EXPERIENCES OF EDUCATION, 1944-1979:

A case study of Everton, Liverpool

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A thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements of

Liverpool John Moore's University for the degree of PhD in Modern History

September 2021

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ABSTRACT

This thesis examines the voice and lived experiences of working-class people educated in Everton, Liverpool, UK in the years 1944-1979. It is framed in the oral history tradition and draws on the wider humanities reflecting the multivariate nature of influences on educational experience. An interdisciplinary approach to post war social history has been identified as a gap by Conekin and others and the interplay of sociology and politics shapes the discussion on the impact of education policy in this work.[1] A contribution to the existing body of work has been made by adding the voice of working-class children, through recollection and memory, to an analysis of education and social policy of the period. This evidence from the lived experience of ordinary people would not otherwise have been captured. Methodologically, the use of a lens placing the perspective of the participant at the core of the analysis enhances the authenticity of the voice. This work raises questions about systemic failure in the efforts of politicians and policy makers to improve educational and economic outcomes for the young people of Everton. The thesis signposts understanding of the impact of education on the individual using authentic voice and suggests holistic interventions to influence current thinking in policy and practice.

The research recognises gaps in knowledge relating to secondary modern school practice and impact and reflects on the teenage narratives from participants which offer some alternatives to existing accounts. This work considers the extent

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[1] Conekin, B., Mort, F., Waters C. (eds), *Moments of Modernity: Reconstructing Britain, 1954-1964*, Rivers Oram Press, London, 1999, p20. Supporting recognition of gaps in the research have also been noted by McCulloch, G. and Sobell, L., Towards a Social History of the Secondary Modern Schools, *History of Education*, pp275-386, Oxford, Taylor and Francis, 1994; Spencer, S., *Gender Work and Education*, London, Palgrave Macmillan, 2005; McCulloch G., 'The History of Secondary Education in History of Education', *Journal of the History of Education* 41.1 pp 25-39, Oxford, Taylor and Francis,2012; these sources are discussed within the main body of the thesis.

to which education policy and practice provided a coherent and relevant learning experience to working class children of the period. It reflects on the ambiguity of political and social policy in providing educational advancement and the deeply entrenched deprivation embedded within Everton.[2] The voice of the participants is central to the research. Each participant case has relevance to our understanding of the impact of policy as experienced through individual lives. The voice of working-class communities is rare in educational accounts of the time and subsequent analysis. The analytical framework combines thematic review with a focus on diverse perspectives gained from reading the participant narratives with alternative lenses to preserve the authenticity of the voice.

Declaration

No portion of the work referred to in the thesis has been submitted in support of an application for another degree or qualification of this or any other university or institute of learning.

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[2] Although the measurement of poverty referencing deprivation and underachievement has changed since the 1960s, the methodology used by the Plowden Committee is recognisable today. Central Advisory Council for Education (England), *Plowden Report (1967) Children and their Primary Schools* <http://www.educationengland.org.uk/documents/plowden/plowden1967-1.html>
Everton was targeted as an educational priority area in 1968, and remain amongst England's most deprived council wards as evidenced through Liverpool City Council profile and census data.
https://www.liverpool.gov.uk

Dedication and Acknowledgments

This work is dedicated to my Mum and Dad, Kitty and Jim, who knew education mattered, and to the memory of Muriel Shelley. All three have been sources of inspiration.

The encouragement and reassurance from my supervisors, Mike Benbough-Jackson and Emma Vickers has supported me through every stage. I thank them for their generosity of time, patience and expertise.

A family of helpers and supporters have brought me to this point. I am especially indebted to commentators and readers: Charlotte Tommins, Sheila Kelly, Steve Atkinson, Sheila Royce, Kathleen Collins, Paul Riley, Grace Boyle and a special mention to Casey Beaumont, Dave Soehren, Maddy Stevens for support and encouragement. I have had so much reassurance from friends and family, who have at times been neglected, but have loved me anyway. For all the messages, phone calls and cups of tea I am very grateful to my children Mikey and Kathleen, Grace, sisters Margaret and Sheila, Kate Berry, and 'Toddler Mums' Annette Shelley and Kath Plunkett.

Thanks are also due to my HR team for their tolerance, to Phil Vickerman and Tim Nichol for believing in me and the importance of understanding working class education and to the History crew at LJMU who were always warmly welcoming.

This has been some journey and I hope it will help me to advocate for and influence the inclusion of working-class voices in education policy and practice.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

Abbreviation	Description
LEA	Local Education Authority
NHS	National Health Service
LCC	Liverpool City Council
USA	United States of America
IMF	International Monetary Fund
EPA	Education Priority Area
GCE	General Certificate of Education
SMS	Secondary Modern School
CSE	Certificate of Secondary Education
SFX	St Francis Xavier
DOB	Date of Birth

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION AND CONTEXT

The thesis is set in the working-class district of Everton in North Liverpool and is informed by narratives provided by ten participants who attended school in the area between 1944 and 1979. The work is framed in the tradition of oral history and considers the impact of education policy and practice on the lived experience of the participants. The voice of the working-class individuals and their recall of school days will add personalised context to the historical record of the time. Definitions of working class differ but contemporary work favours the interrelationship of social and economic factors as opposed to a narrow definition based on labour or occupation. In the context of this work E.P Thompson's understanding of class as a social, economic and political relationship, nuanced by Shulka and Todd build into a recognition that there is no absolute definition but a collection of shared experience and understanding. [3] Jones considers the relationship between the working class and the state and drawing on the work of Skeggs wonders whether working class relates more to a state of mind than environmental conditions. [4] Bourke agrees that the assignment of class based on

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[3] Thompson, E.P., *The Making of the English Working Class*, p 8-9, London, Penguin, 1963. Shukla in the introduction to Know Your Place challenges the idea of an authoritative definition of working class and asserts that working class is not singular or possessed one any one set of ideals or attitudes. Shukla, N., in Connolly, N., (ed),*Know your Place*, Liverpool, Deadink Books, 2015, introduction.

[4] Jones, B., *The Working Class in mid Twentieth Century England: Community, Identity and Social Memory,* Manchester, Manchester University Press, 2012,p 34 ,p 65. Skeggs, B., Formations of Class and Gender, London, Sage, 1997,pp 82-92.

income may be inadequate and refers to accent, minute distinctions and a sense of belonging as a way of articulating class.[5]

However broadly or narrowly defined, Bourke argues that working class individuals residing in a locality will grow to identify themselves as a group. In this way the participants share locality, economic, environmental and cultural experiences and their narratives give voice to inner-city dwellers and help to nuance existing interpretations about educational attitudes and attainment.[6] The thesis provides an opportunity for the less privileged to be heard. The narratives have inherent value in documenting the richness of working-class experience, an experience which might otherwise be lost. Braun and Clarke recognise that meaning is generated through the interpretation of data and as such believe that the concept of reaching an artificially determined saturation point to be subjective and potentially redundant in qualitative analysis.[7] This supports the oral historical framework which accepts each narrative as having value in the exploration and interpretation of the time being explored.

Education shapes the life experience of children and the delivery and resources granted by national and local policy touches families and communities, directly influences their lives.[8] Community has been viewed, in the thesis, as being variable in nature but relating to the urban community of Everton, a spatially bounded locality, in which the participants lived or spent their school days.[9]

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[5] Bourke, J., *Working class cultures in Britain 1890-1968*, London, Routledge, 1994, p3.

[6] Bourke, *Working class cultures in Britain 1890 – 1968*, p 113.

[7] Braun, V., and Clarke, V., To Saturate or not to Saturate? Questioning data saturation as a useful concept for thematic analysis and sample size rationale, *Qualitative Research in Sport, Exercise and Health, Vol 12, Issue 2,* Oxford, Taylor and Francis, 2021,pp 201-216.

[8] Mandler, P., Educating the Nation 1 – Schools., *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society,* Vol 24 p 5-28, 2016.

[9] Delanty, G., *Community*, Oxford, Taylor and Francis, 2003,p3 ; Community is often differentiated as being people rather than place based but in his review of perspectives of neighbourhood and community,

Community has multiple definitions. For example, Theodori notes that while community is an elusive construct it can be considered to be territory based or be territory free. The thesis works with a territorial definition and the territory is the geographical area of Everton.[10] Other definitions include non-territorial constructs relating to social groupings or networks such as the business community or perhaps religious affiliation.[11] Chaskin agrees that there are multiple possibilities in defining communities and that, accordingly, there may be a lack of clarity in understanding the meaning and context.[12] For Chaskin, the definition of community implies a connection, shared or common interests or circumstances. For the purposes of this work, community is defined as being territory based in the locality of Everton with economic frailty being the commonly held circumstance.[13]

This sharing of common circumstances and interests forms part of Bourdieu's framework around the concept of habitus. For Bourdieu, commonly held conditions (environment) can result in class habitus.[14] Class habitus is defined as commonly held and internalised understanding of the conditions facing the class; in this case, economic frailty and a lack of capital, particularly social capital. Bourdieu identifies that class is not just defined by income, occupation or

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Chaskin notes that these can be arbitrary and politically based definitions. Chaskin, R.J., Perspectives on neighbourhood and community: A review of the literature, *Social Service Review,* Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 1997, pp 521-547.

[10] See maps in Appendix 5 – Appendix 8.

[11] Theodori, G.L., Community and Community Development in Resource-Based Areas: Operational Definitions Rooted in an Interactional Perspective*, Society and Natural Resources*, Vol 18 Issue 7, 2005,pp 661-669.

[12] Chaskin, Perspectives on neighbourhood and community: A review of the literature, *Social Service Review* p 522.

[13] The geographical boundaries of Everton are shown on the map in Appendix Five. These are the electoral ward boundaries and have been subject to some amendment most notably recognised in the Local Government Boundary Commission Report 319 which changed boundaries between Everton and neighbouring Breckfield in November 1977.

[14] Bourdieu, P., *Distinction*, London, Routledge and Keegan Paul, 1984,pp 96-102; pp 103-105.

education but also by geographical space. Further he identifies that the geographical space inhabited by the working class will not be socially useful. This infers a belief that there are no particular social advantages in living in Everton and provides a theoretical framework for the interpretation of sources identifying the disadvantage associated with geographical location.

