just doesn't tell people about it. Well I uh I did that too, y'know.

9. Roger: 0-oh I just wanna be a bum out in the-out in the forest y'know in other words, he's gotta- an interest- natural, y'know, in-in nature in other words, but he doesn't wanna be a f(hh)orest ranger. An' he doesn't wanna be categorized.
10. Roger: I'm this, I'm that.
( /// )

11. Ken: In some ways I wouldn't mind being a forest // ranger,

12. Roger: He probably just doesn't wanna tell people what he really wants to be, you know, --- soldier of fortune or some other ( /// )

13. Dan: Why not? ( /// )

14. Roger: Maybe he-he feels that it won't be accepted y'know, an' people'll laugh at him.
( // )

15. Roger: Y'know-I think a lotta people don't wanna be categorized.
( // )

16. Roger: He is gonna be an engineer. He's gonna be a forest ranger.

If we focus on the utterances mentioned, keeping in mind the questions that we previously posed, an initially plausible view will be to consider that 'being something' is specifically a reference to an occupation and an incumbency, where that incumbency is something that none of the boys has yet attained.

In so much as these teenagers ( or any teenagers ) can talk about occupations in other settings and with other persons that would not at all resemble the talk about occupations here, the utterances above are occasioned and ought not to be characterized or analyzed without reference to the occasion of their
production, that is, how the talk is done that way on this occasion.

Now, each one of them can find with respect to the others that he is designated an "underachiever" and a "problem kid" by various school, parental, and law authorities and that he is now in therapy by virtue of having done or not done similar things to what the others have or have not done. Each of them can also find with respect to the others that there are topics that are much on their minds, of which occupations is one such topic; that they are topics which engage them in thoughts and quarrels with related others and that those related others are related in the same way as each one of them is to his parents and that to one another, now, they can talk about these matters vis a vis the troublesome character that they have with those things when talking about them to their parents and to similar authorities.

It could be argued, then, that here these teenagers are not merely talking about occupations, but occupations have become topic talk in so far as occupations are troublesome matters between each of them and his parents. Thus, they can see each other as 'insiders' in so much as they can formulate for each other how they stand with respect to occupations and other topics
in ways that are specifically not the ways that they would formulate those matters for related others, as for their parents; and they can formulate those for each other in ways that are specifically in contrast to the ways those matters would be treated, formulated, and honored by those related others. That is, were they even to try to formulate these notions with the related others, they could see that they would not be honored and what they would meet with would be contrastive notions that would make their own formulations out to be a source of trouble.

In this degree, at least in part, they are problem kids and underachievers by virtue of holding these views which, were they to expose them to adults, would lead them to be seen as deviants who are immature, unrealistic, underachieving, and so on.

Therefore, it is not simply that I can now propose, as an outsider and an analyst, that here are several teenagers and this is the way that teenagers talk since the fact that they are teenagers can be documented, but that for them this part of the transcript is an enactment of that kind of fellow incumbency vis-à-vis others who are co-members as being members of that category and, specifically, co-members as having in a strong way a group of problems that can be seen to be specific to that stage of
life, i.e. they are not problems that they had when they were five years old, although in a later section of the data they talk about them with regard to when they were five years old, but they are bounded by whether to be an engineer or other occupations that they are expected to be preparing for now.

Those issues are specifically problems for members who are co-category members so that for them that is what being a teenager amounts to i.e. having those kinds of problems. That is, they are speaking as teenagers and on behalf of teenagers about being teenagers, with regard to others who get formulated as adults.

So far, I have been referring to the previous utterances as a whole in an effort to give the reader both a perspective with which to read them and in order to briefly discuss how the talk is produced on this occasion vis a vis the co-category membership that the participants can identify themselves as having. Let us now look at a particular utterance in order to make some more detailed observations, the utterance where Roger says that his brother just wants to be a bum out in the forest.

Roger's comment for his brother, "0-oh I just wanna be a bum out in the- out in the forest..." (utterance #9), is an
interesting quote because it says something on behalf of his brother that at first it appears his brother would not say about himself. That is, although one may call others a bum, it is specifically not the kind of term that one is likely to call oneself.

Now, such a comment is made from the perspective of people not yet in occupations, but in the making, and not yet old enough to be in any occupations but old enough to be expected to have plans, expectations, and thoughts. If those persons were to find themselves turned off at that stage to the standard occupations and possibly had an entire philosophy of not being interested in money-making, marriage, and having a family, but simply wanted to just get by and handle things as they came up from day to day, then they could perhaps see that although for them that kind of a lifestyle was desirable and represented a serious alternative, for those who were addressing such questions to them, what it amounted to was being a bum.

What is ironic about that statement is that Roger's brother is using the listener's perspective to describe his plans, although it is not a way that he would talk about them when he was talking seriously about what he wanted to be. That
is, one could feel that the entire adult occupational world was
deception, and that he wanted to do otherwise by not becoming
involved with it, but when talking to school teachers, parents,
probation officers and the like, one could propose one wanted
to be a bum because he knows that that is what it amounts to for
them, which can be a way of distancing himself from them since
he does not want to tell what it is that he really wants to be.

Finding that one cannot tell adults that he wants to
be an engineer or a policeman, etcetera, one can use one of those
terms for them which is not to say that one seriously thinks
about being a bum, but that that is a joking way of saying that
for a certain hearer what it would amount to being is a bum;
which is also not to say that there is not something serious there
but that it is not being told seriously and it is not being told
seriously on some systematic basis i.e. they would not understand.

Since "bum" is not a legitimate occupational term, it
is not something that one can seriously propose that that is
what he wants to be and, therefore, it could be reasoned that when
a person says that he wants to be a bum he cannot help but know
that it is a provocative answer to the question of what is he going
to be. That is, in a normal adult's perspective some people end
up being bums but only by plainly not making it, being lazy, idle,
stupid, or by not being sufficiently aggressive or mature. Thus, being a bum is what a person ends up being by failing.

So, for a person to propose that he wants to be a bum he is specifically seen as being provocative since he is making out as a goal something which is not seen as being arrived at as a goal by those who occupy that category, and since he is using a term that for adults has one kind of incumbency that should be generated in one way but which gets to be generated in another way.

Therefore, it is not that Roger's brother says that he wants to be a plumber to his parents, receives a negative reaction, and then discovers that a plumber is not a good thing for him to be, but it is specifically knowable ahead of time as something that he cannot propose that he wants to be unless he wants to be heard as provoking, being secretive, insulting, and so on, since its very use implicates him in some kind of intentionality.

Now, the term "bum" is typically an alternative to all of the occupational terms, i.e. for some purposes the adult world is full of the gainfully employed, who have various occupations, on the one hand and bums on the other hand. So, for a teenager to say that he is going to be a bum can perhaps be heard as a
serious rejection of both occupations and of the things that teenagers ought to be doing now in order to get them into an occupation later, rather than be heard as humorous. That is, the term has various rejections built into it so that when one says that he is going to be a bum, he is also suggesting that he will be something that his parents will be ashamed of and, specifically, that they cannot now use to tell others about him, since adults are able to tell about their grown up children by way of giving their occupations.

Although any occupation is a legitimate answer to the question of what one is going to be, not all occupational terms are acceptable though only an occupation is acceptable. That is, if one is a middle class teenager whose father is an engineer or a doctor, to propose that he is going to be a plumber may infuriate or disappoint his parents because, although a plumber is a legitimate occupation that might warrant respect, as a son of an engineer to only want to be a plumber may be a source of family trouble because it does not follow the same kinds of educational preparation, it is failing to assume the father's line of business, it falls into a lower wage-earning bracket, etcetera. In addition, he can find that he is only to tell people what he is going to be in occupational terms because
if he tells them his lifestyle preferences he will be categorized\(^4\), where categorized means being assessed and disposed of in a serious evaluative way that one can get by telling people things that they will not understand e.g. he may be assessed as being crazy, romantic, unrealistic, immature, etcetera.

So what teenagers really want to be and an occupation are maybe not very close to one another, but that for a socialized person in the culture they become close and, therefore, it is not the occupational terms that categorize a teenager, but the other things that he does not tell adults such as what he really wants to be which, perhaps, is not an occupational term at all as is the case for Roger's brother.

In other words, adolescents may have some notion of how they want to live their lives and what they want to be and an occupation is something that gets superimposed on that or is something that represents a compromise or represents the best way of getting what they really want to be, which is not the occupation but what the occupation allows them to do. In this manner, if one wants to be close to nature he can be a forest ranger, where what he really wants to be is close to nature and not a forest ranger but, if he told people the former, he would get categorized as being unrealistic, romantic, or out of touch.
with reality since that is not the way that adults talk about what they are or want to be.

It is the giving of something other than an occupation that gets one categorized, where occupations are acceptable but what one really wants to be may not be. Finding that to be the case, one only tells others half of the situation, the occupational half.

One could construct a category of occupations that are not socially acceptable, but the choice for them is not between being an engineer or a street sweeper (which may not be a socially acceptable occupation), but it is a choice between one occupation and another where, for all intensive purposes, they are both acceptable although what a teenager really wants to be behind the occupation perhaps is not socially acceptable.

Now, categorized is what happens to a person if he tells people what he really wants to be (he is laughed at and so on) and to avoid that he finds that he ought to give others an occupational term but, rather than name an occupation that he knows is going to get a negative reaction, he may find that he is better off opting out of the occupational categories altogether and offering the one thing that is an alternative and
which displays that he is not interested in the kinds of things that his parents or others are looking for. That is, to say that one wants to be a bum is to choose trouble that terminates a discussion on the matter, where the other alternative is also trouble, but trouble that opens one up to being undercut and to continuing the discussion. The former indicates that one has already thought through what he wants to be, realizing how his parents would receive it. For them his choice would amount to being a bum and, since he has already made a decision on the matter, they can now leave him alone and give him no trouble.

Thus, it is not that there will not be trouble but that he is encountering his parents as a fighting partner by saying that, rather than encountering them as a child who says something naive and then gets the treatment of a child who says something naive.

Perhaps it could be argued, then, that there are very specific and preferred ways of getting trouble that do not open persons up to being undercut or bare their souls and which might be chosen if one knows that he is already in bad with his parents or other adults, such as choosing to say that he wants to be a bum instead of that he wants to be a plumber. That is,
he can find that he is to contend with trouble as a result of being unable to give his parents an acceptable occupation, knowing that an occupational term is the only acceptable answer because if he tells them his lifestyle preferences he will be categorized.

A few utterances prior to this utterance, Roger says:

5. Roger: That's the way my brother feels; you know I had to push him; you know he wasn't really whole-hearted. "I don't wanna be nothin." He says.

In light of the discussion so far, we can perhaps see that it is not as though we ought to take it literally that a person discovers that he cannot think of an occupational category that he wants to belong to and then decides that he wants to be nothing, but that if he knows what it is that he is going to be will not be received well he can say that he is just going to be a bum and put an end to the argument quickly by starting off at a later stage; and in the utterance above, this is what Roger is suggesting that his brother in fact does.

That is, Roger's use of "He says," here, has the character of not proposing that what follows or precedes it is to be taken as being so, since it is altogether different to
say "I don' wanna be nothin." He says, instead of He says, "I don' wanna be nothin." Moreover, Roger goes on to explain why we are not to believe what his brother says to adults by giving us an explanation for why he says it which turns out to be that his brother knows what he wants to be but, since it is not very realistic, he says that he wants to be nothing in order to avoid being categorized or laughed at.

Now, Roger's brother knows what he wants to be but, in the eyes of his parents and other adults, it is seen as unrealistic and he knows that too, since he favors a lifestyle that would be termed by his parents as being a bum. So, rather than tell people that he chooses not to tell by saying "I don' wanna be nothin" which is another way of saying that he wants to be a bum, since being nothing and being a bum are perhaps the same in the eyes of the person for whom one is saying it, i.e. for the persons who are not that but not the same for a person whose life choice that is; and that is a way of doing an adult's view of what one is turning out to be.

That is, these teenagers can perhaps be seen as idealistic and utopian from an adult point of view and can be seen by some adults as persons who amount to nothing, have no drive, ambition, or pride while the kids perceive themselves as looking
for the good life in a serious and intense way, where doing nothing may be the achievement of that instead of being lazy or a bum. Thus, even though when an adolescent says that he just wants to be a bum he is doing an adult's view of what he is turning out to be, it has altogether different meanings for him, as a teenager, to say that than it would have for an adult to say the same thing.

For an adult to say that he wants to be a bum it can perhaps be funny, since adults generally have already achieved their occupational goals and being a bum could only be seen as a side preoccupation in its most serious sense, but for a seventeen year old to say the same thing, it can be heard by a father as not humorous but as his son's way of seeing the world that is not necessarily his own.

So far, we have been looking at the alternatives that persons have when answering the question of what are they going to be, finding that they cannot provide an occupational answer either because they have none or because the one that they have will not be received favorably, where an occupational answer is the appropriate one. There is another reason why adolescents might find that they cannot give adults an occupational response, even if they have an acceptable occupation
For an adolescent to express an occupational intention is in some ways to make a promise to adults that he can then be seen to either come through on or breach, and which enables them to monitor his actions. That is, at that point in life, a teenager can be seen to be making a potentially serious occupational preference and to announce it can then be similar to promising in that he can be faulted for going back on his word as well as that it provides for adults the criteria to assess him as to whether he is carrying out his plans and taking the proper steps to reach that goal.

If the choice that a teenager makes is an occupation that means that he will have to go to a university in order to be prepared, then adults already have a lever on him in high school in that they can see whether or not he is doing the things in high school that will get him into the university.

In this manner, if one says that he is going to be a doctor but he is not doing well in high school, then he is potentially in trouble with his parents via the fact that what he is doing now will not be seen to be coming through on the commitment that he made when he said that he was going to be a
doctor. Moreover, he may end up being termed an underachiever simply by not living up to his stated ambitions, where an occupational choice is one means for determining one's ambitions, or he may be seen to have made an unserious commitment that may then be a problem by encouraging questions from adults with regard to whether he can or will make a serious commitment and whether he is maturing as he should, since he does not realize that in order to be a doctor he has to begin preparing today.

So there are a series of connections between where one is today and where he might be ten years from now occupationally, and that knowledge provides adults with ammunition to do measurement assessing as to one's seriousness, capacity, progress, fickleness, maturity, stability, and so on, via one's occupational choices and what he is then doing once he has made those choices, both socially and academically, in order to determine whether those things are consistent with the intended outcome.

Thus, when Roger says that his brother does not want to be categorized, he is proposing that it can be problematic for his brother to propose what it is that he is going to be,
whether an engineer or a forest ranger, because then he has provided adults with ways of checking him out that they would not have if he simply did not tell them or, oppositionally, if he said that he wanted to be a bum, where the problem is not avoided but merely shifted.

In accordance with this, stating one's occupational intentions can be problematic in so much as once they are public, others can then find themselves in a position to notice that the person is making unsatisfactory progress toward that goal, is acting out of character for the role that the occupation calls for, or is striving for an unacceptable occupation, which enables them to make other generalizations about the lifestyle and character of that person.

Now, Roger's brother can do one of three things. He can tell adults what he "really wants to be" such as a soldier of fortune and they will laugh at him or label him as immature or unrealistic, or he can give them an occupational term in order to disguise his real feelings, and then they will categorize him and begin to monitor his progress to see whether he is moving toward that goal properly. As a last alternative, he can propose that he is going to be a bum which will avoid both being categorized and laughed at, since it is an alternative
to both occupational categories and the giving of a lifestyle.

It is not as though Roger's brother really wanted to be a forest ranger and did not want to tell adults that he did because he would be categorized, but he did not want to be a forest ranger. That is, all of these teenagers, including Roger's brother, have lifestyle preferences that they would rather not talk about with adults because they get them into trouble, not simply by permitting them to be categorized but because they are not seen as serious in that the adolescents do not pay attention to how they are going to be able to live those lifestyles via an occupation.

They all have preferences for a lifestyle but they may find it hard to come up with an occupation that they have any commitment to and so, it is not so much that if they give the occupational term that stands for what they want to be there will be trouble, but perhaps they do not even have an occupation to give. For either set, "bum" is a term that they can come up with which will get them out of either having no occupation to offer or a bad occupation, where simply giving a lifestyle would be a bad choice as well and get them laughed at and seen as uncommitted since, for adults, lifestyles are not choices but concomitants of occupations so that by choosing an occupa-
tion one attains a lifestyle.

In other words, for adults, occupations are things that they build identities around so that some jobs to them are just jobs while other jobs are occupations. Thus, if one is going to be a bum or a lawyer then there may be an entire lifestyle, set of habits, and manner of dress that would go along with each of those whereas, if one is just in the occupational world to pay the bills, earn money, and keep going, he perhaps does not accept so many of those things and make them a part of himself.

Therefore, garbage collectors are often not expected to have strong internal commitments to collecting garbage in the way that doctors are expected to have those commitments to medicine because the former is seen as being just a job that earns one money, while the latter is seen as an occupational career due to the preliminary work that is involved in order to achieve that occupation.

This chapter has been concerned with examining the talk about a taken-for-granted, commonplace occurrence among adolescents: that they are asked what they are going to be. We have seen that such a question is treated as unproblematic
and reasonable by its incumbents in that they are vulnerable to that question and they have the interactional devices that are required to answer it in a specified way.

Moreover, we have treated the talk about that question as problematic, not because it need be a problem for the participants although for these teenagers answering the question does pose a problem, but because, by treating the process of answering that question as "problematic", an attempt has been made to elucidate those things that are interactionally required to both interpret and respond to it.

While the encounter between the therapist and the teenagers in group therapy has been generated methodically as a result of each of the teenagers being labeled a "problem" by authorities, the topics that they engage in need not be as rigidly arranged beforehand. Although this is the case, it has been suggested that many topics emerge as a result of there being various similar topics on the minds of each of them that are topics which engage them in thoughts and quarrels with their parents and with other adults. Occupations have been shown to constitute one such topic.

Through an examination of occupations as a topic we
have seen that the utterances produced are produced by 'insiders' who recognize themselves as such by making categorical identifications and who, by having that membership, can formulate for each other how they stand with respect to occupations in ways that are different than the formulations that they would give to others. That is, these teenagers interactionally arrive at various topics as a result of having a joint membership in a specific category.

In addition to the above, it has been reasoned that a reference to 'being something' is specifically a reference to an occupation that, for adolescents, has not yet been attained and which poses a problem for adolescents as a result of there being a demand placed upon them to offer an occupation as one that they are in the process of attaining. It is for this reason that we have noted various alternative answers to that demand, answers which have their meaning dependent upon the contextual situation and upon the categorical identifications that can be made, and that we have noted the consequences of giving any one specific response.

The following chapter will be concerned with elucidating some of these issues as well as concerned with posing other kinds of interactional devices that stand behind the utterances
of the talk. Thus, we will still be asking what the utterances amount to and what are the ways by which they are made unproblematic and reasonable for the participants involved. In part, this will mean examining the ways in which occupations can be divided into various subclasses and inquiring into the appeal that particular occupations have for five year olds as opposed to the occupations that adolescents are interested in.
1. This perspective is a typical one taken by classical childhood socialization theorists and adults alike.

2. What is meant by treating the data as problematic can best be described by first examining a quote from Harold Garfinkel in *Studies in Ethnomethodology*, Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey, Prentice Hall, 1967, p. 34:

   In exactly the ways that a setting is organized, it consists of methods for making evident that settings' ways as clear, coherent, planful, consistent, chosen, knowable, uniform, reproducible connections, i.e., rational connections. In exactly the way that persons are members to organized affairs, they are engaged in serious and practical work of detecting, demonstrating, persuading through displays in the ordinary occasions of their interactions the appearances of consistent, coherent, clear, chosen, planful arrangements. In exactly the ways in which a setting is organized, it consists of methods whereby its members are provided with accounts of the setting as countable, storyable, proverbial, comparable, picturable, representable i.e., accountable events.

   The above accomplishments for members are unproblematic, mundane, and constantly present during the everyday situations of interaction but the sociologist, in making those accomplishments a particular subject of study, must treat those accomplishments as an outsider would and as if they were strange. That is, the sociologist must ask how the member makes his world accountable, familiar, and objective.

3. For a presentation of the utterances of the transcript that are used within this thesis in sequential order, consult the appendix. A complete list of the conventions that are used within the transcript can also be found in the appendix.

4. It is important to note here that Roger is using both a lay-
man's definition of categorization, as opposed to the sociological definition of categorization that Sacks employs in his writings, as well as using the term in a double sense for his own purposes. That is, Roger is using categorized to mean what happens to a person if he gives an occupational term to adults i.e., he is monitored for his progress and put into a class as someone who is going to be that occupation. Roger is also using categorized in another fragment of the transcript to mean what happens to a person if he gives adults a lifestyle instead of an occupation i.e., he is laughed at and thought to be immature, strange, unforming, and so on. Thus, Roger has two separate sets in mind for which he is using the term "categorization".

5. That is, the question "What are you going to be?" is unproblematic for these teenagers with regard to interpreting the question and to the ways in which they can answer it, but it poses a problem with regard to which way that they will answer, since none of the boys have or want to give an acceptable occupation.

6. In other words, they are making identifications of one another as teenagers, problem kids, therapy patients, underachievers, boys, and so on.
CHAPTER IV

CHILDREN'S OCCUPATIONAL DREAMS:

SOME FORMAL QUALITIES

In this chapter I will be discussing some of the issues and concepts that were previously mentioned with regard to how a teenager can arrive at making a particular utterance about an occupation and the things that are essential to its being heard as reasonable, although these issues will be presented in a new light. The focus will be upon examining some of the more formal and generalizable features of another piece of the transcript in the hope of comparing it to the data presented in chapter three.

A large portion of the utterances that we will be looking at involve talk about the occupational choices of children, namely these teenagers when they were younger.

Recall that it was mentioned earlier that the adolescents produced talk in therapy about occupations because occupations constituted a topic that was on the minds of each of them as a result of it being a topic which engaged them in thoughts and troublesome matters with specific adults. Furthermore, they
could talk about those matters in therapy with regard to the troublesome character that they had with them when talking about them to adults, one such trouble being that they were anxious about what adults expected and asked of them occupationally.

Now, part of the concern that these teenagers have with occupations is not only that they are anxious and harassed about what adults expect and ask of them but that they can look back on their own earlier selves and find that they have always had some kind of stake in the occupational world, although that stake has not always made problematic the kinds of answers that they could give to the question of what they are going to be, that we referred to in chapter three. That is, it may be that now, as teenagers, they are finding that they have to conceal their occupational choices while perhaps they are also finding that they previously had a history of voiced occupational choices. Therefore, they are at a stage where the occupational world has gone sour on them.

The romantic, glamorous occupational choices have disappeared and yet they are not prepared to make the commitments to the occupational world that their adults want of them for reasons such as that they get categorized or that they are not
interested in occupations as occupations but, instead, they are
interested in lifestyles, where the possibility of converting
those lifestyles or interests into occupations might be very
difficult.

Let us now turn to several other utterances in order
to develop this point:

17. Dan: Certainly I do think that this is
true. I mean any kind of uh (/ )
categorization of an occupation is
just you know, well what are you
gonna be? well I'm gonna be this,
and so on. Certainly. Yer right.

18. Dan: It is-

19. Ken: Sure but-

20. Ken: Yet- When / you were five years
old, w: : : -waitaminute.

21. Dan: Particularly a ten year old child?

22. Ken: When you were five years old din'
you have- didn' you have dreams of
bein a- a-a- a- fireman?

23. Jim: ( // )

24. Ken: A puhliceman? Uhh

25. Roger: That's just a search for adventure.

26. Ken: An ambulance driver, or some such ---
horseshit. Well every time I had this
imagination it was blanked out. Y' know by, "Oh no, you don'wanna be that,
that-there's no money in that, there's
no this, there's no that, uh you wanna be an engineer." (/)

27. Roger: But that's just 'cse every boy wants adventure, y'know an' he sees it as a fireman or a policeman.

28. Ken: So some boys-

29. Roger: C'd also see it as-

30. Ken: So some boys grow up bein a fire-

31. Roger: Why d' they play with guns.

32. Ken: -fireman or a policeman.

33. Roger: N-but it's d-different y'know they come about it under different circumstances. No boy sees adventure in bein a cop, an' then all of his life wants to be a cop, and then becomes a cop. That's very rare.

34. Ken: I don' know,

35. Roger: Just circumstances lead up to it.

36. Ken: But I know there's a lotta guys in college who started out-

37. Roger: I mean-

38. Roger: I mean he sees the truth of it before he becomes old enough to be a cop.

39. Ken: There's a lotta guys in college who started-started out saying they wanted to be a, a-a-

40. Jim: ( )

41. Ken: a-a- whaddya call it a -- not a mathematician, a sec-not a secretar- you know, a-a- special- a specialized // man, // he's-
42. Roger: ( )

43. Roger: Technician.

44. Roger: ('s'at whatchu mean? )

45. Ken: A technician yeah, a secretary like, y'know only he does all kinds of bookkeeping and things like this?

46. Roger: An accountant?

47. Dan: Accountant.


If we focus on Ken's utterance, "When you were five years old din' you have- didn' you have dreams of bein a- a-a- a- fireman?" (utterance #22), we can see that he has come up with an occupational term and that this has been chosen from among hundreds of occupations in the world. Furthermore, it belongs to a subclass of occupational terms so that when he adds to the list we can see that the occupations are all of the same subclass; and that that is available to them is of the essence in order that the meaning be understood such that, if they were to suppose Ken could just as easily have said "insurance salesman", then they could not have understood the point that Ken is making. So, oriented to the maintenance and construction of the talk is a common knowledge about occupational categories.

Ken's comment is in a list construction, meaning one
of the occupations or all of them, ending with "or some such-
horseshit" (utterance #26), which is a retrospective charac-
terization of the items in the class, not a characterization
that applied at the time that the class was in use.