In addition to a consideration of place, The Oral History Association definition of preservation of voice provides the underpinning framework for the structure of the research.[15] Oral history is seen as a method of gathering, preserving and interpreting the voices and memories of people, communities and participants in past events. Reay expands this explanation recognising that the past and the present will combine to shape and mediate responses to the social world, including education, so that an understanding of the past will inform, not only the interpretation of a time in history, but will also support the evaluation of current working class practices in education.[16]

The thesis seeks to hear the voices of participants and these form the primary data source. In placing the research in a geographically confined area, Everton, the thesis may also be viewed as a microhistory of place but the memories of participants are the dominant vehicle for research. As a place, Everton has been subject to changing boundaries however those who live there have a strong sense of identification with the community. Community in this context is taken to

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[15] Oral History Association Principles and Best Practices, www.oralhistory.org .
[Accessed 18/12/2018].
[16] Reay, D., It's all becoming a Habitus: Beyond the Habitual use of Pierre Bourdieu's concept of Habitus in Educational Research, *British Journal of Sociology of Education*, 25:4 ,2004, p 431-444.

mean both the geographical location of Everton and its inhabitants.[17] In local parlance, community is used to describe both place and people. Chaskin recognised that the definitions of community and neighbourhood could be politically based and could by their nature be artificial and interchangeable.[18] Everton is an area where the socio-economic conditions have shown stability over time, a fact relevant in understanding the participant context. The research focuses on memories and experiences of education in a time period of thirty years commencing with the introduction of universal secondary education in England in 1944. Supporting secondary literature provides context from the national and local historical period and political archives. In considering the impact of educational policy and practice, the sources are multivariate, drawing from the history of the period but also responding to socio-economic factors. While education reform and organisation has been considered in terms of structure and regulation, the broader social spheres of influence reacting to reform have not always been integrated in the analysis and this integration and progression of impact over time forms part of the contribution of this work to the body of knowledge. The voices heard in education are rarely from a working class, less d privileged perspective and so have tended to limit the interpretation. The importance of the unprivileged voice is acknowledged within this thesis and adds to the future capacity to interpret outcomes from education reforms. Additionally, the methodology is reflexive of participant memories and priorities rather than the more usual structural assessment relating to a particular policy or intervention. The narratives have individual significance but are also collectively valuable in tracing the impact of education policy over time and Tosh, in particular, views an

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[17] Delanty, *Community,* p 4. Delanty recognises the variable nature of community and that social relationships and historical positioning are important. Delanty believed community is not defined by place but by social relationships.
[18] Chaskin, Perspectives on neighbourhood and community: A Review Of The Literature, p 521.

extended timeframe as being important in being able to see trends and development and understand how context changes over time.[19]

The starting point for the thesis is the development of the 1944 Education Act which was agreed by a wartime coalition Parliament. Despite the constraints of the Second World War, considerable attention was paid by politicians and policy makers to improving the nature of post war education in England and Wales. The Ministry of Education in 1947 referred to the proposed reforms as a bold adventure and an investment in the citizens of the future. [20] The thesis examines the impact of this investment through the perspective of adult memories of schooling. The thesis highlights the recollections of those attending inner city schools in Everton. Carr talks about our understanding of history and how our views are shaped, not accidently, but consciously, by those who believed their interpretation to be worth preserving.[21] The preservation of such memories enriches the body of work associated with working class engagement in education but also signposts the receptivity of educational initiatives and the breadth of social policy integration required to enable change. The interpretation of education history tends to lack the authenticity of working-class experience, certainly outside London, and the changes in response to education policy over time has not been well established. Tosh maintains that the nature of all social phenomena is their development over time and the perceived relevance of education in a working-class community considered through this thesis offers a

[19] Tosh, J., In Defence of Applied History, *Journal of History and Policy.* http://www.historyandpolicy.org/policy-papers/papers/in-defence-of-applied-history-the-history-and-policy-website . [Accessed 2/1/2020]
[20] Ministry of Education. *The New Secondary Education.* Ministry of Education Pamphlet 9, London ,HMSO 1947.
[21] Carr, E.H., 1987, *What is History,* London, Penguin, 1987, pp 12-13.

contribution to progress thinking in this area.[22] The thesis acts to preserve the voice of those who are not widely articulated in the interpretation of education during the timeline 1944-1979.

Chronologically, the journey starts in the 1940s and war time debates centred on the nature of intelligence and schooling, the role of religious bodies in education and the preparation of children to play a role in the post war economy. The 1943 Norwood Report fed into the Education Act 1944 [23] which was the basis for structuring compulsory secondary education policy and practice for the next thirty-five years. [24] The provisions and limitations of the 1944 Act dominated the policy landscape in the period 1944-1979. Prior to the Act, only 10% of the population received a secondary education, the majority completing elementary school at the age of 14.[25] Decisions taken in 1944 about selection at 11, positioning of religious studies in the curriculum and the organisation of schooling at local level continued to influence the lives of school children across the whole of the thirty five year period covered by this work.

Universal secondary education was introduced as a result of the 1944 Act which unified the governance of education under state control albeit subject to local administrative discretion. The significant changes brought about by the Act

[22] Tosh,J., http://www.historyandpolicy.org/policy-papers/papers/in-defence-of-applied-history-the-history-and-policy-website .[Accessed2/01/2020]
[23] The Education Act 1944 https://www.parliament.uk/living-heritage/transformingsociety/livinglearning/school/overview/educationact
[Accessed 20/02/2020 and 01/08/2021 via UK Parliament website].
[24] The Norwood Report (1943) *Curriculum and Examinations in Secondary Schools.* Committee of the Secondary School Examinations Council, *Norwood Report (1943) Curriculum and Examinations in Secondary Schools* < http://www.educationengland.org.uk/documents/norwood/norwood1943.html>
[Accessed 29 May 2020].

[25] Brooks,V., noted the low take up of additional secondary education in The Role of External Examinations in the Making of Secondary Modern Schools in England 1945-1965, *History of Education*, Oxford, Taylor and Francis, 37.3, 2008, pp 447-467.

provide a foundation from which to examine the impact of policy on the educational experience of individuals. Of particular significance is the framing of the Act to leave the structural organisation of secondary education in the hands of the Local Education Authorities (LEAs)[26]. The political incoherence between central and local government resulted in fractured and disjointed application of education policy across the timeline and the effect of this, particularly on pupils in secondary modern schools has not been neglected. The major focus of writing and debate has been on the selection at 11 and the move from grammar schools to comprehensive schools. The culture and ethos of the secondary modern school system has been less well established despite the large numbers of children attending. McCulloch and Sobell note that there are few reports showing how secondary moderns related to their communities or consider the internal relationships within these schools.[27] While the reorganisation debates were happening, two generations of children were being educated in a system which struggled to disconnect secondary modern schooling from a second-class status. Even where central government intentions were focused on removal of selection by examination at 11, the LEAs were not compelled to do so only needing to report their development plans for school reorganisation to the Ministry of Education. Local autonomy led to variation in practice and differentiated experience and the way this variation was experienced through the lived experience of children has been captured in the research.

The emphasis on education in the political agenda increased as a result of the 1944 Act which signalled intent at central level to raise the profile of administration

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[26] Local Education Authorities – referred to as LEAs.

[27] McCulloch, G. and Sobell, L., Towards a Social History of the Secondary Modern Schools, *History of Education*, pp275-386, Oxford, Taylor and Francis, 1994.

and delivery. Policy was controlled by central government while delivery of policy was devolved to local authorities. The consequences of this dual strategy, in terms of education outcomes in communities, is less well understood than the structural debate defining the organisation and infrastructure of education. While power sharing between the government of the day and the LEAs produced a compromise in co-ordinating the existing provision and intended expansion, it also left room for prevarication and uncertainty. The significance of the rather fractured relationship between central and local government has been examined in relation to education from a policy perspective but not from the experiential evidence from those who needed to rely on and trust the authorities to provide coherence in their education. [28] The egalitarian and philosophical impact of the 1944 Act may be subject to diverse interpretations, but the aim of central government to increase levels of spending on education, broaden availability of secondary provision and raise the profile of education nationally was achieved in the immediate post war years. However, despite the increased funding, Simon argues that the reforms did not and were not intended to challenge the social or economic order despite political rhetoric on equality.[29] While the narratives of the past are not directly applicable to the conditions of the present, the alternative lens of working-class experience contributes difference in evaluating the interventions in education over time.

For England and Wales, a selection process using a national examination known as the 11 plus was established which categorised children as academic or not on the basis of the examination. Although the policy interventions were national, local contextualisation provided an opportunity for local vested interests to

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[28] Chitty, C ., *Education Policy in Britain*, Basingstoke, Palgrave Macmillan, 2009,pp 111-142.
[29] Simon, B., *Education and the Social Order,* London, Lawrence Wishart, 1991, p 142-143.

influence the policy outcomes. In reality, the responses were fragmented and the result of compromise with local, most notably, religious organisations. The thesis is concerned with the impact of the fragmentation and compromises on the lived experiences of those who were children as the reorganisation of education was taking place.

Education was part of wide-ranging social reform agenda in 1945 including housing infrastructure and health provision through the newly formed NHS. Perkin considers that the post war society produced a 'revolution of expectation' and the ostensibly meritocratic view of education was part of this societal shift. [30] The extent to which expectation was felt by individuals in communities such as Everton and the level to which their experience reflected the meritocratic intent is explored through this research. Expectation relates to individual life stories but is also reflected in the attitudes of peers, family, schools and teachers. The thesis considers the social context shaping these expectations and the level of opportunity resulting from education reform.

While the thesis reflects experience of participants educated in Everton, alternative structures and policy decisions might create a different reality for those schooled elsewhere. The narratives are not intended to have broad applicability but rather to stand as viable accounts of the relationship between the child and the school as held in the memories of the participants. The Education Act itself compromised or remained silent in areas which might have supported the development of working-class education more effectively. As an example, comprehensives, during the drafting of the Act. However, guidance to the LEAs

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[30] Perkin, H., *The Rise of the Professional Society,* Oxon, Routledge, 2002, p409.

offered no guidance on a comprehensive model and therefore a tripartite or bipartite structure was established in many areas. [31] The structure focused on selection at 11 was established even though the systemic disadvantage of the selection process was known and had been considered in the development of the Act.[32]

The local context becomes relevant in terms of understanding the experiences of the participants. The voice of the participants, subject to editing and interpretation through differing lenses is central to the research. While the context in which these voices exist has been informed by historical, political, social and educational sources, voice is the primary source in the thesis. There has been claim to the distinctiveness of Liverpool by historians, an area separated from English culture by virtue of Irish links, reliance on the port industries and radical nature but these themes support and do not overwhelm the individual oral testimony. [33] Primary sources are provided through the participant group, of ten individuals all of whom attended school between the 1940s and 1970s. The study is based solely in Everton and makes no claim to be representative of the city or wider experience in England or Wales, however, aspects of the analysis may resonate with the experiences of others.[34] Those from similar inner-city

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[31] The Act referred to a tripartite system of Grammar, Secondary Modern and Technical schools. The Technical option was often left out of local plans so became, in reality, a bipartite system. Discussed in more detail in Chapter Two, Education Policy.

[32] Among the authors reviewing the development of the Act is Clive Chitty: *The rise and fall of the post war consensus*, Chapter in Education Policy in Great Britain pp 16-31.

[33] Belcham, J., and Biggs, B., *Liverpool City of Radicals,* Liverpool, Liverpool University Press, 1992,p 3.

[34] Consideration of small samples can be seen through the literature on microhistory which can take many forms but as discussed by Magnusson, S.G., and Szijarto, I.M., *What is Microhistory*?, Oxon, Routledge, 2013,p 8, the boundary for the microhistory needs to be understood. Within this work, those boundaries are those of Everton as a place, attending school in the area, within the timeframe.

communities, across the time-period, may share common elements of their lived experience.

In addition to the local context, participant positioning along the timeline has relevance to the interpretation of the narratives. The timeline covers the change from a recognised post war consensus on education policy in 1944 to the economic depression of the mid 1970s and a breakdown in political cohesion in this area by 1979.[35] The timeline allows the historian to see how education in practice changed over time and Tosh argues that if the time span is too short then it may not be possible to see trends or outcomes which might help explain the present. Education was part of the post war political climate of hope and reform provided Clement Atlee's Labour government. Taking 1944 as a starting point of the research in 1944 may seem obvious but the importance of extending the timeframe into the 1970s allows consideration of whether a fundamental shift in perception or outcome has occurred. The influence of both the political and economic context nationally and locally on education produces differing responses across the chronological timeline of the research. Education was seen as a significant part of post war recovery and politicians from all parties heralded the Education Act 1944 as destined to provide great reform and advantage to all classes in society. Subsequent changes in education policy reflected political beliefs but also the economic climate and the prioritisation of resources. This thesis examines the responses to reform and policy changes at the level of the individual. The timeframe also provides an opportunity to consider whether the conditions influencing the impact changed sufficiently for more traditional

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[35] Chitty, *Education Policy in Britain*: Chitty argues that until 1979 there was broad political consensus about the need to improve educational standards for all and the importance of the role of the state in supporting education.

responses to have become obsolete. [36] Responses to education policy have been collected through the narratives of the participants. Oral history is inevitably linked to the passage of time and so the chronological positioning of the case histories has relevance in identifying change over time.[37] Changes in outcome in education are unlikely to be immediate, the passage of time is needed to explore the adjustments made following policy announcements and the way that these are received by educators, families and children. The span of time provides an opportunity to look at traditional patterns of behaviour and contextualises individual experiences supporting an understanding of participant responses and patterns of behaviour.[38]

The positioning of the research in a working-class neighbourhood, tests the intentions of the 1944 Act to create a more equitable and meritocratic education process where children were not limited by their social class. The narratives reflect the lived experiences of the education policy of the period. The participants differ in terms of specific family circumstances and positioning across the timeline but all were schooled in Everton and have common socio-economic experiences. Historically, Everton had, lower educational attainment than the average for England or the Liverpool region. [39] As an area, metrics relating to financial, social and economic deprivation reveal that poverty has remained a constant through the period of the research to present day.[40] The education outcomes from Everton

[36] Tosh,J., http://www.historyandpolicy.org/policy-papers/papers/in-defence-of-applied-history-the-history-and-policy-website   [Accessed 2/01/2020]

[37] Peniston-Bird argues that of all sources, oral history is most dependant on the passage of time. Barber, S., and Peniston-Bird, C., Oral History the sound of memory, Chapter in *History beyond the Text,* Oxford, Routledge, 2009, pp 105-112.