Therefore, at the time when Ken wanted to be a police-
man or a fireman, it was not "some such horseshit" and not
even necessarily at the time when the utterance was begun since
Roger's comment about it being a search for adventure may have
altered the originally intended utterance. Thus, Ken on this
occasion may be revising the categorizations that he is willing
to propose of that subclass of occupations as a result of the
interactional work with Roger although, at a minimum, it in-
volves a retrospective characterization of a subclass that was
constructed in a special way and is bound to a particular kind
of membership which is five year old boys. That is to say that,
although boys are not talked about specifically by Ken, they are
understood to be and referred to as boys by Roger and are part of
what that membership is all about so that Louise, who is another
group member, would not necessarily be expected to have wanted
to be a fireman or policeman at age five.

So here we see a subclass of occupations with a cate-
gory bound character, a retrospective viewing of it both through Ken's use of "dreams" and "horseshit", and a recharacterization of it which provide not only for the world of five year olds but for the world of fifteen year olds who retrospectively can see themselves as five year olds as a result of having once been there.

Thus, as it looks now, these teenagers are finding themselves to be suffering the results of some induced falsehoods since they retrospectively are finding the notions that they had of the occupational world have turned out to be horseshit. That is, it is not being proposed that as one grows older he changes views or gets different interests but, rather, that there is a determinate characterization placed upon a five year old's view of the world that is in opposition to possible alternative ones, where that retrospective viewing of it could be evaluated in another situation nostalgically, perhaps.

If we look at the subclass of occupations and see that it is a subclass and notice some of its features and how it is constructed such that it is category bound so that small boys are involved, then we can see the power of the complaint made by Ken when he proposes, as against that, that he was told that he
wanted to be an engineer, since engineer is plainly not a member of that subclass but a member of quite another subclass of occupations that is bound to different category members and notions.

One can see that, although under some notion occupational terms are merely occupational terms, it would be hard to see one being proposed to another as an alternative when, in fact, there is a great deal of socially organized knowledge tied to those subclasses of occupations that makes that a powerful retrospective complaint by Ken.\(^1\)

Now, in order for Ken's utterance to have been understood by the others it had to have been given a list-like character such that all of the occupations could be seen to be category bound, which would require that occupations not always be seen as equal. That is, although there could be a world where adults expected that by the time a teenager was fifteen he would have chosen an occupation, in actuality that is not the way things are and these teenagers can see that the occupational world is shot through with implications with respect to whether they are living up to "Mommy and Daddy's" expectations, whether they are displaying that they have ambitions, or whether they
are underachievers.

So when they talk about occupations, that talk is constrained by the sense that they have of the occupational world having an enormous amount of internal structure. Thus, when they look back on when they were five years old, they can see that there were many occupations that they might have selected that rated because of what Roger characterizes as a "boy's search for adventure" and that that is not now a way to be selective of occupations any more than it is a way to select the kinds of occupations that appeal to them when they are fifteen.

The kinds of occupations that they have to consider when they are fifteen are quite different than the occupations that they have to consider when they are five but, nevertheless, these adolescents still have a sense of there being kinds of occupations instead of just occupations and they can see that there are constraints on them to orient to occupations as kinds of occupations.

That is to say, if one proposes that he wants to be something in occupational terms, his parents will hear it not just for its intrinsic satisfactions but for what that means in terms of whether he will bring shame on the family or whether
their child will turn out to be lazy, unambitious, or an under-achiever. So occupations get listened to intensively for several things and thus, they have a list-like character. It is not that Ken can choose between being an engineer or a garbage collector and, in fact, there are jokes about that kind of contrast throughout the transcript:

49. Dan: Cause it hasta go through the school system.

50. Roger: Mh///hm

51. Dan: Otherwise you won't be hired as an engineer. You'll be //hired as a uh- as a // maintenance engineer.\

52. Ken: I dunno if I'm testing myself, but uh-hell, i-if it means testing myself, ok I'm testing myself. But yet when I get outta college it's gonna say 'engineer' on that thing if it takes me til I'm four hundred'n ten years old.
   ..
   ..

53. Jim: Heh g- gonna end up bein ice cream man or sump'n.

54. Ken: Well, uh a lotta people- you c'n get a job as a-as a salesman,
55. Roger: Oh Jesus

56. Ken: As a-uh no I mean fer a big comp'ny.

In the last example above, salesman gets an interesting treatment since when Ken says that he could get a job as a salesman, Roger treats it as if that is a naive and misinformed idea that Ken has if he thinks that he will get somewhere occupationally by being a salesman. Ken attempts to counter Roger's remark by suggesting that it would be for a big company and then by going on to give the case of a neighbor who made it successfully as a salesman but, it is not as though Ken can say that he does not know whether to be a salesman or an engineer since, if he says that he wants to be a salesman, he will get those kinds of responses as a result of salesman not belonging to the same occupational category that engineer belongs to.

That is, someone who does not want to be an engineer may want to be something else but that something else had better look like the kinds of things that a potential engineer might be and not be like a salesman.

There are collections of occupational terms such that if one was potentially a member of one occupation but passed it up, then he ought to select another occupation from that same
collection and not move to another collection. Therefore, a person who was potentially an engineer might decide to become an accountant but not an ice cream man, since ice cream man is not merely another occupation but it is from another collection that belongs with unskilled occupations such as a garbage man or a janitor.  

In this manner, if one of the other group members heard Ken's comment about five year old dreams and then proposed the occupation of insurance salesman as one more member of the list, then it would not be correct because it would not be generated out of the notion of what five year old kids have dreams of being occupationally. In other words, they do not merely choose any occupations but there are kinds of occupations that are specifically seen to be the kinds of things that five year olds are interested in.  

Thus, out of an entire domain of occupational terms, on any occasion when occupations get talked about, there are in force and in use notions about how those things are collected and organized with respect to properties that they have such that, if a person was to say that he was going to the Northwest Territories to work, that would invoke various things that he could be doing as things that one does when he goes to the Northwest
Territories, where those things would include mining, fishing, or work on the Pipeline and when he could, after all, be going there as a psychiatrist. Going to the Northwest Territories to work will invoke a set of occupations that are seen to be the kinds of occupations that people go to the Northwest Territories to do.

So, if one was going to propose a job to another he would not propose unskilled manual labor as a suitable, equivalent job if that person had been applying for jobs as a corporation executive because he would take it that occupations have that kind of relational character to one another.

Now, one can propose that he can come up with an occupation that has relevant properties to whatever criteria by which another is assessing his analysis, although those properties have not been told to him. Thus, all of this is not simply restricted to occupations, teenager's talk about occupations, or teenager's talk about kids versus the occupations but Ken's utterance is a prevalent way of displaying that the domains of items that people propose large lists of have an internal structure and organization that is not composed of a single internal structure or organization, but which is composed of many such structures for agents or persons of given interests, tastes,
and occupations.  

Therefore, to return to Ken's utterance, if someone had heard Ken say fireman or policeman or ambulance driver, but then proposed salesman as another co-category member, it would be apparent that he had not understood how Ken was putting his list together and, in fact, part of the problem that these teenagers have is coming to terms with just those notions. That is, for adults, if one of the kids is not going to be an engineer when he is expected to be, then he had better be something that is in the same collection as an engineer and he had better be able to grasp what that collection is, where salesman surely would not be in that collection but, perhaps, one of the problems that these adolescents have is learning these collections.

So, in Ken's utterance, he has put fireman, policeman, and ambulance driver specifically in a list so that the others can see that they are related occupations and determine what that relationship is whereas engineer, which is also an occupation, is set apart from the list. That is, fireman, policeman, and ambulance driver are seen to be co-members of one subset of occupations where what they have in common can be found by the
others to be occupational interests of five year old boys but, since engineer is distinctly set apart from that list and can be seen to belong to an altogether different subset of occupations, where that subset cannot be independently found because no other co-members are given, the category that it belongs to is provided as being a money-making profession.

Thus, if Ken had simply said in utterance twenty six that his father had said "...Oh no, you don't wanna be that, uh you wanna be an engineer.", we might not be able to see with the clarity that we do see just what it is that Ken is going to presume because, having only engineer available to us, we perhaps cannot be clear about the category of the subclass that he is referring to since there are alternative categories such as those that involve money-making, an educational level, or a specified level of prestige. What we do get, however, is a subclass with the category built in so that one occupation is enough.

Furthermore, Ken has a nice way of getting the others to see that he is not proposing that they, as five year olds, ought to have specifically been interested in being firemen, policemen, or ambulance drivers but, rather, that they ought to have been interested in being things that five year old boys are
occupationally interested in, of which firemen, policemen, and ambulance drivers are only three such examples. In other words, Ken is able to display that his list is not yet complete and, since the category that the listed items belong to can be found, additional occupations belonging to the same category are retrievable by the others.

Ken is able to do this by using the format "or some such _____", which like "or something" and "and stuff" suggest that what precedes them is at least one item of a list and that the relationship to one another that those items have can be found by others by examining what has already been given. For example:

45. Ken: A technician yeah, a secretary like, y'know only he does all kinds of bookkeeping and things like this?

46. Roger: An accountant?

47. Dan: Accountant.


In the above example, Ken attempts to describe an occupation for which he as yet does not have a formal name. He has begun two lists: a list of occupations that are similar to the occupation that he is attempting to name, and a list of
duties of that occupation, although his list has ended with only one item which is bookkeeping.

Now, Ken has indicated that bookkeeping is part of an unfinished list and he has provided, both in that list and prior to it, information that can enable Roger to come up with additional duties of that occupation and, in so doing, then be able to name the occupation as an accountant. That is, Roger can find other duties that are related to bookkeeping such as working with mathematical figures, recording financial transactions, posting, and filing in order to aid him in determining that occupation, and he has been invited to look for those duties, in part, as a result of Ken saying "...and things like this?" (utterance #45) which has told Roger that there are other such duties.

Thus, Ken's utterance is elaborately organized in such a way as to provide both a retrospective view of five year old occupational interests and a present view of the same interests, where those occupations are given as belonging to one category and contrasted with occupations of another category, such as an engineer, and that have ideas of commitment, preparation, training, and early choice tied to them. Therefore, a
garbage collector would not be a suitable contrast since it is not expected to have been chosen early in life, to express an occupational interest, to be prepared and trained for, or to provide for a lifestyle.

One way of looking at occupations, apart from other ways, is as being divided into two large subsets: those which persons are expected to choose, orient to, prepare for, and commit themselves to, and those that are just jobs, where each one of these teenagers is expected to be interested in the former by adults but finds himself to be interested in the latter.

That is a problem that turns on the categories of occupations and their respective compositions and relationships, where the grounds on which these adolescents select their occupations may not be the grounds on which those collections that their adults use are constructed as well as that, even if they are constructed on the same grounds, the adolescents have to learn the categories that each occupation belongs to and that may, in itself, be problematic.

In other words, each one of them has to learn the way in which the domain of occupations is structured into subclasses and collections, each having properties that are not in and among
themselves intrinsic to the occupations but which are relevant to the ways in which one can get seen to be achievement or white collar oriented, living up to family expectations, and properly preparing for those occupations.

In this manner, Ken's utterance is elaborately organized not because it tells us that five year olds want to be firemen, policemen, or ambulance drivers but because it displays the trust that these teenagers have in the structure of the occupational world.

This chapter has been concerned with presenting the more formal and generalizable interactional devices that stand behind adolescent's talk about occupations.

By examining a different portion of the transcript that involved talk about the occupational choices of children, it was demonstrated that the occupational terms mentioned by the adolescents were divided in such a way as to provide various subclasses of occupational terms, and that the list-like character that some utterances possessed was primarily a means by which those subclasses of occupations could be identified and recognized by the others, a point which was crucial to understanding those utterances. Furthermore, it was found that there are
collections of occupations that govern the ways in which a person might choose another occupation, given that he has decided not to be what he has told others he will be.

When these issues were compared to the data in chapter three, it was discovered that, because of the subclass character that occupations have, they get listened to intensively for a variety of things such that if one proposed to his parents that he wanted to be a specific occupation, they would hear that not only for its intrinsic satisfactions but, also, for what that would mean in terms of whether he would be an underachiever or bring shame on the family; and that hearing would, in part, be based upon whether the occupation was one that persons orient to and commit themselves to or whether it was to be considered as just a job.

In addition, it was noted that the occupational choices of the adolescents were problematic not only because they were anxious about what adults expected of them but also because, by examining their five year old occupational choices, they could determine that they were mislead into having false notions about the occupational world. While they could not now voice their occupational choices, they found that they had a history of voiced occupational choices; and while nearly all occupations known to
them were acceptable to offer at five years old, only specific subclasses of those occupations that persons orient to and commit themselves to are acceptable now.
FOOTNOTES

1. The socially organized knowledge that is tied to occupations is evidenced by the very specific and widely agreed upon prestige ratings that are given various occupations. Albert J. Reiss nicely discusses this point in the following quote that is taken from his book, Occupations and Social Status, New York, Free Press of Glencoe, 1962, p. 195:

The high correlations among the ratings for occupations by individuals with ostensibly different evaluative criteria strongly suggests the existence of an underlying and agreed upon structure of occupational prestige.