[38] Tosh discusses the nature of the enabling conditions, i.e. the environment and asks whether, over time, the conditions which accounted for the behaviours still applied. http://www.historyandpolicy.org/policy-papers/papers/in-defence-of-applied-history-the-history-and-policy-website

[39] Everton Ward Profile, 2018, LCC, https://www.liverpool.gov.uk [Accessed 11/01/2020].

[40] Indices of social deprivation Everton Ward statistics 2019: Liverpool City Council., https://www.liverpool.gov.uk [Accessed 11/01/2020].

appear to be somewhat impervious to the changes in education policy. There is little evidence that a disadvantaged working-class voice informed the development of policy or practice. An examination of the lived experience may facilitate a better understanding of education policy and its outcomes for in working class communities.

Geographically, Everton is positioned to the north of the city centre of Liverpool. Liverpool was, in Victorian times, a prosperous city second city, its wealth fuelled by slavery and cotton but the city faced economic decline with changes to maritime trade.[41] Poverty was deeply entrenched in the city and in Everton, challenges to survive dominated every-day life.[42] Families faced economic and social disadvantages linked to the decline of the docks and the industrial base of the city. Roberts believes that the sectarian behaviours exhibited in the city resulted in part from escapism from the destitution of daily living. [43] Theodori conceptualised community as a local society and suggested three dimensions which would indicate the existence of a community.[44] Firstly, as indicated previously, there would be a geographic dimension; secondly there would be a human life dimension and thirdly, there would be patterns of behaviour related to human interest. In Everton, this third dimension was often represented by allegiance to either Protestant or Catholic causes. This sense of community is associated with the concept and need for belonging and is rooted in a Christian

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[41] Parkinson M 2019 *Liverpool Beyond the Brink*, Liverpool, Liverpool University Press,2019,p 1. Lane, T., *Liverpool City of the Sea,* Liverpool, Liverpool University Press, 1977, p14.
[42] Liverpool Echo, 27th March 1962, reported North West Regional Board for Industry noting that no area of similar size elsewhere in the UK having employment problems remotely comparable. Employment problems in North West, *Liverpool Echo,* www.britishnewspaper.co.uk [Accessed 15/6/2019].
[43] Roberts, K., *Liverpool Sectarianism,* Liverpool, Liverpool University Press,2017, p 22.
[44] Theodori, G.L., Community and Community Development in Resource-Based Areas: Operational Definitions Rooted in an Interactional Perspective, *Society and Natural Resources*, Vol 8, Issue 11,2015, p661-669.

perspective which highlighted religious collectivity.[45] The work of Arensberg and Kimball was identified by Delanty.[46] Contextualised in rural Southern Ireland, this work considered community to be based in tradition, rarely questioning the established order. Both Catholic and Protestant communities are represented in this study, not least because religious denomination was a key factor in school application and admission decisions. The relationship between religious affiliation and schooling is unavoidable in any analysis of education in Everton.

Memories relating to religious observance or segregation are told or inferred through stories which reflects the tradition of oral history, specifically history from below. [47] The philosophy of history from below emphasises the importance of the voices normally omitted from the more formal narratives of the time. Moreover, focusing on a community reveals the threads linking the overall experience. Theodori refers to these threads as social fields and includes education, economy, recreation and faith-based allegiances as indicators of the existence of community.[48] The narratives are placed in a local and national context which reflect the political and education policy landscape of the time. This involves looking beyond the parliamentary debates and an examination of policy structure in order to reach an understanding of what it felt like to be governed, the impact of power on ordinary people and their responses.[49] The memories of the participants co-exist with other sources but are not subordinated to them. The memories of the time reflect the recall and context of the individual participants.

[45] Delanty, *Community*, p 14.
[46] Delanty, *Community*, p 35 reference to foot note 4 Arensberg and Kimball's work in rural Ireland. Gibbon, P, Arensberg and Kimball Revisited, *Economy and Society*, 2:4,1973, pp 479-498.
[47] Carr, Thompson and other historians discuss the use of the narrative form in oral history and history from below; Thompson, P., *The Voice of the Past*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2000, pp 119-152; Carr, E.H. *What is History?* London, Penguin, 1977,pp 122-123.
[48] Theodori, Community and Community Development in Resource-Based Areas: Operational Definitions Rooted in an Interactional Perspective, *Society and Natural Resources*, pp661-669.
[49] Tosh, J., *The Pursuit of History*, London, Pearson, 2010,p 21.

The accounts bring richness and personal context to established accounts of the period and provide an opportunity for alternative truths and interpretations to emerge.

The policy provisions of the Education Act in 1944 initially reflected a political agenda for social justice in education but ultimately became an economic one driven by funding limitations and the demands of the labour market. Politicians and policy makers ostensibly aspired to change the lives of the less advantaged but there is doubt as to whether the economic realities and social networks were understood or recognised. Smith recognised that while there had been expansion in education, increases in qualifications and the relative chances of children from different social backgrounds were as unequal by the end of the twentieth century as they had been at the beginning.[50] Reay asks whether working class attainment studies in education have considered material deprivation. [51] In addition to housing and the tools of education, Reay reflects on time and poverty with the need to work curtailing the time and energy available for study. There is little evidence that the capacity and time to do homework, to prepare for examinations to focus on education was considered in terms of the resources made available locally or nationally. The ability of the directives of the 1944 Act to enable capacity to learn where there was significant material disadvantage has been questioned previously but this research uses authentic voice and considers the interconnectivity of impacting variables.

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[50] Smith, G., Schools; Chapter in *Twentieth Century Social Trends*, edited by Halsey, A.H., and Webb., J.(eds), *Twentieth Century Social Trends*, London, Palgrave Macmillan, 2000.

[51] Reay, D., Shifting Class Identities; Chapter in *Social Justice, Education and Identity* edited by Vincent, C., *Social Justice, Education and Identity*, London, Routledge,2012.

The deficiencies in delivering the intentions of the Act has been considered in political and educational historical accounts but an appreciation and evaluation of the impact at the level of the individual is less well understood.[52] Additionally, there is little evidence in the application of the Act of a belief in the intrinsic value of education across all sectors of society. The Education Act was the product of cross-party consultation and considerable discussion with religious bodies and professional teacher associations. Following its enactment, a partnership between government, LEAs and teachers developed in the 1950s irrespective of the ruling political party. This partnership began to fray in the 1960s as views about the efficacy of selection at 11 became increasingly polarised.[53] By the 1970s there was a national move towards comprehensive education although local vested interests continue to protect the grammar school process. Throughout the development stages and consultation on delivery, there was no real place for the working-class voice. Policy making was an elite occupation and the views of the working classes would not have been considered let alone solicited. [54] Understanding of the socio-economic and cultural challenges facing working class individuals would have been limited. The recalled responses to education in the 35 years following the Education Act provide individual accounts to enrich and inform the context of the period.

Oral and social historians agree about the relevance of such individual accounts which, when placed in the context of the time, create a new and possibly different

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[52] Typical of the literature in this area would be the review of 30 years of the Act authored by Caroline Benn and Clive Chitty. The focus is on policy and politics and neighbourhoods are viewed statistically not in terms of human interaction. Benn, C., and Chitty C., *Thirty Years On*, London, David Fulton, 1996).

[53] McCulloch, G., (1994) Visions of 1944, chapter in *Educational Reconstruction*, London, Woburn Press, 1991; Chitty, C., *Education Policy in Britain,* Basingstoke, Palgrave Macmillan, 2009, pp 28-29.

[54] And continues still to be so. Sutton Trust 2019: 59% of current permanent secretaries in government went to private schools and 56% were Oxbridge educated www.civilserviceworld.com . [Accessed 18/1/2020]

narrative. Memories of the time, recorded through interviews, interpreted within historical context, enhance the body of knowledge by introducing an alternative perspective. The use of oral history implies a shift of focus so that the study of educational history involves 'the experiences of the children', as well as the political climate, policy decisions and changes in teaching pedagogy. [55] An appreciation of how a collection of ordinary people from Everton perceived their school days set alongside the big educational reforms of the period creates an opportunity for alternative interpretation and diagnostic analysis of potential improvements in provision.

Oral history creates a framework for analysis; hearing the voices of those whose early lives were shaped by families, schools and communities in Everton. Oral history recognises the relevance and value of these voices. The participants in the study needed to trust the researcher to represent their views, a process that was facilitated by shared background and appreciation of the culture of working-class life. Participant recall signalled the importance to the individuals of the events they chose to share and it was important to them that these memories would be respected. Todd notes that personal accounts can be dismissed as merely nostalgic but recognises that other accounts, for example, political biographies, form an accepted part of the historical narrative.[56] The question becomes one of the relative weighting given to diverse accounts. The thesis gives weight to the voice of the lived experience. There is value also, in recognising the need to be heard and the importance of this to participants.[57] While the interviews

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[55] Thompson, *The Voice of the Past,* p 7.

[56] Todd, S., *The People – The Rise And Fall Of The Working Class,* London, Routledge, 2012, p 140.

[57] Bourdieu tended to be dismissive of the lived experience believing it to be a superficial representation of the views of the researcher. Contemporary historians see the value of individual stories in supporting or refuting the narrative of the time. Bourdieu, *Distinction* p 94.

provided space for the participant to choose relevancy and importance of school memories, there was no doubting a shared view that their experiences had not previously been captured or understood. Extracts from three of the participant interviews express a desire to be heard:

"…you know what I mean…. put the words together for me" [58] *(Tom)*

"…I've rambled on... you can make sense of it can't you?" [59] *(Jane)*

"people should know…. you tell them our story." [60] *(Ann)*

Published work, minutes of meetings, internal reports are all accepted historical sources. These documents have preserved those elements considered by their author to have been significant or worthy of being preserved. The oral testimonies contain elements considered by the participants to be worthy of preservation. The written documents tend to be the preserve of the more privileged but this does not make the oral accounts less valid. . The freedom of expression in recounting their memories reveals a richness sometimes missing in accounts of working-class lives.[61]

Participants chose what to reveal, they retained control of their narrative. Where questioning and question design are closed and predetermined there is a risk that the framework may reflect the priorities of the researcher rather than retain the focus on the memory of the participant. There are potentially issues around the later interpretation of data, as this may have been perceived through a more

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[58] Tom, Interview A2, See participant detail in Chapter 4, p147.
[59] Jane, Interview A3, See participant detail in Chapter 4, p148.
[60] Ann, Interview A5, See participant detail in Chapter 4, p 153.
[61] Abrams, L., Fleming, L., Hazley, B., Wright, V., and Kearns, A., Isolated and dependant: Women and children in high-rise social housing in post- war Glasgow, *Womens History Review*, London, Taylor and Francis, 28:5, 2018, p 794-813. This article discusses the methodology used by Pearl Jephcott in collecting data..

privileged lens, but the data itself, reflected the stories the participant wished to tell and felt to be worthy of inclusion.

Although historical memory and personal experience may have blurred lines in the accounts of the participants, Portelli suggests that the recall of what participants believe to have happened is in itself revealing. Such recall can highlight the psychological impact of an event in a person's life. [62] The recall is closely linked with the individual's sense of self both at the time of the memory and the interview. [63] While there is a need to understand the chronology it plays a lesser role compared to the participant voice. The voices in the case histories matter, because education matters. Education remains a formative influence in the lives of many people and the clarity with which school days are recalled by the participants is testimony to that. While the official records reflect the priorities of those storing and recording at the time, these priorities may fail to reflect the contextualised experience provided by unofficial and informal, oral accounts. The absence of the lived experience testimony means that the voices of the children in the period, all be it altered by the journey to adulthood, do not transfer into the archive material on which future appraisals of the period will be made. The question of selection at the age of 11 and the nature of inner-city education continues to be subject to political debate and policy change so it is crucial that archives and written accounts of the time contain reference to the lens of the lived experience alongside more established reports. [64]

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[62] Portelli, A., 'Oral History as a Genre' referenced in Abrams, L., *Oral History Theory*, pp 1-18.
[63] Abrams, L., *Oral History Theory,* New York, Routledge, 2016, p 197.
[64] Benn and Chitty ,*Thirty Years On,* p 8.

The distribution of power within the relationship between the policy makers and the participants is an additional layer for consideration in developing the thesis. It is not only the structural power of the elite but the way in which this power can be used to advantage or disadvantage communities and individuals. As historical timelines can provide a sense of the direction of travel in policy outcomes, the timescale needs to be of sufficient length to allow the direction to reveal itself. With a working class voice unrecognised, the policies fail to address the holistic nature of some of the influences and therefore reduce the potency of interventions to support working class communities. A longitudinal approach has been taken in order to show changes over time in the lived experience of education policy.

Rationale for the Thesis

The absence of a voice representing less advantaged communities may help to account for the intransigent outcomes from education experienced by inner city, working class communities. Everton shows the characteristic indicators of poverty and poor infrastructure and an ongoing lack of progress in secondary school outcomes. [65] When defining the characteristics of community, Theodori included education as part of the interacting fields contributing to the behaviour of the community overall.[66] Both Gaine and George and Theodori recognised the role of education. Gaine and George also saw community as influencing education; Theodori considers education to be part of community cohesion. The narratives use oral history to support an appraisal of the impact education policy

[65] City of Liverpool: Everton Ward Profile 2019 www.liverpool.gov.uk. [Accessed 11/01/2020].
[66] Theodori, G.L., Community and Community Development in Resource-Based Areas: Operational Definitions Rooted in an Interactional Perspective, *Society and Natural Resources*, London, Taylor and Francis online, pp661-669. https://doi.org/10.1080/08941920590959640 [Accessed 17/8/2020].

had on education outcomes in Everton. Oral history appreciates the value of an individual story to contribute to an understanding of the period and the first-hand accounts lend a different focus.

The nature of educational provision in predominantly working-class areas, such as Everton, tended to correspond to the hierarchical structure and ethos of the dominant institutions of the time. [67] The hierarchical positioning within schools emulate the hierarchies in society and as such conveyed a sense of positioning within that hierarchy. Evidence of contextual and environmental working-class communities in developing policy is lacking, possibly because this was not considered to be important or have something to contribute to the debate. [68] The policy direction focused on enabling a fit with the prevailing ethos. The impact that school structure, curriculum or culture had on children with complex and underprivileged home lives plays a less significant role in the literature of the time than, for example, discussion about the nature of intelligence. Where discussion of socio-economic factors has been introduced, the working-class voice is seldom introduced in the literature. The analysis of social class and the transition to higher education undertaken by Reay provides a role model for integrating voice into an academic evaluation.[69] The work by Reay is supported by a framework for analysing factors influencing attainment developed by Gaine and George who considered that there was a web of interconnected factors potentially impacting

[67] Bowles and Gintis were sociologists writing in the 1970s claiming that schools were organised according to the expected roles children would play on leaving school. They argued that the school structure was designed to create obedient and docile workers. Discussion in Cole, M., *Bowles and Gintis Revisited,* London, Routledge, 1998.

[68] While discussing potential disadvantage in the structures of school policy, accounts from Chitty, Jones, for example, anticipate that there will be working class detriment but do not use evidence from working class sources to reveal why this might be the case. This point is recognised by Aldrich, R., Three duties of the Historian of Education, *History of Education*, Oxford, Taylor and Francis, 2003, Vol 32 No2 pp133-243.

[69] Reay, Shifting Class Identities, Chapter in Vincent, *Social Justice, Education and Identity.*

negatively on attainment in minority groups. [70] Writing more recently, Reay acknowledges that while these interconnecting factors are excluded from the policy and practice discussions then the emphasis remains on making the child fit the education structure but without a detailed consideration of the cultural and material barriers which would need to be overcome. The structure of school life was more likely to be reflective of society norms than to challenge them. The formal culture of schools, particularly selective grammar schools, may have appeared somewhat alien to children from Everton and these feelings are revealed through an interpretation of the data viewed through the lens of a working-class memory and what Bourke recognised as an awareness of difference. [71] Only later in the period, in the 1970s, did adjustments providing support for successful education outcomes show some impact on individual achievement. Secondary sources and oral testimony suggest that the school system may have actually worked to move predominantly working-class children into positions of subordination.[72] Bourke shares the Goldthorpe analysis noting that lower economic classes failed to benefit from structural changes in the employment market and that this linked to accessibility of qualifications.[73] In revealing the way school culture and expectation influenced self-worth, the need for further interpretation of how policy development is viewed from below. Understanding this view forms part of the rationale for this thesis.

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[70] Jones, K., discusses the work of Little and Westergaard in this respect. *Education in Britain*, p 58. Also, Gaine and George, 1999 Gender, *Race and Class in Schooling* pp 109-112; Reay, D., Shifting Class Identities; Chapter in *Social Justice, Education and Identity* edited by Vincent, C.

[71] Jones, K., *Education in Britain:1944 to Present,* Cambridge, Polity Press, 2003*,* p 58. Noting that working class disadvantage continued, post 11 plus; Bourke, J., Working Class Cultures in Britain 1890-1968, p 3.

[72] Todd, S., *The People,* p 396. Todd acknowledges the role of education in the labour market and the "matching" of people to suitable jobs. Suitability tended to be decided based on class and geography.

[73] Bourke, J., *Working Class Cultures in Britain 1890-1968*, London, Routledge, 1994,p 83.

The rationale for the thesis included an aspiration to understand change in the voices over an extended time period so recognising that responses to policy change could take time to embed. This longitudinal approach was particularly relevant given the relationship between national policy and local delivery of education strategy. De Vaus identifies the value of longitudinal research in the ability to examine change or stability over time.[74] Longitudinal research in history has often been data driven and comparative statistics of the time have reviewed educational attainment and social mobility. Less evident has been the examination of the changes in attitudes, behaviours and responses over time and the thesis seeks to address this in accounts of working-class education over four decades. Participants used recall to identify their memories of school and the thesis examined the changes or lack of change in responses to education over time. In defining the timeline for the thesis, I was reassured by the addresses Peter Mandler gave to the Royal Historical Society between 2014 and 2016 on the theme of Educating the Nation.[75] In each of the three papers, Mandler sections the time since 1944 to present day into three blocks. The first of these three blocks coincide with the timeframe I had identified to produce a longitudinal view of responses to education. This gave me confidence that the time period had merit as a distinct historical period. Additionally, given that my interviewees had been to school in the 1940s and 1950s, I was acutely aware of their advancing age and felt the compulsion to capture memories before these were lost.

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[74] DeVaus, D., Research *Design in Social Science,* London, Sage, 2001,p 115.
[75] Mandler, *Educating the Nation* I, p 111.

The positioning of the narratives in a geographical area with little economic diversity provides an opportunity to evaluate responses in relation to the impact of education policy within a defined geographical area. The choice of Everton provides a geographical location, a social space, in which commonality and difference in responses can be evaluated. This may result in an improved understanding of the relationship between education policy and working-class children. Everton, like Merseyside, is a place of unclear boundaries but a clear sense of belonging is expressed by those who live there.[76] While some authors exploring community relate to what Bradshaw refers to as a post-place community this work reflects the importance of place, rather than social or work related grouping, in understanding how messages about education were received and responded to.[77] The potential for education to influence individuals and their life experience is not confined to the generations considered by the thesis. In 2018 the percentage of those suitably qualified to enter Higher Education in Everton remains one of the lowest on Merseyside and the UK. [78] This suggests that as well as providing additional knowledge to inform views of the past, the research can also contribute to education policy development in the future.

This thesis asks questions about the efficacy and governance of educational policy in respect to the life chances of working-class individuals. Through this research, there may be potential for improving the relationship between education provision and the outcomes for future generations in the area. Liverpool has been considered radical and even exceptional in its social and

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[76] Benbough-Jackson, M., and Davies, S., *Merseyside, Culture and Place,* Cambridge, Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2011, p1. Boundary changes over time have altered the official definitions of Everton.
[77] Bradshaw, T.K., The Post Place Community: Contributions to the Debate about the Definition of Community, *Community Development,* Oxford, Oxford University Press, Vol 39, 2008, p5-16.
[78] Liverpool City Council Ward profile 2018. www.liverpool.gov.uk. [Accessed 11/01/2020].

economic behaviours but the relationship with education appears rigid and bound in vested interests. Understanding why this might have been the case and the role of central and local government in creating life chances, through education, has guided the structure of this work.

Structure of the Thesis

This thesis has been structured to provide a framework in which the participant narratives will be central but supported by historical context. The thesis has been organised into seven chapters.

Chapter one considers the rationale and context for the thesis. The identification of oral history as the dominant framework for construction and analysis is explored. The chapter recognises that a multivariate approach is required in considering the development, delivery and impact of education policy. Diversity in the relationship between education and other social factors such as social and economic capital and neighbourhood culture signals the need to draw on material from historical, political and sociological sources. [79] The opening chapter raises questions about the efficacy of education policy in supporting working class attainment during the period 1944-1979. The chapter acknowledge the variety of definitions associated with the description 'working class'. King favours a recognition that the working class represents a broad and diverse group of workers in both urban and rural communities and who share elements of inequality. Recognising inequity in the accumulation of all forms of capital, Bourdieu also discusses navigating the field of play, which in this work I consider

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[79] King, C., Counting the Working Class for Working Class Studies, *Journal of Working-Class Studies,* Illinois, Duke University Press, 2019, p116. Todd, S., Young Women, Work and Family in England 1918-1950,Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2005, p8 also comments on the diversity of class definitions and notes that it changed over time from being defined by labour to a set of interconnected elements which could not, in themselves, be taken in isolation.

to be responses to education policy and practice.[80] Within this field, there are subsidiary characteristics, besides income, which also play a part in signalling the relationship between education policy and working-class individuals. These characteristics may be tacit in nature, inferred or implied but not formally stated. An understanding of the rules, even if these are informal, are part of the inclusion criteria. Without guidance and role models to provide a road map; working-class children may well be excluded, and to continue the field of play analogy, left on the side-lines watching.