2. Ken's use of "Mommy and daddy" can be compared to Roger's use of "Play big people", both of which are not typical ways of referring to adults by adolescents but, instead, are children's ways. Therefore, either is a way of doing a distancing from adults that is ironic since the teenagers do not see themselves as children but are suggesting that adults see them as such. In Roger's example, big people and adults are one and the same, which is attested to by a following comment by Ken that speaks of having a talk with his father and that is perhaps a way of playing a big person since it was an intellectual talk. That is, Roger is suggesting that, for them, being an adult or a big person is something that they are aware of as having not yet attained in the eyes of adults and so it is still a matter of play. After Ken states that his talk with his father turned out very good, Roger follows it by asking, "From the old man's viewpoint?". At first this appears to be an odd statement since a notion about something being good seems to involve a judgement of one's own and, therefore, seems to be taken from the perspective of the speaker which would cause it to be heard as Ken's viewpoint. That Roger questions this implies that, for Ken, the talk could not have turned out good and, therefore, it must be his father's viewpoint that he is giving which is to say that playing a big person is for them only play and, thus, it does not entitle them to all of the respect, privileges, control, and independence that the actual category calls forth. Even Ken's following comment, "For once in his life" takes this perspec-
tive by indicating that this was an unusual case for it to have turned out good for him.

3. Here, Dan is speaking about professions that amount to something versus professions that do not amount to something. So there is an occupational classificatory system which includes maintenance engineer among the occupations that do not amount to anything and Dan uses that knowledge when he speaks about what these teenagers might have to be and compares that with what they might want to be. Here, he does nearly a pun on the occupation of an engineer by doing a strong contrast set e.g., money and prestige versus little money and low prestige. So, ice-cream man, although the same kind of contrast, would not do the work of displaying how the society would look at them if they went to apply for an engineer's job without having the experience since, if one of them was untrained but said that he was an engineer, he would be looked at in the terms of an engineer and not thought of as a possible ice-cream man, although perhaps as a low form of an engineer i.e., a maintenance engineer. That is, it is not as though they would be given janitor's jobs when they applied as engineers, but they might be thought of in those terms where, in fact, the two jobs could be placed within the same building.

4. That there is a contrast between various subclasses of occupations is aptly discussed in a study on occupations that can be found in Albert J. Reiss' book, Occupations and Social Status, New York, Free Press of Glencoe, 1962, p. 195. The following is a brief summary of two findings:

Two conclusions seem inescapable from this investigation: 1) despite the fact that the social position of a person has an effect on his ratings of some occupations, the prestige status of occupations is viewed in substantially the same way by major social groupings in American society and 2) despite the relative lack of consensus on the criteria for rating a job as having excellent standing, there is almost complete agreement on the nature of the occupational prestige structure of American society, at least where the rated occupations are highly salient.

5. Another example of the internal structure and organization of
lists can be found in an examination of Roger’s list:

Roger: You’re not interested in cars, you’re not interested in sports, you’re not interested in mechanics, // you’re not-

Jim: Well I’m interested in it, but I don’t feel that I sh’d—that I wanna go into the field,

In the above, where Roger begins to focus on Jim, he is depending on prior talk to be able to make that kind of list. That is, it is not that Roger can begin to tell Jim that he does not like certain things, by pure guessing alone, without likely receiving complaints such as “How do you know?” and, also, it is not perhaps interesting or even unusual that Jim would not like certain things, since no one is expected to be interested in everything. So Roger could perhaps receive a response such as “Well, you just chose the things that I do not like”, where that could be seen as a complaint since it presumes that Jim is not interested in anything and, after all, he is interested in quite a few things that Roger has not paid attention to. In actuality, none of these possible responses are ones that Jim offers and, as it turns out, Jim says that he is interested in them as if somehow he ought to be. How Jim can possibly come to a conclusion such as that involves first, perhaps, that Roger can find some way to single out those interests as ones that belong to some group of interests that Jim ought to find appealing and, second, that Roger have some grounds for determining that Jim is not interested in those activities. That is, for Jim the list is intelligible in that it is responded to either as the total so far or in that he has let it go so far. When he challenges one item of it, he challenges not its belonging in the list or the intelligibility of the list but only the truthfulness of its application to him. He both must allow it to be taken that he understands the construction of the list and he must expect that others will in order to make any sense of his response. Now, as was previously mentioned, there must be a million things that Jim is not interested in but one cannot make up a workable utterance by collecting some of those without possibly receiving complaints. So, first of all, that Jim is not interested in something has to be heard as presumably something that he could be interested in, where it might make no sense to say that Jim is not interested in Chinese History because it is true, since we would wonder
how Roger would ever know. So Roger has to find a way to make a list of those things a person is not interested in intelligible and coherent, where one way might be to find such items that they might be expected to be interested in given who and what they are and from those items to select those that one's biographical conversational experience with that person has indicated that they are not interested in. Therefore, it is not as though this list is an especially esoteric one that Jim alone is interested in or that is relevant for only Jim, but these are perhaps things that all of the others are interested in as well or at least which all of the others can possibly be interested in, in order for that to be said to Jim, which gives grounds for ruling out Chinese History, repairing watches, origins of the second world war, and so on. So, to extend the list, Roger has to come up with items that have some warrant through who Jim is with respect to them and who they are with respect to Jim, and what has transpired between them. He has come up with interests that are seen to be common interests for teenage boys and he has found grounds for asserting that those are not interests for Jim because Jim has remained silent on those issues when they arose in previous conversations. An example similar to this is noted by Harvey Sacks, where a lady calls about an apartment for rent and says, after the landlady says that she does not accept pets, "I don't have any pets but I have a fourteen year old son". The question gets raised, what do pets and sons have in common? Over the course of talk, that is potentially consequential for them given the kind of negotiation that they are in, i.e., it is not enough to say "I do not have any pets" as a response, if the woman turned up with a child, it could turn out that not only did the landlady not accept pets, but she did not accept children either, since children and pets are the kind of things that get prohibited by apartment owners. So even though the landlady has not said that she takes no children, it gets checked out by the potential renter as an issue and gets treated unproblematically by. Therefore, with regard to Roger's list, Dan, Ken, Al, and Louise can be expected to find some sense in Roger proposing that Jim is not interested in those things and, when Jim gives a response that addresses one or all of those items, it can be heard that in order for Jim to produce such a response he must have found the intelligibility of that collection of interests, and Jim must assume that the others found it in order to make
some sense of his response. In this manner then, if one wants to make a teenager out to be not like everyone else, then that he is not interested in cars, sports, or mechanics is a collection of items that will do that where, of the many other items that he is not interested in, most of them will not only be puzzling to Jim if they are proposed but to the other hearers as well, although they could perfectly well be correct. That is, some grounds have to be found for their assertability, making such proposals hard to object to. One of the ways that Roger can obtain a response and also have the potentially unconnected interests that he is naming observable as all belonging to one category, is to form a list that is seen to be incomplete but where all of the items will appear related and where a response will become necessary in order to terminate the list. That is, by placing the items in a list he has made them appear related and he has emphasized that relatedness by prefacing each interest with the same clause, "You're not interested in" which, beside displaying a relatedness, is repeating over and over the point that he is making i.e., Jim's lack of interest. So lists have an internal structure and organization that is composed for persons or agents of given interests, tastes, and occupations.
CHAPTER V

OCCUPATIONS:

A RETROSPECTIVE VIEW

It is the purpose of this chapter to examine some features of the data that was presented in chapter four. Although we were previously concerned with noting the more formal and generalizable features of the transcript utterances, many of which were operable independently of the talk about occupations, the group therapy setting, and the fact that the participants were adolescents, let us now turn to a more particular examination of that same talk about occupations by adolescents in an effort to further understand the interactional resources that stand behind the utterances and that provide for their reasonableness and in order to discover what the utterances amount to when spoken by adolescents and among adolescents about occupations.

Recall that in chapter four we were discussing the following utterance as being a display of the trust that the teenagers have in the structure of the occupational world, as a result of its elaborate organization:

22. Ken: When you were five years old din' you have- didn' you have dreams of bein a- a-a- a-fireman?
Although Ken's utterance is in the form of "When you were five...", we can see that it is speaking for all five year olds and that it is autobiographical which becomes more apparent as he goes on to explain that he had such dreams but that, when he expressed them to adults, those dreams were treated as inappropriate and he was told that he wanted to be an engineer.

Therefore, it is not that only these kids, as teenagers, find that they have to contend with being asked what they are going to be, where that is a question that kids get asked at early ages as well, but it is not necessarily a serious query on the part of an adult for a five year old while it is a serious query for a teenager. That is, a ten year old is already expected to be getting realistic about what he wants to be but a five year old is not expected to be realistic and, although he is perhaps serious about his answers, he has notions about the society that turn out to be wrong or useless when he grows up.

Now, Ken can look back on his five year old dreams and see that they were dreams as opposed to plans from where he is now but that, at five, children ought not to have problems by telling their occupational choices to adults since adults are expected to see that they are only dreams and not serious occupational choices and, thereby, ought not to treat them as such.
So Ken has a special complaint in that he was treated at five as if his dreams were a serious occupational choice by an older child. Thus, it may be that Ken really did want to be a policeman or an ambulance driver when he was five but now, at fifteen, he can see that his parents should not have treated it as if he wanted to be a policeman or an ambulance driver, but only as a five year old's dreams which even he now finds to be "horseshit".

That is, his parents ought to have known then what he knows now because they were adults but, instead, they treated his dreams as responsible, occupational choices and countered them with adult, rational arguments of the kind that would be addressed to somebody who was making what they thought to be a mistake in a serious occupational choice where, Ken, at fifteen, can see that his five year old thoughts were the product of imaginations and dreams.

In this manner, although now their plans are treated as if they amount to responsible, occupational choices, which for them poses trouble since they do not want to be categorized, for Ken to have always been listened to in that sense enables him to find grounds for making a powerful complaint, since he can find that even at five he was categorized and treated as a problem
child by virtue of wanting to be the wrong things.

Thus, as a result of Ken's utterance, we are able to see what things he wanted to be at five which are occupational interests of other five year old boys, how as a fifteen year old he can re-evaluate what he wanted to be at five and how, at fifteen, he can see that when he was five his parents did not seem to have the insight into him then that he himself has ten years later. So, being someone who has suffered a family malfunctioning, where the average parent would have treated his dreams for what they were worth, Ken was reprimanded and treated as a problem child which, in turn, has given him problems ever since.

That is, ever since Ken can remember he has been told that he wants to be an engineer which now poses problems for him that stem around an indecision about his career, a revolt against his parents, and an indecision about what he really would like to be, but which he can trace back to when he was five years old, when his parents were mishearing things that five year olds say.

Therefore, Ken can not only find that but he can find that it is relevant to where he is now, even with regard to being
in therapy, where a lot of what he is concerned about relates to his worries about whether he is going to be an engineer. That is to say that it is not mentioned coincidentally that when he was five his parents said that he wanted to be an engineer, but all of these concerns for Ken have been constantly mentioned throughout the transcript as a result of them consisting of things that he cannot get straight in his head and, now, he can find a history for them by going back to a point in his life where his parents ought not to have been treating his occupational choices as occupational choices but, rather, as dreams, imagination, and horseshit that he himself can see them as being.

So having dreams is seen by Ken as a normal five year old's preoccupation and, that it should have received the kind of parental treatment that it did is seen as something that he can now make a complaint about, since Ken's parents were in a position to know about his thoughts since they were already adults, and he was not in such a position since he was only five.

Now, Roger's response to Ken's utterance, "That's just a search for adventure" (utterance #25), can be heard by Ken to be not only identifying the category of occupations that he
is referring to and also suggesting that those five year old interests are occupations that children want because they are glorified by the adult world, but he is suggesting that those occupations may not be so desirable once one has seen that truth. Therefore, what one does at five years old is not merely characteristic of occupations but it is characteristic of adventure and that can then be translated into things such as occupations and, thus, it is not to be regarded as an occupational choice in the way that engineering may be regarded as an occupational choice. To this extent, five year old occupational choices are lifestyle choices in that the occupation itself appears to promise a range of activities that are attractive.

They are not lifestyles in a teenage sense, where a teenager might want a lifestyle that involves communing with nature or being free to come and go as he pleases, but they are lifestyles in that when one is five he sees occupations not as ways of supporting himself, making money, or keeping a family but as made up of their characteristic activities, and those characteristic activities appeal to him because they are exciting, glamorous, heroic, and so on. Therefore, five year old occupational choices are similar to lifestyles in that they
promise a life where one can do the things that, at five years old, he would really like to do, such as grow up and be able to carry a gun.

These teenagers have gone beyond the five year old dreams and now occupations no longer seem to them to be represented by the activities that are essential to an occupation or else their notions of the activities that are essential to an occupation have changed. Let us look at an example to illustrate this point:

33. Roger: N-bu'i-but it's d-different y'know they come about it under different circumstances. No boy sees adventure in bein a cop, an' then all of his life wants to be a cop, and then becomes a cop. That's very rare.

In the above utterance, Roger is no longer seeing that what a cop does is pleasant and exciting and something that he would like to be, although he may have thought those things when he was five but, instead, being a cop is now despicable to him as a result of both finding out the truth about cops and finding that, for him now, cops are persons who give him trouble and who give teenagers trouble.