Chapter Two examines a range of sources connecting the historical and political proceedings of the day to the local social and economic forces influencing decisions in education. The chapter is divided into four sections. Each of the sections relates to content relevant to an understanding of the context for the participant group. Although the sections are interconnected each brings a specific knowledge base to help to illuminate the context of the narratives. The first section focuses on the historical period and how events at national and local level shaped the educational experience of the time. The impact of the war and subsequent deficiencies in infrastructure is key to this section but the relevance of economic factors expose the environment in which decisions about education were taken. The second section looks at the development of education policy and practice over the time period and has a focus on the relationship between central government and the LEAs. The political and social changes over time are considered to be moderators in the development of policy and practice and this is recognised through the content. The third section considers the importance of

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[80] Bourdieu, *Distinction*, p 96. Lin, N., *Social Capital*, A Theory of Social Structure and Action, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2001,believes the dominant social culture will be transmitted through education, represented by teachers and administrative structures with the intention of reproducing this dominant culture in future generations, p14.

place and is shaped around Everton as a geographical area exploring networks and relationships influencing the responses of individuals and families to education. Within Everton, the community networks and the physical streets shaped opinions and provided friendship and a sense of belonging. Goodhart understands the difficulties of defining community.[81] While community can be taken to mean close and supportive, elements of community can also be exclusive, as evidenced by the religious segregation connected to education. The norms and boundaries that can make a community feel comfortable can also exclude difference, ideas, and incomers. The fourth section considers how conformity with community norms have been identified and can be established through social, cultural and political influences on education. Cultural influences have been broadly defined to include the impact and interdependence of religious affiliation and education. Chapter Two, in summary, examines the sources which may inform our understanding of the participant voice and suggests that there may be gaps relating to working class voice, the nature of secondary modern schools, and the perspective lens used to interpret previous research.

The approaches to be taken in organising and analysing the participant narratives form the methodological framework in Chapter Three. Oral history provides the basis for organising the participant narratives. Within the process of data reduction and organisation, care has been taken to retain the authentic voice. The use of data reduction and the importance of perspective in interpretation of the narratives is considered within the chapter and the framework for analysis is

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[81] Goodhart, D., *The Road to Somewhere*, London, Hurst and co, 2017,pp 12 and 13.

developed. The chapter views the data through different lenses to provide a more nuanced evaluation of the data.

Chapter Four introduces the participants whose testimony drives the direction of the thesis. The primary source for the thesis is the collected memories of the participants and their contributions determined by their own priorities in telling their stories. This chapter gives biographical details of the participants and places them in particular spaces along the timeline. The chapter considers the participants in context across the timeline. The participants articulate their stories with the freedom to focus on what is important to them in recalling events from their schooling six or more decades ago. In understanding the impact of the 1944 Act over time the subsequent evaluation of these stories allows the more conventional narratives to be viewed with an alternative lens.

In Chapter Five the narratives have been organised into themes identified through the weighting of content in the interview. Within the themes, it is possible to see the development of change over time in response to education policy and how this was perceived by the individuals. The focus of Chapter Five is the lived experience of the participants.[82] Tosh regards such personal testimony as important and centred on the experience and opinions of individual informants. Three themes have been identified for analysis, informed by the frequency and extent of content relating to these areas in the participant narratives. The narratives are revealing and, as anticipated by Tosh, contain a vividness of detail and emotional power. The impact of local and national education policy, social influences and aspirations and opportunity on leaving school form the three

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[82] Tosh, The Pursuit of History, p 313.

themes. These have been divided into subthemes as the participant's emphasised different elements. In order to retain the authentic voice, further categorisation was needed to ensure that elements considered important by the participants were fully represented. Subthemes such as school structure and governance, the nature of the curriculum, assessment and the impact of connectivity between pupil and teacher shape the content on local and national policy. Within the theme of social relationships, the importance of place, geography and culture, including religion, form additional subthemes. The third theme is focused on economic reality and the labour market in relation to educational outcomes and includes deliberation about the role of national examinations. Within these themes the participant testimony is viewed through a series of lenses and these acknowledge the cultural positioning of the researcher.[83] While there are some areas of shared commonality between researcher and participant experience, particularly with those cases later in the timeline, it would not be true to suggest that the research was conducted purely from an insider perspective. Most notably, the researcher did not attend school in Everton or Liverpool. However, there is an element of working class shared experience which immediately recognised and understood some elements of the narratives which might have been invisible to a total outsider. Wilkinson and Kitzinger consider that, whatever the similarity we might share with participants we are also, by the nature of being researchers, also outsiders.[84] There is a space, as which lends itself to having elements of both insider and outsider status. The testimonies are reviewed from this space between.

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[83] Dwyer, S.C., and Buckle J.L., The Space between: On being an Insider-Outsider in Qualitative Research, *International Journal of Qualitative Methods,* London, Sage Publications, 2009.
[84] Wilkinson, S., and Kitzinger C., Representing our own experience: Issues in "Insider" Research, *Psychology of Women Quarterly*, Vol 2. California, Sage Publications, 2013.

Chapter Six uses the alternative lens of the child at the time to look at the way in which the participants viewed the world around them. The neglect of secondary school culture and curriculum, the importance of recognition and future prospects through national examinations and the impact of schooling on livelihoods and future expectations are suggested as key questions emanating from the research. The influence of place and of being in and of Everton reflects the importance of geographical positioning. The question of the longer-term consequences deriving from political incoherence in policy development is asked. The narratives reveal two key transition points for the participants. The first of these is the transition at 11 from primary to secondary school. The second is the transition from school to work. Both transition points are considered in more detail in this chapter. Such analysis leads to questions about how the experiences might inform an understanding of the relationship between working class communities and education policy.

The final chapter considers the consequences of the multiple layers and asks how the learning from the narratives could inform responses to working class engagement with education. It recognises that education structure and practice reflected the priorities of the policy makers who may have failed to comprehend the complexity of interventions required. Everton, as a case study, adds to the archive in terms of oral history, working class history and the history of education. Experiences viewed across a timeline may inform policy and practice as the thesis allows a direction of travel to be discovered. The holistic nature of the research reveals the relationship of education with the labour market, social norms and expectations and supports conclusions about the relationship between education policy and opportunity.

Research Aims

The aim of the thesis is to allow previously unexplored voices to be heard and examined as a means of understanding the nature of education for working class children at this point in history. Areas such as Everton endured multiple levels of deprivation throughout the time period and into present day. [85] The voice of people from a working-class population is under-represented in research. Even in the 1960s, when there was an attempt to understand working class culture and implications for learning, the authentic voice of people from the working-class communities is not well established. [86] Where people lived had, and still has, an impact on how they are perceived by the world. The research aims to create a platform for the voice of the working-class community in Everton to be heard.

The case narratives are the primary source of data and add to the archival sources. The case narratives address the marginalisation of the working-class voice informing the understanding of the historical context. The thesis will use chronology and established sources as a framework in which the oral contributions, their richness and difference, can be evaluated. The experiences are spread across a thirty-year time span so active responses at local school level and the experiences of the child can be examined over time. The voice of the participant at the centre of the research. The themes aim to capture the recall of adults remembering time at school. The reliance on memory in oral accounts is not seen by historians, such as Portelli, as having any less credibility than established sources. [87] Tosh discusses the notion of frailty of memory and

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[85] Liverpool City Council Everton Ward Profile. www.liverpool.gov.uk [Accessed 11/01/2020].
[86] Jones, *Education in Britain,* pp 75-78.
[87] Portelli (2016) did not accept that the telling and retelling of stories within families and communities was any less reliable than written documents or memoirs. Discussed in Abrams, *Oral History Theory*, pp 22-28.

recognises that the testimony of participants may differ from the established record[88]. Warham concedes this point but notes that the public accounts themselves may be subject to change over time, a view shared by Carr.[89] The research accepts that there may be historical flaws or inaccuracies in the responses from the participants but written documents and archive documents may also reference the interests of the author so may equally be flawed. A further aim of the thesis is to record what Thompson called the minutiae and culture of working-class life. He believed these details gave insight to the interpretation of working-class life.[90] The thesis contributes through an interpretation of working-class decision making, reflecting these minutiae, and adds a more nuanced appreciation of the factors influencing education in working class communities. Through a better understanding of the context in which education decisions were taken, the thesis moves from perception to an understanding of the real experience and exposes the privileged view taken by more traditional, archive based accounts. The participant narratives illuminate a deeper understanding of how skills and educational opportunities were perceived on the streets of Everton, a relatively impoverished area of Liverpool. The oral history provides the central narrative of working-class life. Contextualised alongside the macro-history; the educational reforms of the period, the case histories with micro-historical detail add to the interpretation of policy and political history.

In a time of cultural and societal change, the oral testimonies can be viewed as a response to and reflection of the shifting context of education policy. The time

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[88] Tosh, *The Pursuit of History,* pp 303-327.
[89] Carr, *What is History?* p 13; Warham, K., Engaging with young people through narrative co-construction: Beyond Categorisation. '*Educational and Child Psychology, The British Psychological Society Journal,* 29.2 pp 77-86, 2012.
[90] Thompson, *The Voice of the Past*, p 22.

period recognises the impact of the move to universal secondary education, which was intended to be aspirational and reforming, and the outcomes over thirty years as illustrated by school organisation and pupil experience. Timeline matters when assessing potential impact of policy and practice. Aldrich notes that despite the hopes or rhetoric around egalitarianism, by 1999, over forty years after the Education Act of 1944, 88% of graduates were the children of professionals with only 14% coming from working class homes. [91] The thesis aims to improve understanding of the complexity of influencers in the experience of education and the way these manifested themselves. Factors contributing to this complexity in Everton included the movement of population from the inner-city wards towards new build housing on the edges or beyond the city boundary and the proportion of children requiring denominational education.

Contribution to knowledge lies in responding to the voice of people from this working-class environment and considering how these add an additional dimension to archive material relating to education over four decades. Each of the decades from the war-torn 1940s, the 'long' 1950s, the swinging 1960s and the recessionary 1970s have been studied individually but the longitudinal approach presents an opportunity to view education through the alternative lens of change. While social change has been documented across these decades the extent of change in education and life opportunities has been significantly less well established. The extent to which Everton conforms to the national trends and expectations can also be revealed through longitudinal research. For example, Brown believed that religion ceased to matter in the 1960s. Participant evidence

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[91] Aldrich, R., The Three Duties Of The Historian Of Education, *History of Education*, Vol 32 No2, Oxford, Taylor and Francis, 2003, pp 133-143.

may suggest that in this community, in relation to schooling, that was not necessarily the case.

Outcomes in education from Everton school children did not improve greatly over the period and have not improved since so a further aim is to analyse the extent of alienation between the architects of education policy and those who are affected by it. The primary gap is one of authentic voice. Aldrich notes that it is the duty of the historian to record and then interpret data for use by future generations. [92] Additionally, Warham believes that it is the interplay between the public accounts and the newer individual narratives that can create alternative possibilities. [93] The thesis aims to moderate some of the more conventional views held about working class engagement with education.

Although the importance of home culture is identified in existing work, it is rarely viewed from the perspective of the working class experience. A study by Mays is dismissive of the home lives of working-class children in Liverpool and seeks to argue that there is no interest in school and that children from 'slum' dwellings arrive in school with little idea of discipline or orderliness. [94] The struggles and challenges faced by the families were not given consideration in understanding why school was seen as a lower priority. A more sensitive study by Bridge concedes the importance of school meals and milk to mothers struggling with household budget. [95] While the lack of facilities to study were noted, alternative

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[92] Aldrich, The Three Duties Of The Historian Of Education, *History of Education*, p 134.
[93] Warham, Engaging with young people through narrative co-construction: Beyond Categorisation. '*Educational and Child Psychology* pp 77-86.
[94] Mays, J.B., *Education and the Urban Child*, Liverpool, Liverpool University Press, 1965, pp 96-101. Mays work is reported by Tomlinson as identifying an unbridgeable divide in Liverpool between two nations of education. Tomlinson, S., *Education in a Post-Welfare Society*, Maidenhead, Open University Press, 2005,p18.
[95] Bridge, N., *My Liverpool Schools*, Portinscale, The Kirkland Press, 1962,p58.

models to meet the needs of more disadvantaged groups were not explored. Such an exploration might be better informed when those needs have been better understood. Fuller understanding of the extent to which policy achieved a level of aspiration raising in education is addressed through the research with a broader focus on facilitation and support.[96] The level of structural neglect is exposed by the narratives. The aim of the methodology using participant led interviews draws on traditional thematic analysis but additionally builds in a consideration of alternative perspectives.