In a sense, Roger's view about becoming a policeman is
not too different than the adult view of becoming a garbage man or an ice cream man since, for Roger, becoming a policeman is something that just happens to somebody by getting to a point and needing a job, which is not how he might have seen the process of becoming a policeman earlier in life.

So there is a structural parallel here since, when one is five years old he may look forward to years of contemplating being a policeman and finally becoming one but, when one is fifteen, he is expected to look forward to becoming an engineer with that same kind of time span built into it, the only difference being that when one is five he voluntarily looks forward to becoming a policeman while at fifteen he may be constrained to orient to becoming an engineer. That is, both perspectives have a future reference and if it was not for that reference it would be a different story since, it is not that these teenagers have to get out and get a job but that they have to do whatever teenagers have to do in high school, and do it now, in order to be able to be an engineer eight years from now.

Thus, when they were five, it might have been easy to contemplate a distant occupation where, perhaps, they had no idea what they would do between being five years old and grown
up but, now at fifteen, the training, commitment, and announce-
ments for adults can be a difficult experience.

So, Roger's talk about becoming a cop invokes a notion of how there are occupations that one becomes party to when he is an adult by virtue of a steady adherence to them over a period of years, versus occupations that one can circumstantially fall into. That is to say that when one is five years old a policeman might look like something that one attains by virtue of long felt ambitions but, by the time one becomes a teenager, perhaps for these teenagers cops get seen to be people who could not do anything else or who ended up being cops through circum-
stances.

Therefore, it is not merely an accident that "policeman" as a term gets transformed into being a "cop" by Roger since, as a five year old one wants to be a policeman but now, when he sees the reality behind it, he cannot even imagine being a cop. Police-
men switch from being heroes and adventure figures to being dis-
liked persons who specifically give trouble to people like Ken and Roger, and who are the enemy.

That is, for these teenagers, they have a common know-
ledge about cops and a cop is a profession that for them no self-
respecting kid would want to be such that, unless they display that they are talking about cops arbitrarily, then they get to be heard as talking about policemen in the way that teenagers talk about policemen, which is as "cops", "pigs", and so on. So we see that there are enforceable notions of what people or category members are like and, although they may not really be that way, these teenagers can use those notions where, here, it is an enforceable notion of how adolescents feel about cops and if someone has a different notion, then he either is required to offer an explanation why he sees cops differently, such as that his father is a policeman, or he ought to remain silent.¹

Now, one of the things that is story material and enables persons to get a pleasant reaction from others is the contrast between what they are now, which is often a successful actor, writer, etcetera, and the childish things that they wanted to be at five such as a fireman, policeman, or ambulance driver, where that can then be seen as charming since, even a person such as that, when he was five, had childish notions just like everyone else.

For these adolescents, who as yet have become nothing and are having problems becoming anything, when they look back to
what they wanted to be at five years old they find that they bought into the occupational system in a way that has now betrayed them. They bought into the occupational system because, at five, they wanted to be something and knew what they wanted to be and now those things do not have charm for them and they do not look back on those choices as naive and with a tolerance, but they look back upon those things with a bitterness and resentment, finding that they were led to have notions about the occupational world that experiences proved to be untenable.

In addition, both now and then they saw occupational categories as being adult bound so that one way to achieve adulthood was to achieve an occupation where, when they were five, becoming an adult was viewed with favor while now, perhaps, becoming an adult is seen to be a responsibility that means being monitored in the process, deprivations, being accountable for their time, and so on.

Thus, when the person who has successfully attained an occupation looks back to when he was five, he does not see his notions as being false, but sees them as charming while these teenagers do not have that kind of security that enables them to look at their five year old aspirations at a distance since those aspirations appear sardonic and, given what they thought before,
They are now learning the hard way about the occupational world, having not yet attained an occupation.  

It soon becomes apparent, when we look to Roger's utterance, that he is suggesting that adult cops are not the product of children who wanted to be policemen and who maintained that as a stable choice over a period of years but, rather, that cops came about their occupations through different circumstances.

Roger's utterance looks back on the five year old occupational choices and on Ken's characterization of those occupations as "horseshit" by displaying that those are not viable occupations once one knows about the world from a perspective of someone other than that of a five year old. That is, he discovers that firemen, ambulance drivers, and policemen do not lead lives of adventure and, specifically, that cops are not merely things that they do not want to be as a result of disinterest, but precisely what they do not want to be as a result of knowing what cops now are and what they stand for for persons such as them.

Moreover, for some occupations, they scarcely know what incumbents of those occupations actually do. For example, in one fragment of the transcript previously given, Ken is uncertain about what an accountant does:
49. Ken: There's a lotta guys in college who started out saying they wanted to be a, a-

50. Jim: 

51. Ken: a-whaddyacallit a -- not a mathematician, a see-not a secreta-you know, a-special a specialized // man, he's-

52. Roger: 

53. Roger: Technician.

54. Roger: 's'at whatchu mean? )

55. Ken: A technician yeah, a secretary like, y'know only he does all kinds of bookkeeping and things like this?

56. Roger: An accountant?

57. Dan: Accountant.


59. ( ): Uh huh

60. Jim: ( ) be a //  

61. Ken: They get in there and they start--they go through college for th'first two years and they got a semester more to go? And all of a sudden they'll just change their minds, they'll say


63. Ken: I don' // like this.

64. Roger: They realize this isn't what they wanted.

65. Ken: Well,
66. Dan: Sure.

67. Ken: See th-yet-yet you c'd change, you can change at almost any time.

68. Dan: Of course.

69. Ken: When you're older, I guess, I dunno // Now you don't have any choice.

70. Dan: ( No, you- now. )


Now, from Ken's point of view, he may have a problem in deciding how he is going to be an accountant at fifteen when he does not even know what an accountant does. That is, these boys are unfamiliar with many of the occupational terms such that, when those occupations are referred to, they are called by generalized terms so that, if one was that occupation, he might not call it by the same term.

Thus, Ken refers to an accountant as a specialized man, by not having the proper term, and he makes it apparent that he does not know the proper term although he knows that his term is incorrect where, if engineer and accountant are equally esoteric occupational terms, perhaps there are some occupational terms that one simply knows as of his autobiography while others remain esoteric at that stage.
So, at some stage, possibly one can get to know several occupational terms without there being an autobiographical account for how he has mastered them but, for now, Ken may know and use a set of engineer's terms, as a result of his father always wanting him to be an engineer, but he can be totally unfamiliar with an accountant's term and what an accountant does as a result of that occupation having no relationship to his biography as of yet.

Previously, we have been looking at Ken's account and Roger's account of what five year olds want to be and what they might turn out to be while now, in the utterances just given, we have an account by Ken of persons in college and what they want to be, which involves an entirely different subclass of occupations, many whose names Ken does not yet know. That is, he is referring to a subclass of occupations that one finds out about, knows about, and orients to by the time that he gets to college where, prior to that time, he might not even know what they consist of or what they are called although he knows that they exist.

Therefore, when Ken refers to a specialized man, here, (utterance #51), he is talking about an accountant in a naive
way that is not the way that an adult would refer to the same occupation but, for Ken, it is reflective of where he is now such that when he gets to college he will have those kinds of interests.

That is to say, it is supposed that there is an abundance of talk about getting married and having children among teenagers or younger persons, which is not where they are now but they can already see that it is where they are going to be sometime. They can suppose that they will end up getting married although right now the idea of getting married might for them be a strange idea. Thus, Ken knows in that same way that when he gets to college he will have aspirations for occupations that presently he does not even know the names of and, yet, he knows that such occupations exist and that he will have aspirations for some of them but, at this time, he only knows about them in an inexpert's or an outsider's way, which is the way of someone not yet involved with them.

In this respect, there is a nice progression from five year olds to teenagers to adults where five year olds want to be an occupation but they want to be the occupation because of the things that it will permit them to do; teenagers want their freedom and want to be able to live the way that they want to
live and occupations, for them, are problematic because they are expected to be tied to them and they are then monitored and bothered by adults; and adults view occupations seriously because they have to make a living and because occupations help them to be respectable and get them things such as a place in the country which, for them, represents a notion of a lifestyle but which, for teenagers, does not represent a lifestyle or represents a rejected lifestyle.

In this chapter we examined the ways in which the question "What are you going to be?" can be either a serious or a non-serious query on the part of adults and, depending upon how it is treated, it can result in both present and future problems for its incumbents. In addition, we examined the ways in which notions about occupations can have a determinate character placed upon them for specific age groups, although those age groups may have a structural parallel as well.

Finally, it was noted that there are notions of what people or category members are like and that those notions are enforceable interactionally.
FOOTNOTES

1. The notion of what policemen stand for for teenagers is one that presumably exists for most teenagers in American culture, although for these teenagers that notion is a particularly relevant one since perhaps many of them are in therapy as a result of having problems with just such authorities. That is, they have been sent to the group therapy sessions as a result of being labeled "problem kids", where part of their problem is one of delinquency e.g., having a poor relationship with law authorities as a result of committing robberies, speeding, or fighting with weapons in gangs.

2. Roy Turner is to be given credit for proposing this as an alternative perspective.
CHAPTER VI

CONCLUSION

Through the analyses in this thesis, we have seen that the attainment of adulthood is not simply a matter of maturation and physical development, where if we permit persons to grow up things will take their proper course, but the attainment of adulthood involves an entire socialization process that enables one to become a 'good' adult which is someone who is more than physically and sexually mature but, rather, who has over a period of time experienced, oriented to, and learned various things in a way that has made him a responsible adult.

We have seen that occupations are tied with adulthood in that adulthood not only in a contingent way involves occupations in so much as persons, as adults, are expected to be able to provide for themselves and attain lifestyles by way of occupations, but occupations are things that persons who are not yet adults ought to already be orienting to and continuing to orient to over the course of their lives, unseriously as five year old children but seriously orienting to by the time that they are teenagers although, perhaps, for them it may always be a serious orientation.
Thus, the question, "What are you going to be when you grow up?", is a request for an occupational term because, for adults, occupations provide for lifestyles and enable one to live so that he can be something, although it is not semantically necessary that an occupation be given.

Various categories in our society, such as teenagers, are vulnerable to that question in so much as they are responsible for doing the things that they ought to be doing now that will get them into a particular occupation at a later date, and the particular answer that they give will enable adults to determine whether they are living up to those responsibilities as well as, perhaps, to monitor future actions. That is, they are expected to be attending high school, choosing the correct courses, and getting the proper training and experience that will enable them to become responsible adults. So, during that time, such persons will be asked what they will be and that is seen as a reasonable query in that all persons are expected to be orienting to being something, where that something is an occupation.

Now, with children such as five year olds, that query is treated by adults in a humorous way, not with regard to the nature of the question but with regard to the answers that are
given since those answers are revealing about what the child has so far been doing, experiencing, watching on television, reading and so on. That is, it can be seen as both cute and informative for a five year old to say that he wants to be a cowboy when he has grown up in the city and has never been to the country since it enables adults to see that he has, perhaps, been watching cowboys on television and, at a minimum, that although he is not held responsible for his occupational choices, he has already come to take them seriously himself, knowing that he is expected to orient to being something in occupational terms.

Moreover, although his occupational answers are not taken seriously in the way that fifteen year old occupational answers are taken, adults are already able to monitor five year old choices in such a way as to determine whether they are proper, although not serious, five year old choices. In other words, adults can come to see that when a five year old says that he wants to be an accountant, he is not making a five year old's occupational choice, since five year olds are not expected to have even learned the term for an accountant let alone the duties that the occupations calls for but, instead, that the child probably has a parent or relative who is an accountant from whom he has heard the term and repeated it without knowledge of the occupation.
So answers to the question of what is one going to be are to be oriented to by all persons with regard to occupations where, at age five, they are not heard by adults to be serious choices but, at age fifteen, they are heard and monitored as serious choices. Thus, by the time that five year olds get to be fifteen they have learned that some answers to that query are not good ones to give, either because those answers are not reflective of occupations but are, instead, reflective of lifestyles, which will get them to be laughed at and thought of as immature and problem kids, or because those answers are occupations that will hold them responsible for preparing for them now and being monitored and for living up to them in the future.

Therefore, incumbency for adolescents is in some ways their problem, rather than it being due to incomplete socialization or biological stages, since adolescents know that they are held responsible for occupational choices and, having once been children, they already have a history for what things are expected of them and, for the problem teenagers mentioned in this thesis, they have a history for what they have been told to be.

That is, incumbency for adolescents as it is related
to occupations, both as a future release from incumbency via adulthood and as a present reminder that they ought to be preparing for those occupations now and are being monitored now, is a problem for adolescents in that they must deal with adults by masking their lifestyle preferences or by failing to give their occupational choices which, were they to expose those preferences to adults, would get them to be labeled as problem kids, by virtue of holding those views, or categorized and monitored in order to determine whether they were living up to the things that those occupational choices required.

Thus, one of the solutions for either situation, that chooses a particular kind of trouble by coming on as an equal to adults and which terminates the query, is to propose that one wants to be a bum or wants to be nothing, which states what the adolescent's chosen lifestyle would amount to for those addressing the question and which is an alternative to being categorized and monitored since "bum" is not an occupational term.