Research Objectives and Questions

The research objectives involve gathering narratives relating to school life in Everton in the period 1944 – 1979 providing longitudinal, thirty year plus case study of working-class memories of education. Once collected, the narratives are placed in a framework identifying themes and priority areas of impact relating to education and the working-class community of Everton. Education policy and practice is viewed through the lens of the less privileged. Finally, conclusions are synthesised articulating the relationship between the interpretation and the capacity for these to inform future practice. This framework recognises the work of Jordanova in understanding the link between the preconceptions of the past and change in current policy practice using an interdisciplinary approach which remains rooted in history.[97]

To meet the research objectives, participants were asked to recall their memories and feelings at the time of their schooling and reflect on what was important to

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[96] Todd, *The People*, pp 216-222.
[97] Jordanova, L., *History In Practice*, London, Bloomsbury, 2000, pp 69-70.

them. The content was directed by the participants who were free to focus on whatever element they felt to be memorable within their schooling. This created a diversity of content which was then organised using a framework for data reduction.

The research questions have been framed to give structure to the process of interpreting the narratives which had allowed participants to express the matters of importance to themselves rather than being obligated to respond to the agenda of the researcher. The first research question related to the creation of primary data sources which revealed the voice of working-class participants. Transcripts revealed the memories of the participants and once collated; the second question explored the identification of themes established through data reduction. Recognising the importance of context, the content of themes is explored through the literature linking historical positioning with education policy, social and environmental conditions and the relationship between central government and local education policy in Everton during the time period. Although there may be areas where participant content is not corroborated directly, Tosh confirms the importance of recognising how the research data is connected to verifiable historical events while not undermining the discourse created by the oral sources.[98] Interpretation forms the third question, as the contextualised data is viewed through the lens of the participant in addition to the lens provided by the literature and the researcher. The framework for this was provided by Mauthner and Doucet. [99] The final question related to the level of enhanced understanding achieved relating to the experiences of education in working class communities.

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[98] Tosh,*The Pursuit of History*, p205.
[99] Mauthner, N. and Doucet A., 'Reflections on a voice centred relational method: Analysing Maternal and Domestic Voices' in *Feminist Dilemmas in Qualitative Research*, ed. by J. Ribbens and R. Edwards ,London, Sage, 2011, p3.Discussed further in Methodology chapter.

The narratives resulting from the interviews and subsequent data analysis, will be used to consider the impact of education policy but also class and social capital on the educational experience of the participants. [100] Lin considers social capital to link to attained status in life. Parental status, education and the extent of resources available through networks provide a pool of social capital which each individual can access.[101] This definition is in harmony with the work of Bourdieu who categorises the fathers' educational level, the individual's educational level and the father's occupational category as establishing the space of social positioning.[102] Lin believed that the extent to which this pool of social capital could be mobilised would impact on attained status. Status itself may be difficult to define and may be seen in terms of respect and not monetary gain. Lin describes status as combining occupation, positions of authority in any context, earnings and assets.[103] Bridger and Alter question whether social capital can function at all in communities where the concept of reciprocity may be disabled by the lack of the capital overall.[104] Bridger and Alter also note that communities were often engulfed by forces which were made centrally, with decisions which would impact locally being taken by interest groups who had little concern for the consequences of their actions on local communities. The consideration of social capital accessibility as well as economic disadvantage provided a relevant social context with relevance across all participant stories.

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[100] Social capital is defined as the capturing of capital in social relationships. The key reference being used is Nan Lin who considers the use of social relationships for instrumental reasons as being distinct from human capital which is based in the labour market and cultural capital (Bourdieu) which has greater concern with the replication of dominant features of class. Lin, *Social Capital*, p 14.

[101] Linn, *Social Capital, pp 19-33.*

[102] Bourdieu, *Distinction*, p 120. Bourdieu considered inherited cultural capital, scholastic capital and social trajectory as categories for defining the habitus of class.

[103] Lin, *Social Capital*, p 78.

[104] Bridger, J.C., and Alter, T.R., Place, Community Development and Social Capital, *Journal of the Community Development Society*, Vol 37, No 1, Oxford, Taylor and Francis, 2009,p 5-18.

The social context provided an opportunity to view the development of education practice over time. Liverpool was a city where selection at secondary level was still in place into the 1970s, allowing consideration of the longitudinal impact Everton, as a community, presents with strong cultural characteristics and combined with a level of consistency in terms of socio-economic indicators, there is a rich environment for hearing new stories to inform the existing narrative. While recognising that the subsequent life experience and the prevailing mood of the participants will influence the responses and stories included in the interviews, the variables in outcome resulting from education policy may be easier to isolate and determine where socio-economic positioning is relatively constant.

The introductory chapter introduces the motivation behind the research in revealing hitherto unheard narratives relating to experiences in education from working class participants. The chapter explored the structure of the thesis and the objectives and research questions shaping the work. Chapter two will review key elements of the literature associated with the thesis questions. Invariably, with multivariate research, there may be questions about the depth of content but the holistic integration of the variables is important to interdisciplinary research[105]. Accounts of education policy, or housing strategy, for example do not always recognise the interdependence of the strands of social policy and their subsequent impact.

Connectivity between the strands and a longitudinal view of change provides an alternative perspective and adds to the body of knowledge in working class education. In concluding this introductory chapter, the thesis is framed as an oral

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[105] Jordanova, *History in Practice,* p 261.

history, with participant led content, analysed using a multivariate approach and

guided by a working-class lens to support the authenticity of the voice.

CHAPTER TWO

TIME, PLACE AND POLICY – REVIEWING INFLUENCES ON EDUCATION IN EVERTON THROUGH LITERATURE

Introduction

The literature chapter will focus on understanding the policy and wider influences on the participant group during the time period 1944 -1979. The development of education policy to provide perspective at the national and local level has been tracked chronologically. [106] The political landscape is relevant to this perspective and while historical sources dominate the literature, there are multidisciplinary references which inform the investigation into education. Conekin et al reflect on the absence of cross disciplinary work in understanding post 1945 social history.[107] This absence can be viewed as reducing the synthesis of available work relating to the post-war period and 1950s. The cross disciplinary nature of social historical interpretation is echoed by the work of educationalists Gaine and George.[108] Their work recognises the interconnecting web of influences on education. An understanding of this web can provide a framework for analysing education outcomes. The web identifies a series of influences ranging from society and policy, family and culture to teacher and individual expectation, and resources. While the web focused on identifying relationships between race, class and gender, the contributing factors impacting on education provide a useful basis. Although chronology is important to the context, an understanding of the

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[106] Education policy at national level is taken to mean England and Wales as Scotland and NI operated a different structure for education policy and governance.

[107] Conekin, B., Mort, F., Waters C. (eds), *Moments of Modernity: Reconstructing Britain, 1954-1964*, London, Rivers Oram Press,1999, p 20.

[108] Gaine, C., and George, R., 1999, *Gender, Race and Class in Schooling,* Londong, Farmer Press, 1999, pp 109-112.

relationship between individuals and education is enabled by moving beyond chronology and policy into a deeper understanding at the level of the community and family. Locality forms part of the critique of policy as local authorities held the power for planning and delivering education provision. The structures which determined access to education were developed nationally but delivered locally. Locality plays in the sense of social space and disposition individuals feel when closely attached to an area or community. Both locality and education play a part in the social space, the field, which Bourdieu believes creates a structure, a habitus where perception and disposition organise the way in which people see the world and respond to it.[109] The concept of habitus as identified by Bourdieu suggests it is meaningful to explore the relationship between individual practices and the situation, the field, which is in this case, education. The relationship between economic capital, social and cultural capital forms part of understanding the individual and family and community responses to education.[110] Working class practices frequently relate to economic conditions and choices are made on the basis of savings of money, time or energy. Bourdieu sees these choices as being part of necessity and claims that working class communities internalise the need to do what is needed to get by and that some parts of the fabric of society, including education, are categorised as being 'not for us'.[111] The relationship with families and peer groups combines with the power of place to influence attitudes and expectations towards education and the value placed on education by working class communities.[112] The literature explores the cultural,

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[109] Bourdieu, *Distinction,* p 95 where the relationship between the various forms of capital plus an understanding of the field – the rules of the game lead to individual practice; p 468.

[110] Bourdieu, *Distinction,* pp 373-397.

[111] Bourdieu, *Distinction,* p 379.

[112] Expectation and the emotional pull of the demands made to attend to the material conditions of home is discussed by Tinkler, P., Spencer, S., and Langhammer, C., Revisioning the History of Girls and Women in Britain in the Long 1950s, *Women's History Review, 26:1,1-8, 2017.*

religious and social environment of the time span reaching from the 1940s to the 1970s a time of considerable social and technological change. There is an additional consideration of the economic environment, particularly the labour market, which plays a part in determining the risks, aspirations and opportunities relating to education in Everton, 1944-1979. While the literature review will primarily draw from history sources, the influence of the wider humanities, particularly sociology, politics and geography are taken into account. [113] This multidisciplinary approach focuses on the variables impacting on the way that education is experienced. The chapter is structured in four parts and considers: chronological context from a local and national perspective; the development of education policy and practice; the importance of place; social, cultural and political influences.

Chronological Context

Oral historical data is at the heart of the thesis, and, in recalling memories, individuals may cite place as well as people. In setting the thesis on the streets of Everton, the work recognises the importance of place. An understanding of Everton in the context of the time is helpful in appreciating the inclusion of sociological and urban identity work alongside historical and educational literature. Everton is a district to the north of a city Liverpool which was, and remains, a place which recognises itself as having a distinct identity and cultural heritage.[114] Additionally, it is an area in which structural poverty and infrastructure issues are shared realities. Historically, Everton was a prosperous village, looking

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[113] Spencer, *Gender, Work and Education in Britain in the 1950s*, p52. Spencer discusses the relationship between history and sociology and references Musgrave who believed that combining these gave the opportunity for a fuller view of the issue under consideration.

[114] Belcham, J., and Biggs, Liverpool City of Radicals, consider the foundational culture of the city and describe Liverpool as a city that likes to talk, where having an opinion is part and parcel of the city's image and identity.

down on the port of Liverpool both physically and culturally. [115] It was a village set apart from the city and in the 1800s was viewed as a desirable place of residence.[116] However, the semi-rural hillside was overtaken by the growth of Liverpool and dense terraced streets were packed with families, many of whom were migrants to the city from Ireland. Everton was subsumed into the growing port of Liverpool with its Irish influences and indeed its sectarian affiliations which can later be seen to shape educational experience. Biggs and Sheldon discuss the development of political traditions in Liverpool. [117] Their work notes interwar efforts were made to direct working-class anger away from sectarian and race-based fights to an understanding of shared poverty and class. The sectarian nature of education is both explicitly and implicitly referenced in the accounts of life in the city of Liverpool.[118]

By 1930, Everton was a place of poverty, poor housing and social need. The decline of the transatlantic maritime trade and the break- up of the Empire had left Liverpool communities isolated. However, by 1937, the seaport had recovered and maritime trade began to energise the local economy. However, the onset of war meant the commercial improvement was short lived and the city and its constituent communities faced fundamental economic and social problems. Liverpool was the command centre for the Battle of the Atlantic and also a communication and supply hub for the rest of Britain.[119] Education during

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[115] Tony Crowley writing about the development of language in Liverpool discusses accounts from the 1700 and 1800s where Everton was a place of gentle eminence p 16, the highest class of society compared with the urban cacophony of Liverpool below. Crowley, T., *Scouse – a cultural and social history,* Liverpool, Liverpool University Press, 2012, p 16.

[116] Sharples, J., 2004, *Liverpool* Pevsner Architectural Guides, London, Yale University Press, 2004, p 7.

[117] Biggs, B. and Sheldon, J., *Art in a City Revisited,* Liverpool, Liverpool University Press, 2009, p 154.

[118] While sectarian behaviour in Liverpool is reviewed in a number of local texts, Roberts has a full and contextualised account in his book: Roberts, *Liverpool Sectariani*sm.

[119] Pye, K., *Liverpool: The Rise, Fall and Renaissance of a World Class City*, Stroud, Amberley Publishing, 2014 p 158.

the blitz years was fragmented due to bomb damage or evacuation. The context of having been in the blitz and the immediate aftermath creates an environment distinct from others in the timeline in respect of the extremity of external factors. In this period, the trauma and infrastructure damage of war affected both the population and the physical environment.

Established accounts of the time articulate the resolution and defiance of the cities that suffered from frequent bombing raids. A report in the Aberdeen Weekly Journal is typical of media reporting. The paper states that the cities faced the worst the Nazis could do without any thought of giving up. The paper suggests that the 'savage and indiscriminate' attacks on the civilian population made the people more resolute. [120] Towers points to the longer term impact of the blitz causing physical and mental trauma to survivors and their families which were beyond statistical evaluation.[121] Later accounts question the collective positive spirit of the population. Todd uses information from Mass Observation interviews to question the extent of civilian resilience in cities such as Coventry and Liverpool. [122] The communities in bombed areas, Todd concluded, were, in reality, finding the day-to-day survival in damaged cities very difficult and were impatient for improvement. For children remaining in Liverpool, the impact of the war would have been all encompassing.[123]

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[120] Aberdeen Weekly Journal – Thursday 20th March 1951 @britishnewspaperarchive.co.uk. [Accessed 27/01/2019].

[121] Towers, B., Waterfront Blues, pp206-213. The May blitz resulted in fatalities of 1,900 across Merseyside with 450 seriously injured, 66,000 homes destroyed and 70,000 made homeless, Towers, B., *Waterfront Blues: The Rise and Fall of Liverpool's Dockland*, Lancaster, Carnegie Publishing, 2011, p 208.

[122] Todd, *The People, the rise and fall of the working class,* pp 137-138.

[123] The first bombs fell in Prenton, across the river Mersey from Liverpool in August 1940 and by October of that year there had been 200 air raids on Liverpool. Towers, B., Waterfront Blues: The Rise and Fall of Liverpool's Dockland, pp 206-213.

Wartime children were evacuated from Liverpool although many returned home to the city finding removal from family and community too painful. In September 1939, 130,000 were evacuated from central Liverpool areas, these were mainly children.[124] By the end of 1939, however, Towers reports that 28% of the evacuees had returned. The evacuation policy introduced the city children to combined age classrooms which were more common in rural areas. [125] All age schools required fewer classrooms and teachers and the numbers of evacuees arriving into North Wales put a severe strain on the ability of the local authorities to provide appropriate resources. The economy in Wales had struggled since the depression of the 1930s and the lack of physical resources and qualified teachers would not have provided a stable and coherent education for children already suffering from trauma and physical deprivation. The nature of schooling for evacuees is a matter for separate study and consideration but it is worth noting that the evacuee movement heightened the fractured nature of schooling during the years up to 1945 and revealed an infrastructure in rural communities that was unable to cope with the influx of children from the city. An unexpected consequence of the evacuation was a wider societal appreciation of the poverty in which many of the children lived and Towers believed this had an impact on social policy, including education, post war. [126]

Accounts from Mass Observation and historians, including Kynaston, have suggested that Liverpool was cohesive in the face of prolonged bombing raids.[127]

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[124] Towers, *Waterfront Blues*, p 212.
[125] Dudgeon, J, P., *Our Liverpool,* London, Headline Publishing Group, 2010, Chapter 10 details the lives of evacuees; and Bridge, *My Liverpool Schools,* gives a personal account of the evacuation process pp 35-53
[126] Towers, B, Waterfront Blues, p 213.
[127] Mass Observation is a social research organisation collecting data from 1937 to 1950s www.massobs.org.uk. [Accessed 27/01/2019]; Kynaston, D., *Austerity Britain ,London, Bloomsbury Publishing, 2007,* pp 280-290.

However, Pye believed that there was an exhausted community in Liverpool and that all commodities were in short supply. [128] This view of poverty and inequality is supported by Kynaston who reported a 1944 survey showing class differences in weight and height of children due to health and nutrition issues.[129] Domestic poverty levels could also be referenced through the extent of poor quality housing blighted by bomb damage and access to basic amenities. Housing linked to precarious casual work at the docks, as without a regular income the cost of travel would be prohibitive. Poor housing conditions continued to be a concern for Everton for more than two decades after the war exposing a slow recovery from infrastructure problems.[130] The experiences of Everton may well resonate with other districts left behind when cities emerged from the chaos of war.

Nationally, the years immediately following the war were focused on reconstruction. There was a common approach to the welfare state and an acceptance of a mixed economy across all political parties which would hold for a further thirty years. Policy makers and politicians tended to lack representation from all sections of society, however, and so tended not to be radical in their approach to social mobility. Social mobility is a complex construct and a post - war world where reconstruction offered employment and an increase in white collar occupations improved skill levels, a sense of upward mobility could be sensed by working class populations.[131] The decisions made in the post war climate appear to have been informed by those from a more privileged background with an apparent lack of a working class voice. There are reports of

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[128] Pye, *Liverpool,* p 170.
[129] Kynaston, *Austerity Britain* p283.
[130] Infrastructure recovery was slow in other parts of England also with bomb damaged cities such as Coventry experiencing housing issues into the 1970s.
[131] Mandler, P., Educating the Nation III: Social Mobility, *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society, 26, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2016.*

a request by female MPs to increase the representation of women on the committees dealing with reconstruction, but, other than suggesting that Attlee was sympathetic to the opinions of the working class, there is little evidence of this occurring. [132]   The debate and consultation on post-war education began during the war years but prioritising education was always going to be hard for local authorities as they struggled with multiple competing priorities. The political climate immediately after the war was one in which Labour embraced the mood of change so that the powerful memory of collective action and community support during the war gave Labour a clear majority in 1945.[133]

The nationalisation policies and the National Health Service produced an optimistic feel in the country but Pye reports that the focus for most Liverpudlians was on community and family. [134] The post war years had left local authorities with major issues to deal with but housing was clearly a priority.[135] Writing in the Liverpool Echo in 1955, Roberts deplored the housing position resulting in houses declared unfit for habitation pre-war still being in use as homes.[136] Her view was that despondency was the hallmark of those waiting to be rehomed and use of cleared or previously bombed land was inconsistent.[137] The housing issues for Liverpool did not recede, by the 1960s, the densely packed terraces of the post

[132] Gloucester Citizen 3rd March 1943 www.britishnewspaperarchive.com. [Accessed26/01/2019].

[133] Tiratsoo, N., 'Labour and the Electorate', in *Labour's First Century*, ed. by D. Tanner, P. Thane, and N. Tiratsoo, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2000, pp. 281-308.

[134] Pye, *Liverpool,* p 161.

[135] Towers suggests that pre-war there were still homes being made in condemned Victorian properties and that the blitz contributed to a lack of any housing, however unsuitable for habitation these might have been. Towers, *Waterfront Blues*, p 202.

[136] Roberts, R., 'How City is tackling slum clearance', *Liverpool Echo* 29th November 1955, 3. The British Newspaper Archive. Online. Available: https://www.britishnewspaperarchive.co.uk/viewer/BL/0000271/19551129/130/004 [Accessed 19 /12/ 2019].

[137] Returning from war, service men and women were shocked by the conditions they found in Liverpool. Towers reports the physical devastation; homes burnt out shells, ships burned out in the docks, people walking miles to find a house to rent. Towers, *Waterfront Blues*, p 230.

war years were replaced by tower blocks and a depopulation of the area as residents were moved out to overspill estates up to 12 miles away from Everton.[138] The post war boom had brought some relief from wartime deprivation but over dependence on maritime trade meant that this was a temporary reprieve and among communities such as Everton there continued to be deeply entrenched poverty. Todd reports that the income gap between rich and poor increased during the 1950s and suggested that improvements in living conditions were brought about by overtime or multiple jobs leaving those unable to undertake these levels of work further behind.[139]

Nationally, improving affluence in the 1960s brought with it a decline in deference and a decline in lifestyle differences between the working and middle classes.[140] Access to modern amenities and consumer durables changed lives for a growing percentage of the population. The social change in the time period can be illustrated through housing as by 1971, half of all families owned their own home.[141] Additionally, full employment reduced levels of pre-war poverty with Todd reporting that rising wages creating a greater sense of confidence and security in working class communities.[142] The affluent worker identified by Goldthorpe and Lockwood in 1969, characterised the growing professional level of the working class, a move from manual to non-manual working and a desire for similar comforts and amenities to those enjoyed by the middle classes.[143] The 1960s was a time of relative prosperity for Liverpool as the Docks and maritime

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[138] The impact of Liverpool City Council housing policy is discussed in more detail later in this chapter in the section on 'Place' p56.
[139] Todd, The People, pp 200-201.
[140] Perkin, *The Rise of Professional Society* p 418.
[141] Ibid, p 421.
[142] Todd, The People, p 252-258.
[143] Goldthorpe and Lockwood, Affluence and the British Class Structure, pp 133-163.

trade thrived. Although the casual nature of employment at the Docks was the cause of hardship for many in the city, but at its peak, 25,000 dockers were employed. Despite mechanisation, manual labour continued to be the cheapest, most effective way of managing the diversity of inbound cargo.[144] However, changes in the nature of the work by way of containerisation increased and by the 1970s this increased mechanisation left both the workers and the Mersey Docks and Harbour board in a precarious position with the subsequent impact on the economic and social capital in areas such as Everton.[145] An understanding of the economic conditions is relevant to considerations of responses to education. Family and community support systems which may already be weak through poverty are further challenged by uncertainty. Lin recognises that fragmentation can occur when a community lacks both wealth and reputation and there is scarcity of physical resources. In Liverpool, infrastructure changes to the economy and public housing increased the impact of this fragmentation.[146] Lin saw education as one of the influences growing the social capital to support individuals to achieve their potential and more might have been expected from education policy in the period between 1944 and 1979.

There was little evidence of an emergent middle class residing in Everton itself with more prosperous families tending to move from the city to the other side of the river known as The Wirral. However, in discussing the communities left behind by the post war reconstruction, housing and jobs are considered by writers such as Carpenter but in the analysis education has not been considered as part of

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[144] Pye, *Liverpool,* p 168.

[145] Lin, *Social Capital,* pp 12,13. Friedman and Laurison also point to cultural capital as an area of disadvantage less readily defined or tangible, presented sometimes as sophistication, which may hinder working class children in their progression in life, or to succeed in a grammar school environment. Friedman, S., and Laurison, D., *The Class Ceiling*, Bristol, Polity Press, 2020, p 15.