In this manner, there are various topics that are on the minds of teenagers, such as occupations, since they are immersed in becoming what they will be as adults, which are occasioned by virtue of being troublesome matters between teenagers and adults and which make teenagers co-members in that they have
similar problems which are specific to their stage in life and which they can then talk about with one another with regard to the way that they handle those problems with adults.

Part of a teenager's concern is not only that he is bothered by adults about occupations, but that he can look back on his own earlier self and find that he has always had a stake in the occupational world where, now, he has bitter and mixed feelings about that world such that he feels that he has been fooled. That is, the five year old romantic occupational choices have disappeared and the adult occupational choices are unappealing because he is not ready to make the adult commitments that will mean deprivations and categorization and lifestyles, for him, are not necessarily dependent upon attaining an occupation.

So, a teenager, when looking back on his earlier occupational aspirations, can see that the occupational world is divided into various subclasses of occupations such that, when he was five, he was interested in five year old occupational choices which were characteristic of adventure and a particular lifestyle that he wanted to lead but which, now, he has found to be attained in a way different than lifelong ambition and training and which stand for duties and commitments that are different than those
he saw at age five.

He can also see that, at age fifteen, there are jobs, that are in another subclass of occupations, that are simply jobs and a way to provide for oneself while others are occupations that involve commitment and preparation and that those occupations are further subdivided such that, if he does make a commitment to an occupation and then changes his mind, he will have to select another occupation from that same subclass in order to be seen to be living up to the same level of achievement, preparation, potential salary, and so on, where the grounds on which he selects an occupation may not be the same grounds on which an adult would select an occupation.

Thus, although a teenager is expected to be orienting to jobs as occupations which involve preparation and orientation, he may be a problem for adults by virtue of being interested in jobs as just jobs, since he does not connect a lifestyle to an occupation or he does not want to be monitored for his present actions. That is, he sees occupations as being adult bound where, when he was five, he may have wanted to become an adult and, perhaps, carry a gun (in the case of wanting to be a policeman) but now becoming an adult means being monitored, being accountable for one's time, and being deprived and, therefore, occupations do not look so appealing or else he has not yet come to terms with
the subclasses of occupations.

So, when a teenager talks about occupations, that talk is constrained by an internal structure of the occupational world and he must rely on the others having a common knowledge about the ways in which occupational categories are subdivided in order to be understood where, part of the internal structure of the occupational world will involve that parents characteristically hear the occupational choices of teenagers for what they mean in terms of whether their child will be unambitious, unrealistic and immature, lazy, or whether he will bring shame on the family.

Therefore, these teenagers are aware of whether they are displaying achievement and ambitions for adults, being aware of the expectations of their parents, such that they can find that those things are a source of problems for them since with some occupations they do not yet even know their names or what they entail, having not yet grasped many occupational terms and, therefore, they cannot presently decide to be those things even though decisions are required of them while, for other occupations that they may have once wanted to be, they can find that they were misled to have false notions about them such that those occupations are no longer desirable now that they have seen the truth.
That is, they can find both a present source for their problems, as a result of not yet being in a position to grasp a lot of occupational terms, and find a history for their problems where, at a younger age, they were misled into having false notions about occupations and about the way people attain occupations and, as is the case for Ken, where they had their five year old occupational choices heard as if they were serious occupational choices when they ought not to have been heard in a serious way.

So, there are various subclasses for the domain of occupations where, in any particular piece of talk, subclasses can get invoked and constructed which are not formal pieces of knowledge that are carried in one's head or learned in classrooms such as that occupations are divided into three groups: those that five year olds are interested in, those that teenagers are interested in, and those that adults are concerned with, but that on the occasion of the need arising, such subclasses can be invoked and analyzed by hearers to find that class character and find what it is doing with respect to a topic of talk where, with regard to the occupation of an engineer, we have previously found at least two alternative subclasses: that of policeman, ambulance driver and fireman versus engineer and that of ice cream man versus engin-
eer. That is, in the former, we have a subclass that invokes five year old occupational choices and adult occupational choices while, in the latter, we have occupations that require little preparatory work, are low in prestige, salary, and education, and which are occupations that one can fall into versus occupations that require a great deal of education, preparation and early training and which are high in prestige and salary.

Thus, there are two ways to divide the domain of an occupation to make a here and now point that is relevant for a particular conversation so, although we have been looking at a transcript of the talk of Ken, Al, Roger, and Jim, that transcript displays the workings of these kinds of systematic properties of membership categorization terminology that are usable in all kinds of general ways and which are not restricted to teenager's talk about five year old occupational choices.

That is, in other settings we could find the same kinds of mechanisms so that, for example, middle aged adults could talk about their occupational aspirations when they were students such that, finding where they are now and looking back on those aspirations, they could see that rather than expressing a desire for adventure, they are expressing that they had idealistic notions of the world which could now be characterized as "all that horseshit"
since, when they were students, they had a naive view of a world that they had not yet entered. So there is a structure that goes beyond Ken, Al, Jim, and Roger and which goes beyond therapy, but which they can trade on in therapy as teenagers.

Now, this thesis was begun by raising several issues. It was noted that various utterance parts appeared to have a cognitive connection and that, presumably, those utterances could be heard as being reasonable, occasioned, and commonplace, even when the utterances, themselves, could initially be heard as contradictory or when they could have multiple possible meanings over a range of settings. An example was given which included three utterance parts from the transcript: "I don' wanna be nothin." He says (utterance #5), He says that he wants to be something he knows what he wants to be ( utterance #7 ), and O-oh I just wanna be a bum out in the- out in the forest (utterance #9).

From these utterances we asked how it was that a teenager could propose to another teenager that a third said that he did not want to be anything when, in actuality, he wanted to be something. That, as a question, led us to ask what provided for the reasonableness of those utterances, utterances which appeared to be in opposition to one another, such that they were treated by their recipients as unproblematic; and how were those utter-
ances arrived at topically, with regard to the interactional resources behind them, so as to capture a major theme in the talk. A further examination of the data revealed some interesting things.

Recalling that the setting was a group therapy session among teenagers who had been designated as "problem kids", we noted that the talk, although it was not topically pre-arranged, was built upon the knowledge that each one had of his being in a similar position with the others in this respect, and that the topic choices had an orderliness in so much as they were topics that engaged them in thoughts and quarrels with adult authorities such as their parents.

Furthermore, we noted that those topics were talked about in specific ways, the utterances being produced for 'insiders', and that those ways were not the ways that those same topics would be talked about with the authorities. This led us to propose that Roger's utterances about his brother wanting to be something were, perhaps, a reference to occupations and that occupations had become topic talk as a result of the troublesome character that occupations had for these teenagers who were "problem kids", in part, by virtue of having no goals and by
being underachievers. That is, although they were not yet in occupations, it became apparent that they were expected by adults to have plans and expectations for various occupations and to be in the process of preparing for those choices.

Therefore, we could see that Roger's comments for his brother were not only statements that stood for what his brother had said, but they were made from the perspective and were reflective of someone who had not yet achieved an occupation and for whom occupations were troublesome, and those things could be seen by the participants as well. That is, the perspective of Roger's brother could also be seen to be the perspective of all of these teenagers and that perspective was one which stated that the teenagers had to conceal their lifestyle or occupational preferences from adults in order to avoid being laughed at or categorized and monitored, where the way that that problem was handled by Roger's brother was by ironically using the adult perspective to describe his lifestyle choice as a "bum".

In other words, we were able to find that, for those teenagers, "bum" was what that lifestyle amounted to for adults. After piecing together the initially given utterance parts
(utterances #5, #7, and #9), the intelligibility of those parts, that had at first appeared contradictory to one another, were made reasonable and commonplace, since Roger's brother said that he wanted to be nothing (or that he wanted to be a bum, which amounted to nothing) to adults but told Roger, an 'insider', his real lifestyle preferences, and he did that in an effort to avoid being laughed at.

Moreover, the ways in which those utterances were arrived at topically became apparent, and they were seen to have become occasioned in therapy and among teenagers as a result of the problems that occupations posed for each of them with respect to adult authorities. That those discoveries were found to be commonplace knowledge and identifiable by the participants, enabled us to answer why the utterances were treated by their recipients as unproblematic.

Additional observations into other utterances revealed a complex structure among occupational subclasses, a structure that had to have been essentially known by the adolescents in order for the meaning of their utterances to have been understood and which, was seen to have effected our first utterances. That is, it was a knowledge of the occupational subclasses that had caused each of
them to find that there were some occupations that they could not
give to adults and that the giving of any occupation to adults
would give cause for it to be heard for whether it would bring
shame on the family or for whether their son was an underachiever.
Furthermore, it was that same knowledge of the subclasses of
occupations that led Roger's brother to declare that he wanted to
be a bum, since "bum" had to have been proposed as an alternative
to all of the occupations.

Finally, we noted the ways in which Ken and Roger took
a retrospective view of occupations, by looking at their five
year old occupational choices, and we discovered that a determinate
characterization had been placed on those views such that they now
believed that they had been defrauded. That perspective permitted
us to, again, return to our initial utterances in an effort to
further explain how a teenager could come to offer to adults that
he did not want to be anything and how, as "problem kids", they
could come to talk about occupations, where it was observed that
part of their present problems were a result of their disillusion­
ment with the occupational world.

Therefore, to summarize, we have seen that these teen­
agers view themselves as rational beings who live in a world that
they understand, a world in which they know what they want and
where they want to go and what their preferences are, but they find that there are people around called adults who have rights to put them away, check them, monitor them, and send them for treatment. Now, from the adult point of view, teenagers are not to be seen as creatures who have free will or who can decide what their own problems are but, instead, they are seen to be passing through a stage that is not really understood by themselves but that is understood by adults.

So adults do not really need to listen to the contents of teenager's problems in order to know that they are teenager's problems and what teenagers, in fact, have to do is shape up or get treatment or buckle down, where the ways that teenagers themselves talk about their problems are not listened to as statements of what their problems in fact are.

That is to say, perhaps one of the hallmarks of adulthood is that one can come to define his own problems, where for others to re-define them for him is to be heard as a put-down or as patronizing. Thus, even though others re-define problems for adults, it is probably done largely behind their backs.

Now, one of the problems that these teenagers have is that their parents and other authorities have scenes with them
where they examine critically those things that are wrong with them and what they ought to do, where adults can be seen as irrational in policies of making wrong choices but they get those things honored interactionally by fellow adults in that they are responsible for their own lives and are competent to make those choices. So, although they make judgements of one another, those judgements typically are heard by third parties.

In this manner, an adult does not often say to another adult's face that he ought to shape up or that he is immature because, if he does, he is likely to be told to mind his own business, where teenagers are frequently told to shape up because they are immature but, if they give the same retort, they are not seen to be doing something that they have a right to do but are seen to be talking back, demonstrating even more that they are a problem, and showing that they are irresponsible.

Therefore, in some ways it may be that teenagers parallel former mental patients in the ways that they get viewed and treated by the society around them. That is, former mental patients get talked about by social workers and psychiatrists as having a multitude of problems that are talked about in medical, mental, emotional, and psychological terms but, in a basic sense, the problems of
the mental patient are that people will not give him a job or that his family will not talk to him. In other words, he sees his problems as mundane ones that would be problems for anybody.

Now, former mental patients may be paralleled to statuses whose incumbents are not entitled to speak for that status as to its problems and its management because there are other persons in the world who are licensed to do that. Teenagers are one such status which has adults licensed to manage and speak in behalf of it.

A former mental patient's complaint that he cannot get a job is not seen to be the complaint of a normal unemployed person but, instead, it is seen to perhaps be part of his emotional problem that he complains instead of looking for work, where if a normal person is told that he complains instead of looking for work he can possibly find grounds for getting angry. Teenagers are in a similar position in that if they find that they want to be something that resembles a lifestyle more than it resembles an occupation, they find that they must conceal that from adults or else they will be seen to be immature and unrealistic rather than to be making rational, responsible choices since, for adults, one way to become responsible and entitled to speak in behalf of oneself is to attain adulthood through an occupation.


APPENDIX

CONVENTIONS USED IN TRANSCRIPTS

1. SEQUENCING. The transcript of sequential features is done with special care, using the following conventions:

The double oblique (//) indicates the point at which a current speaker's talk is overlapped by the talk of another:

V: Th' guy says tuh me- hh my son // didid.
M: Wuhjeh do:

A multiple-overlapped utterance is followed, in serial order, by the talk which overlaps it. Thus C's 'Vi:c' occurs simultaneously with V's 'left', and her 'Victuh' occurs simultaneously with his 'hallway':

V: I // left my garbage pail in iz // hallway,
C: Vi:c,
C: Victuh,

An alternate system is to place a single bracket at the point of overlap, and place the overlapping talk directly beneath the talk it overlaps:

V: Th' guy says tuh me- hh my son [didid.
M: [Wuhjeh do:

In front of two serially transcribed utterances, the bracket indicates that they start simultaneously:

M: [ I mean no no n'no,
V: [ P't it back up,

A single right-hand bracket indicates the point at which two overlapping or simultaneously-started utterances end, if they end simultaneously, or the point at which one of them ends in the course of another, or the point at which one utterance-component ends vis-a-vis another. In some data cited, an asterisk is used instead:

M: [ I mean no no n'no.
V: [ P't it back up.]
In general, the equals sign (=) indicates 'latching'-i.e., no interval between the end of a prior and start of a next piece of talk. It is used for the relationship of a next speaker's talk to a prior speaker's, for the relationship of two parts of a same speaker's talk, and as a transcript convenience for managing long utterances which are overlapped at various points, in which case a through-produced utterance may be more or less arbitrarily broken up:

R: Wuhjeh do:=
V: = I said did, he, get, hurt.
V: My wife // caught d' ki:d,=
R: Yeh.
V: =lightin' a flyuh in Perry's celluh.
V: Well my son did it=I'm glad her son didn' get hurt, *hh I said but...

An equals sign at the end of one speaker's utterance, followed by the equals sign combined with a left-hand bracket, indicates that the bracketed speakers have started simultaneously, with no interval after the preceding talk. This may occur for a speaker followed by two others, or for one 'continuing' speaker and one other:

J: The son of a bitch gottiz // neck cut off. Dass wuhd 'e should of did, =
V: Wuh-
V: =[I'm not intuh this.
J: =[if he- if he's the one thot broke it,

An alternate system is to place double obliques in the course of what is treated as a single ongoing utterance by a first speaker:

J: ...Dass wuhd 'e should of did, // if he- if he's the one thot broke it,
V: I'm not intuh this.

A right-hand bracket plus equal sign indicates that two utterances have ended simultaneously and will be 'latched' onto by a next. In this case, the two priors are latched onto by two simultaneously-starting nexts:
V: Ya:h, well I woulda picked it up.
M: [ I mean no no n'no ]=
V: [ P'it back up, ]=
M: [ Ih doesn' make any- ]=
V: [ It doesn' mattuh, ]=
M: If it breaks ]
V: So dih gu:y] says hh

Numbers in parentheses indicate elapsed time in tenths of seconds. The device is used between utterances of adjacent speakers, between two separable parts of a single speaker's talk, and between parts of a single speaker's internally organized utterance:

V: ...dih soopuh ul clean it up,
   (0.3)
(): hhehh
V: No kidding.
M: Yeh there's nothin there?
   (0.5)
M: Quit hassling.
V: She's with somebody y' know'hh ennuh, (0.7) she says
   Wo:w...

An alternate system is to use one oblique between parentheses per .i:

V: ...dih soopuh ul clean it up,
   (//)
(): hhehh

The long dash, rarely used, indicates an untimed pause, e.g. a 'beat':

V: I'm intuh my thing, intuh my:: — attitude against othuh pih—hh

2. SOUND-PRODUCTION is neither conscientiously nor consistently attended in the present data, but the following special symbols are used:

Punctuation markers are not used as grammatical symbols, but for intonation. Thus a question may be constructed with 'comma' or 'period' intonation, and 'question' intonation may occur in association with non-questions:

V: Becuss the soopuh dint pudda bu:lb on dih sekkin flaw en its burnt ou:t?
V: A dog? enna cat is different.
R: Wuhjeh do.

Colon(s) indicate that the prior syllable is prolonged. Multiple colons indicate a more prolonged syllable, as in the second example, in which V's 'Wow' covers five syllables in M's overlapped utterance:

V: So dih gu:y sez'hh
M: Yeh it's all in the chair all th//at junk is in the chair.
V: Wo:......:w]
V: =I didn't know that?

Underscoring indicates various forms of stressing, and may involve pitch and/or volume:

V: I sez y' know why, becauss look.

The relationship between stress and prolongation markers indicates pitch change (or non-change) in the course of a word. In the first sentence, with stress marked only under the first letter, pitch does not change. In the second sentence, pitch drops at the end of 'hard'; in the third, it rises at the end of 'hard?'

V: 'M not saying he works ha:rd.
V: I don't work ha:rd.
H: Does he work ha:rd?

The short dash indicates a 'cut off' of the prior word or sound:

V: He said- yihknow, I get- I get sick behind it.

The h, within parentheses, within a word or sound, indicates explosive aspiration, e.g. laughter, breathlessness, etc.:

M: I'd a' cracked up 'f duh friggin (gla- i(h)f y' kno(h)w it) sm(h)a(h) heh heh

The h without parentheses indicates audible breathing. A dot placed before it indicates an in-breath; no dot indicates out-breath:

V: So I sez, 'hh wa.I whuddiyou goin do
The degree sign (*) indicates that the talk it precedes is low in volume:

M: Jim wasn' home, // *( when y' wen over there )

Upper case indicates increased volume:

V: En it dint fall OUT!

3. **READER'S GUIDES.** The following additional conventions should be noted:

Single pairs of parentheses indicate that transcribers are not sure about the words contained therein:

M: I'd a' cracked up 'f duh frigg ( gla- 1(h)f y' kno(h)w it ) sm(h)a(h) heh heh
M: Jim wasn' home, // *( when y' wen over there )

Matched pairs of parentheses indicate not merely two possible hearings, but address the equivocality of each:

V: I'll be ( right witchu. )
   ( back inna minnit. )

Empty parentheses indicate that no 'hearing' was achieved:

( ): Tch! ( )

On occasion, nonsense syllables are provided, in an attempt to capture something of the produced sounds:

R: ( Y' cattuh moo? )

The speaker designation column is treated similarly: single parentheses indicate doubt about speaker, pairs indicate equivocal possibilities, and empties indicate no achieved identification of the speaker.

Materials between double parentheses indicate features of the audio materials other than actual verbalization, or verbalizations which are not transcribed:

M: ( ( whispered )) ( Now they're gonna, hack it. )
M: ( ( RAZZBERRY ))
M: ( ( cough ))
V: ( ( dumb-slob voice )) Well we use'tuh do dis, en we use-
TRANSCRIPT

Dan: Oh a fine artist // actually.
Roger: Yeah. ( /// )
Dan: Whe-what is it thatchu want to be?
Jim: I dunno. ( /// )
Roger: You must wanna be // something
Ken: You have- you had // ( actually- )
Jim: I don't. I: really don' know // what I wanna be.
Roger: What are you interested in.
( /// )
Jim: Y'know,— What am I interested in? Well what-whaddyou mean,
what am I interested // in or what-
Roger: Y'see I can't very well speak on this thing because I-I never
was in a situation where I didn'know what I wanted to be.
( )
Roger: So I-I, I can't—I—it doesn't dawn on me that somebody couldn'
know what they wanted t'be. So I can't really — say a word.
I-legitimately.
( /// )
Dan: And yet, y'-in-in one way, even though you know whatchu want
to be, there have been difficulties similar to Jim's.
Roger: Well, it was never offered to me, this is the path you take
if you wanted to be— I always saw it that this is not. This
won't get me where I wanta go. Maybe it was rationalizing,
but — y'know. Maybe when- or I was younger, nobody said-I
knew what I wanted to be. Right off the bat.
( /// )
Roger: Well I don' know how long- but nobody said you want to be
this, go this way. This is the only way.
( /// )
Roger: An' if they did, say this is the only way, I would say no I
see a different way. An' I'd move in that direction.
( /// )
Dan: And if you saw the different way, and it was potentially
successful, sure.
Roger: Yeah.
Dan: Why not.
Roger: Well, As I say. What about this person who knows what he
wants to be, and he feels the school, won't, move him in
that direction.
Dan: An' what-it // won't and what else is-
Roger: Or he sees the fault, in the school. And he (says) uh I can't
correct the school, so I'll just move in a direction that will
uh afford me success,
( / )
Dan: Which is?
Roger: Other- other than, in-in the school.
( ): Mh hm,
( // )
Roger: Therefore, the-// in my s-case,
Dan: Well the on-uh the only problem is that in uh in our society
it's very difficult, ( / ) to see other directions.
Roger: Mh hm,
Dan: Specially when person wants to get a- to be an engineer.
Roger: Mmyeah,
Dan: Cause it hasta go through the school system.
Roger: Mh//hm
Dan: Otherwise you // won't be hired as an engineer. You'll be
// hired as a uh- as a // maintenance engineer.
Jim: (( cough ))
Ken: Yeh, I know,
( )-booky.
Roger: Al//right.
Jim: Yeh
Dan: Which means thatchu sweep floors.
Roger: Alright. Now maybe he doesn't // wanna // accept the fact that
this is the direction if you wanna ( )
Jim: True hehh
Dan: That's about it.
( // )
Ken: Well, I dunno maybe- now-
Ken: ( )-
Roger: Le-let's say I wanted to be a scientist. And then I said but
I'm not gonna go to school and become one.
( / )
( Can't do it. )
Ken: I-
Roger: Alright so I-I'm just I'm just kidding myself. I-I just didn'
wanna go to school. So I'm just gettin round the problem.
( ): Yeh
Roger: Why. Didn' I wanna go to school. I knew deep down inside I
had to go to school to be- 'f I w-really wanted to be this,
y'know, so I-either shifted that I really didn' really wanna
be this, or said this isn't the way to become this,
Ken: Honestly in my uh-in my opinion, I don't really think that I-I really want to be an engineer more than I-I could think of other things that I'd much rather be.

Ken: But yet.

Ken: Uhh it's been poked into my head since I was a little kid that's what I was gonna be.

Dan: That's a very important remark to make.

Dan: Really.

Ken: Well it's- this-this- I mean- maybe- maybe it-it seems funny to you guys,

Ken: But uh

Ken: i-it's dawned on me, a- a buncha times it-th't- actually I've had no real choice in what I wanted to be.

Ken: I- this is the truth. My- my father, is uh, is never said ju have to be an engineer, but yet he says if you're not going to be, I'm gonna sell the company.

Ken: In other words,

Roger: So you felitchu had to be one.

Ken: No.

Roger: In order to make yer father happy. T'appease // yer father.

Ken: Yes,

Ken: In some-

Ken: Oh hell. In-in some in some ways ( // ) uh I- it-// it dawned on me that I-I almost h-have to be. I'm forced t'be.

( sniff )

Roger: I // think that I was puttin it ( in its right detail. )

Ken: Is it- is

Ken: It is waitami-it is still in the line that I want to be. In uh electronics.

Ken: But yet I'm gonna- I'm gonna end up bein an engineer. If it-if it — If, if I'm three hundred an' forty years old, when I make an engineer,

Roger: Yeah,
Ken: That's what I'm gonna be,

Roger: Well in a different way I was given that same thing,

( / ), my folks recognized k-my talent when I was very young, and- "Oh we're very disappointed that you do(n't) hehhh make some use of this talent", you know, so, not commanding me you (h)ave to be an engineer, but-
I guess it was instilled in me very young.

Roger: Mh hm,

Ken: Well I wanted to be that, y'know, but, I also felt that I should be.

McGhee: Yes but I've been told that's what I want to be.

Ken: Yes but you weren't - you were told but yet you had a choice.

Ken: I'm told, and I've got- I've gotta uh a business all set, but yet if if I become an engineer, I've made a vow that- I mean you know, this isn't public, my father, by the time-by the time I become an engineer my father might not even be alive.

Ken: But // when I become an engineer-

Roger: You s(h)ure as hell's ( // ) fer yerse(h)lf,

hh hh hh hehh

Ken: Wait-

Ken: It's not-

Roger: You said y'were gonna be a four hundred an' fifty years old // before you become an engineer.

Ken: Well-

Roger: I know "at the // rate I'm going", hehh heh

Ken: I-it's- still-still hhh

Roger: hehh

Ken: Still I don't think I will work for my father. W'r-if I become an engineer. I wou//ldn't-

Roger: You'd buy 'im.

Ken: No!

Roger: Se(h)t up a rival // company heh

Ken: No it's just that-

Ken: It-it's that he's-h-he said things to me, that- he may not of thought that they bothered me.
Ken: But inside you think well, hell. Just to—just to prove that I could, I'm going to be. And this is what I'm saying now. Just to—just to prove that I could be an engineer, I'm gonna get the diploma.

Roger: Test yourself?

Ken: I dunno if I'm testing myself, but uh—hell, if it means testing myself, ok I'm testing myself. But yet when I get outta college it's gonna say 'engineer' on that thing if it takes me till I'm four hundred 'n' ten years old.

Ken: At the rate I'm going, it may just be four hundred an' ten years old.

Roger: You know you gotta learn to sound more convincing.

Ken: Oh, but I—

Jim: Heh heh

Ken: Heh heh
gonna end up bein ice cream man er sump'n.

Roger: You haven't been writing.

Ken: I c'd think—

Roger: Couldn't ya—

Ken: I c'd think of a lotta things that I'd rather be than an engineer, or electronics technician, there's a lotta things. You know there's—there's jobs that—that that interest chu, and jobs that—that you'd like, but yet you don't know if you'd like to make a living of it,

Ken: And uh, you know,

Roger: You haven't been writing.

Ken: No, he's gotta long memory. Takes in ten minutes sometimes.

Roger: Huh?

Jim: Smog. Ai//r-

Ken: Smo(hhh)g ehh heh

Jim: ehhhehh!

Ken: Oh God I hate those things. Oh I desp— I've bought a pair those things.

Roger: I'm not doin it to—cause you hate it. I just wanted to—

Ken: I bought a pair of gla-

Roger: ( //

Ken: Next week I'm gonna bring 'em in here an' wear 'em.
Jim: I'm just wearin' 'em // cause of the smog in here.
Roger: [But you see they don't-they don't bother us, so you won't be accomplishing anything.
   ( // )
Roger: [See heh you're the only one it // bothers-
Jim: [You never know you might grow up 'n be a sun- uh one of those guys th' makes shades. Sun//glass manufacturer.
Roger: [Ahhahhhhh yer gonna de-design su(h)ngla(hhh)ses hehh hhh t'be worn indoor(hh)rs
Jim: heh heh!
Roger: t'bug peo(hhh)ple.
(Jim): hyeh heh hehh
Ken: Yet maybe someday, someday I'll get over the feeling that I have to, I have to be, what- what I'm expected to be.
Roger: ( Y'know my glasses work- fer spectacles, )
Dan: Why didju say that he had t'sound more convincing,
Roger: When he said "I am going to be an engineer if it takes me the rest of my life", it sounds- I dunno maybe it's 'is manner of speech, but it sounds to me, that uh he's just trying to make people:: He's trying to support his image.
   ( // )
Roger: He's saying uhm
   ( /// )
Roger: I don'- is it- look- I c'n see through this-I-at least I think I c'n-th't- alright. "I want these people to think no matter what I am gon-" It's something that I would do.
Dan: Uh huh,
Roger: I-I uh I'm not say-I'm not saying that he doesn't wanna be an engineer.
   ( /// )
Roger: You // probably do.
Ken: I don't!
Roger: You don't?
Ken: I don't // wanna be an engineer,
Dan: He just said it.
Ken: I've said it a buncha times. I don't really wanna be one!
Dan: He said he wants t'be an engineer in order t'prove to 'em that he can make it.
Roger: No-I'm j'st saying that the way // he said it, I'm n-I'm just making a comment.
Dan: ( That's )
Dan: ( Yeah )
( ): Oough! heh
Roger: "I'm gonna be an engineer if it takes me four hundred fifty years." And this sounds, very fake t'me.
   ( /// )
Ken: "I'll maybe it does, but— uh//hh
Roger: "I-I mean it just sounds t'me like I'm j-I'm just saying this t'make people think I'm perseverant an' — I-ya-it doesn't sound very convincing t'me, Ken,

Ken: I don't really give a damn. Ya know that?
Roger: 'Right jus'a min', I wanna study //ithis,

Ken: whhh hh//hh
Roger: J-maybe I'm not convincing to other people either but I c'n notice it 'n // s'mbody else.
Ken: It-it- it really doesn't bother me if you don't think I'm going to,

Roger: I didn' say I don't // think you're going tuh, I said I don't think, you convince people the way you talk.

Ken: No I mean—

Ken: Mmaybe // I don't,
Roger: And that that's whatchu really wanna do,
Ken: Maybe I don't. Maybe I'd be a better salesman. Or maybe I'd be a — better girlscout leader, I don' know,

Roger: tch mmyer not-you don't understand what I'm saying. I'm j'st saying, By saying 'I'm gonna be an engineer if it takes me four hunert'n fifty years. Nuh matter what. It's gon-' It just doesn't sound like —

Ken: W- ( // )

Roger: Oh
( ): nuhh
Roger: I dunno,

Ken: But- Maybe someday th't uhh t'h my f-my father'll quit feeling that- uh maybe I'll quit feeling that I have to fill his image.

Ken: Maybe then I will be what I want, but uh in some ways I don' really— y'know, 's a lotta fields open.

Roger: Oh well, hhmhhhh
( /// /// )

Roger: You have no interests Jim.

Jim: Hm?
Roger: You have no interests,
Jim: In what?
Roger: In anything.
(Jim: Well nobody's ever pushed me into--y'know what I'm--nowat--not
Roger: You haven't pushed yourself in any direction.
(Jim: Yeah,
Roger: You're not interested in cars, you're not interested in
sports, you're not interested in mechanics, // you're not--
Jim: Well I'm interested in it, but I don't feel that I sh'd--that
I wanna go into the field,
(Roger: Are you scared to go into something?
Jim: No,
(Roger: That's the way my brother feels y'know I had t'push him
y'know h-he ( wasn't really ) whole-hearted. "I don' wanna
be nothin." He says.
(Jim: (( clears throat ))
(Roger: Well y'see, it's not a very realistic approach really. He
says that he wants to be something he knows what he wants
to be, but it's not a very realistic thing.
(Roger: So he just doesn't tell people about it. Well I uh I did
that too, y'know.
(Roger: Oh I just wanna be a bum out in the-- out in the forest
y'know in other words, he's gotta-- an interest-- natural,
y'know, in-in nature in other words, but he doesn't wanna
be a f(hh)orest ranger. An' he doesn't wanna be categorized.
(Roger: I'm this, I'm that,
(Ken: In some ways I wouldn't mind bein a forest // ranger,
Roger: He probably just doesn't wanna tell people what he really
wants to be, you know, — soldier of fortune or some other

Dan: Why not?
Roger: Maybe he--he feels that it won't be accepted y'know, an' 
people'll laugh at him,
Roger: Y’know—I think a lotta people don’t wanna be categorized.

Roger: He is gonna be an engineer. He’s gonna be a forest ranger.

( ): Or an artist.

Roger: ( ) people ( ) know what they wanna be.

Dan: Mh hm.

Dan: Maybe.

Roger: But I don’t think there’s much sense in that,

Ken: I dunno it just—I dunno it doesn’t seem fair t’me, I know that— if I ever have kids I’m not gon- I’m not gonna— to even attempt — to uh — tell them this is what they should be, this is what they shouldn’t be. Y’know it-th’t—I think that—that sh—you’re own decision.

Ken: Like Louise said when she was here, uh, uh with— with her with her father’s mother y’know the baby bit?

Roger: M—my little baby? Well, this is the same thing. I’m—I feel that I’m old enough to— t’make my own decisions, and to do what I damn well please.

Dan: Butchu just said thatchu can’t.

Dan: In many ways you’ve s— you’ve indicated thatchu don’t really want to be an engineer.

Ken: Yeh.

Dan: And thatcher father, th’t this is your father’s decision,

Ken: It is.

Dan: Thatchu don’t consider that to be a fair approach,

Ken: I don’t.

Dan: And that— ’n then you say in— then on the other breath uhh uhh you’ll—you’ll say that if it takes four hundred ’n ten years I’ll be an engineer.

Ken: eh Just to prove a point I think it—that’s—that’s my main object // is to

Dan: To prove what point? Thatcher father is // right?

Ken: Uh—no that—when he—when he sat over in the corner and he says uh uhhh oh what is—that—that father and son thing that we—y’know that family goody we had here?

Dan: Yeah
Ken: When he'd say oh I've given up all-all thought of him ever being an engineer, but yet he's pushing still for me to be an engineer, but yet he's not-he's not acting like y'know like he's just too damn dumb to make it,

Jim: (clears throat)

Ken: And this pissed me off to no extent. I was so mad, I didn'- ( )

Ken: I dunno if ( / ) if I could i-if I c'n make it, which I-I will, I'll become an engineer.

( / )

Ken: I'll go through school-

Dan: Without working-

Roger: But you just said you ha-ya gonna make it.

Ken: I am.

Roger: But now you said if- if I can make it.

Ken: Well-

Jim: I don't think yer gettin anywhere.

( / )

Roger: Yeah I-I when I say I wanna be thi//s-

Dan: How do you feel right now, Ken?

Ken: I dunno, I j'st-

Dan: Feel low? Feel like yer bein put on?

Roger: "Why me"? Hm?

Dan: Attacked?

( / )

Ken: No,

Dan: No?

Ken: I-I really don't. I-I mean, agreed, these guys may think something's wrong, I me(hh)an y(hh)'know, like some kinda cloud,

Jim: I think-I think yer reversing yerself every time you say something, y'n::: a few minutes later you s-say the oppo//site.

Ken: [Well, I-

Roger: I think so, too.

(Dan): (( clears throat ))

Jim: Wish you'd make up yer mind.

( / )

(Dan): ( Or that uhm -- )

( /// )

Ken: This pisses me off.

( /// )
Roger: When I say I wanna be something, it's not that I just wanna be this, it's just I-I-I just—that's the only thing I tell people that I wanna be an artist. It's really a whole way of life, y'know, an' I guess that's— an' that's the way my brother feels too, so he just—just tells everybody, b'cause he won't be accepted, y'know, the idea is // not standard.

Dan: Yeah
Dan: Uh huh.
Roger: Y'know this is— this is just halfa the situation.

( / )

Dan: Uh huh.
Roger: You visualize yourself uh living a certain way. An' the only thing 'tchu tell people is uh whatcha do as yer occupation.

Dan: Yeh
Roger: I see it as a whole picture.
Dan: It is.
Roger: Y'know
Dan: Yer right.
Roger: Not just uh ( / ) like my father, you know, "Well I-I'm a painter."

Dan: Uh huh.
Roger: Y'know? But I-I don't see it that way at all.
Jim: Huh.
Roger: I— How am I gonna live, what am I gonna do for a living, an' the whole-whole scene.
Dan: Right.
Roger: And uh since most people don't think along these lines, they y'know they just think well whaddya do, where d'y'live in an apartment?

Dan: Oh // yeah,
Roger: Or a house? An' you—you go t'work this way you go to work that way.

( ):

Roger: So you just tell people in order t'— y'know to—to meet their ideals, just w—what half of it's gonna be by saying what's yer occupational thing.

Dan: Uh huh.
Roger: So y—you don' wanna be categorized
Dan: You don' wan'em t' // think—
Roger: Well, mmmhh I guess c'se— You got more to tell them that they won't understand. Y'know that they'll just— think tha'yet nuts.
Roger: So we just uh either give 'em the occupation part of it, or just don't say nothin at all.

Roger: Or don't want anybody to think whatcher gonna be.

Dan: Certainly I do think that this is true. I mean any kind of uh ( ) categorization of an occupation is just you know, well what are you gonna be? well I'm gonna be this, and so on. Certainly. Yer right.

Dan: It is-
Ken: Sure but-
Ken: Yet- When // you were five years old, w:-:-waitaminute.
Dan: Particularly a ten year old child?
Ken: When you were five years old din' you have- didn' you have dreams of bein a-a- a- fireman?
Jim: ( // )
Ken: A publican? Uhh
Roger: That's just a search for adventure.
Ken: An ambulance driver, or some such — horseshit, Well every time I had this imagination it was blanked out. Y'know by, "Oh no, you don'wanna be that, that—there's no money in that, there's no this, there's no that, uh you wanna be an engineer."

Roger: But that's just c'se every boy wants adventure, y'know an' he sees it as a fireman or a policeman.

Ken: So some boys-
Roger: C'd also see it as-
Ken: So some boys gr//ow up bein a fire-
Roger: Why d'they play with guns.
Ken: fireman or a policeman,
Roger: N-bu'i-but it's d-different y'know they come about it under different circumstances. No boy sees adventure in bein a cop, an' then all of his life wants to be a cop, and then becomes a cop. That's very rare.

Ken: I don'wonna,
Roger: Just circumstances lead up to it.
Ken: But I know there's a // lotta guys in college // who started out-
Roger: I mean-
Roger: I mean he sees the truth of it before he becomes old enough to be a cop.
Ken: There's a lotta guys in college who started saying they wanted to be a, a-a-
Jim: ( )
Ken: a-a- whaddyacallit a — not a mathematician, a -- not a secreta-you know, // a-a- special- a specialized // man,
(Roger: ( )
Roger: Technician.
Roger: ( 's'at whatchu mean? )
Ken: A technician yeah, a secretary like, y'know only he does all kinds of bookkeeping and things like this?
Roger: An accountant?
Dan: Accountant.
Ken: Yeah.
(Jim): Uh huh
Jim: ( ) be a // ( )
Ken: They get in there and they-they start-they go through college for th'first two years and they got a semester more to go? And all of a sudden they'll just change their minds, they'll say
Dan: Sure.
Ken: I don't // like this.
Roger: I don't like this.
Ken: They realize this isn't what they wanted.
Dan: Sure.
Ken: See th-yet-yet you c'd change, you can change at almost any time,
Dan: Of course,
(Jim): Uh huh
Ken: When you're older. I guess, I dunno // Now you don't have any choice.
Dan: ( No, you- now. )
Ken: Mommy and daddy make you do // what they-what they want.
Roger: HHHHAAACHHHU
(Jim): ( G'bless you )
Dan: Butcher analogy or yer reference or yer example of the accountant is the pre-is the person who has been able to wuh find himself in a position where he's able t'change.
Ken: Yeh
Dan: That is, he has not in one way or another been removed, from the entire area of competition. Because of the fact that he hasn't competed or hasn't achieved his grades // before.
(( clears throat ))
Ken: Well, uh a lotta people— you c'n get a job as a—as a salesman,
Roger: Oh Jesus
Ken: As a—uh no I mean— fer a big comp'ny.