[146] Lin, N., *Social Capital,* p 163.

the regenerative mix.[147] There appears to be a gap in bringing together the role of regeneration and education in considering how to improve outcomes for children and families. Todd reports that reform in education was skewed towards middle-class districts and nationally and locally the take up of grammar school places from working-class children was in the region of 10%.[148] Halsey, recognised that this failure to capitalise on educational improvement was due to a lack of financial and cultural resources and journalists and politicians placed responsibility for this failure on the shoulders of working-class parents.[149] In the ten years between 1943 and 1952 there had been an expansion of first generation grammar school boys but the drop-out rate for those from disadvantaged backgrounds meant that their life chances were less improved than they might have been.[150]

By the 1950s and 1960s, there was a commonality relating to the establishment of a comprehensive alternative to selection. This is discussed in more detail in the next section on policy but it is worth noting that there were supporters and detractors to selection at 11 from both the Labour and Conservative party policy makers. Education was linked to growth in the economy with a more generic belief that education would improve society. That education was seen as the key to productivity and competitiveness in a rapidly changing world can be identified as a theme of the Wilson government. However, in the governance of education, the LEAs were able to frustrate comprehensive school development. For

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[147] Carpenter, M., Lessons from History – The blitz, the building boom and the people left behind, The Conversation, www.theconversation.com/lessons-from-history- [Accessed 8/12/2020].
[148] Todd, *The People,* p 219. Todd additionally noted that in middle- class areas of the city the proportion rose to 70-80%.
[149] Halsey, *Trends in British Society since 1900: A Guide to the Changing Social Structure of Britain* pp. 268-296. Todd, *The People*, p 219 refers to a local newspaper the Daily Post and The Economist in suggesting that low ambitions from parents were associated with a failure to take up educational opportunity.
[150] Ibid

comprehensive school supporters such as Crosland, selection at 11 represented a failure in social justice but at local level, powerful lobbies, often with religious affiliation, influenced a local model which in Liverpool meant segregation in terms of both religion and perceived aptitude as measured by the 11 plus. Within Liverpool, the Catholic Church was responsible for educating one third of working- class children but the investment of money to adapt schools was not forthcoming.[151] While admission to secondary school was controlled by selection and geographic boundaries, Benn and Chitty argue that over emphasis in the research on the role of admissions failed to acknowledge education as a factor in determining roles in the economy.[152] The analysis of social and economic capital during school years and societal position on leaving school remained primarily theoretical and reliant on statistical evidence.

The local economy in Liverpool links to its position as a river city. However, the decline of Victorian affluence, the shift in trading links from the Atlantic towards Europe from the Atlantic and containerisation all meant that a primary part of the economy underwent significant change.[153] This was damaging to an unskilled workforce. Working practices in the docks were transformed as dependence on mechanisation reduced the need for manual labour. With containerisation, the docks in the north end of the city were not deep enough to harbour the new, larger ships. This resulted in unemployment rates rising sharply in communities such as Everton, which had been largely dependent on the work the docks provided. Government measures to bring manufacturing work to Speke and Knowsley

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[151] The role of religious affiliation is discussed later in this chapter and is referenced by a number of the participants but particularly those who attended Catholic schools. That education could be seen as a threat to the power base of the parish can be seen in Brothers, J., *Church And School. A Study Of The Impact Of Education On Religion*, Liverpool, Liverpool Press, 1964, pp 83-84.
[152] Benn and Chitty, *Thirty Years On,* p 60.
[153] Towers, *Waterfront Blues*, p 1.

brought only short-term relief.[154] Between 1971 and 1984 Towers records that 95,000 jobs were lost in manufacturing.[155] The recession in 1973-1975, the rise in business failure and relocation, the decline in real wages left Liverpool experiencing levels of joblessness unknown since the 1930s.[156] The secondary school system provided few options for school leavers previously destined for work in the factories. As some schools had prepared pupils for little else but factory work the intensity of this blow to the region was significant. Spencer notes the absence of alternative forms of continuing education on offer.[157] The school leavers of the mid to late 1970s faced poor prospects nationally and the absence of alternative employment to replace dock jobs and work allied to the docks exacerbated the economic frailty in Liverpool. The economic changes also influenced decisions in respect of employment options post school.

Prior to the economic downturn the more favourable economic conditions of the early 1960s had led nationally to the creation of dual income families and the acquisition of material possessions and advantages. The North West and Liverpool felt the benefit of such change and according to Smith, the structure of employment on Merseyside was strong in this period.[158] Local researchers Cousins, Davies et al saw this view as optimistic and particularly highlight the need for semi-skilled labour in areas where a disproportionate number of those unemployed were unskilled.[159] This, they argue, lowers the impact of the regeneration measures as organisations filled skilled positions from outside the

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[154] Towers, *Waterfront Blues,* pp 278-281.

[155] Ibid, p 280.

[156] Marren, B., *We shall not be moved,* Manchester, Manchester University Press, 2016, p 17.

[157] Spencer, Gender, Work and Education in Britain in 1950s, p 76.

[158] Smith, D.M., Industrial Location and Regional Development, *Environment and Planning A: Economy and Space*, Vol 1 Issue 2 , London, Sage, 1969, pp 173-191.

[159] Cousins and Davies writing in Nightingale, M., (Ed) et al *Merseyside in Crisis*, Manchester, Manchester Free Press, pp 14-15.

area. Marren reports that unemployment figures remained high while they dropped to record lows in the rest of Britain. [160] Cousins and Davies et al point to the dependence on a small number of very large firms with international centres of power and decision making who were disengaged from the local community and workforce. [161] Marren argues that the marginalisation of the port traumatised the local communities and with the lack of opportunity, there was a withdrawal from civic engagement which reduced the working- class voice in influencing anti-poverty, urban decay affairs affecting them, including education.

Alongside economic concerns, the falling population in the inner cities due to rehousing policies resulted in reduced funding for schools and inner city education priority consequently became a lower priority. [162] While the 1940s and early 1950s were viewed nationally as times of austerity dominated by a post war economy, the later 1950s became viewed as a time of growing prosperity and respect for authority ahead of the social upheavals of the 1960s. As Thomas discussed, in an examination of the 1950s, this was an oversimplification; but he does signal that overall the 1950s have been neglected by historians reviewing social change. [163] The childhood memories of the participants in the research can be evaluated against the background of a perceived social and cultural revolution in the 1950s and 1960s, acknowledged by historians such as Thomas and Jarvis.[164] Positioning along the timeline allows for an evaluation of the pace of change in education in the context of wider social change. Donnelly, for example,

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[160] Marren, *We shall not be moved*, pp 48-50.
[161] Nightingale, *Merseyside in Crisis*, p 20.
[162] Pye, *Liverpool*, p 171, From a pre-war peak of 900,000 the population in 1971 had fallen to 610,000.
[163] Thomas, N., Will the real 1950s stand up? *Cultural and Social History*, Vol 5 Issue 2, Oxford, Taylor and Francis, 2008, p 227 -236.
[164] In this work cited above, Thomas references Jarvis' work on the McMillan administration of the 1960s which argued that the social changes of the 1960s were already in place in the 1950s as evidenced by a progressive legislative agenda from a Conservative government. Thomas, *Will the real 1950s stand up?* p 232.

considers that while the 1950s and 1960s did produce transformative change for some, for many there was little difference in the ways that they experienced or imagined their daily lives.[165] During the early part of the timeline, the focus on education from political stakeholders had focused on the structure of secondary school admissions and the appropriateness of selection at the age of 11. However, the 1970s saw a popular support for comprehensive structures of schooling especially if these were portrayed as grammar schools for all.[166] Environmentally, the early 1970s were seen, by Todd, as a time of relative prosperity and promise in England. [167] However, economic changes resulted in a decline in affluence, particularly in areas such as Everton, dependant on older industries and practice. While the earlier part of the timeline presented post war reconstruction and a focus on the local delivery of education, by the 1970s increasing centralisation and a focus on curricular development could be seen in education policy development. [168] In his address to the Royal Historical Society in 2014, Mandler noted the change in aspiration and expectation from parents across all social classes. Writing about the examination performance of public school pupils, Green and Kynaston reflected on work by Gathorne-Hardy noting the recognition in the 1970s that if parents were unable to pass on accumulated wealth, the only way to benefit children was through education.[169] Education, in the 1970s, was more commonly seen as the road to a good job and potential earnings. This contrasts with earlier decades where time spent in education was perceived as a drain on the precarious finances of the family unit. Political consensus post war may have initially focused on some measure of social unity

[165] Donnelly, M., *Sixties Britain, Culture, Society, Politics*, Routledge, 2005, p xii.
[166] Mandler, P., Educating the Nation I: Schools, *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society 24, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press,* Abstract.
[167] Todd, *The People,* pp 216-219.
[168] Green, F. and Kynaston, D., *Engines of Privilege,* London, Bloomsbury Press, 2019, p 89.

and a focus on meritocracy. [170] The reality of meritocracy is challenged by other historians, notably, Mandler, who felt that, at best, the contribution to a meritocratic society was fragile.[171] However, a consumerist approach to education reflected recessionary times. The 1944 Act, though flawed, had aspirations towards meritocratic based, more equitable outcomes from education. The concept that education could be used as a way of redressing class-based inequalities was declining in the political landscape of 1970s and the extent to which education had been able to contribute to social mobility during this period and since has been questioned.

Although there is reference to the unskilled nature of the local workforce in economic reviews, over the time period, there is little evidence a synergistic analysis of the connectivity between education, housing, employment, and place. Having considered the chronological path travelled by the city and its inhabitants during the timespan of the thesis, a more detailed consideration of the way education developed and how this was experienced at local level forms the next section of this chapter.

Development of Education Policy and Practice

Chitty and Benn suggest cross-party consensus fuelled the expansion of post-war education and motivated politicians to be perceived as governing in the best interest of all. [172] The fracture lines in this consensus may be viewed as more complex, crossing party lines and differing from the national to the local

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[170] Some historians believed that there was a consensus on meritocracy, Gillard, D., Chapters 9 and 10, 1939-1951 , www.educationengland.org.uk [Accessed 16/10/2019]; Benn, and Chitty, *Thirty Years On* pp 9-11.

[171] Mandler, Educating the Nation III: Social Mobility, *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society..*

[172] Benn, M., *School Wars,* London, Verso, 2011*,* p 37-50.

environment. Although controversial before inception, selection at 11 was at the heart of education policy in 1944. Even exponents of an equitable nonselective system of were cautious about developing the comprehensive model.[173] Caution about implementing a primarily theoretical and philosophical framework to create a more equal comprehensive education provision tended to be minimalist and related to structure.[174] Benn and Chitty considered that a clear definition of comprehensive education had still not been established decades after policy direction and despite the fact that comprehensive schooling by name had become the norm in many parts of England. While the dilution of academic excellence following expansion of education had been debated in the structuring of the 1944 Education Act, the relevance of education to a working-class family may have presented a more entrenched problem. Those experiencing multiple levels of deprivation made delivery of the 1944 aspirations difficult to achieve. For the duration of the period covered by the thesis, Everton children were part of a system based predominantly upon secondary selection at eleven with religious denomination playing a significant factor in deciding on school entrance. The literature in this section, considers policy development to include the relationship between local and national government, the structure of governance in education, the impact of religious affiliations and the relationship between teachers and the communities in which they practiced.

From the 1930s to the 1960s, education was perceived by politicians and subsequent historians, to be the heart of the post war social reconstruction of Britain. Bridge, writing about the planning process following the 1944 Act felt that

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[173] An example of this would be Ellen Wilkinson who was Minister for Education from 1945-1947 and was in favour of a non-selective system in theory though supporting the tripartite system in practice.
[174] Benn, C., and Chitty, C., *Thirty Years On*, p27.

from a school perspective there was a view that the government was on the same side as schools and headteachers.[175] The government devolved responsibility to local level and the LEA were encouraged to contribute towards spiritual, moral as well as the mental and physical development of the children in their care.[176] The London County Council articulated this as meaning all round growth and development endowing children with the spirit of citizenship and social unity.[177] The local authorities received a booklet explaining that the new 'modern' schools would be for working class children and focused on their future employment which was envisioned not to demand any measure of technical skill or knowledge.[178] Expectations for working class children were entrenched from the policy development stage, which suggests that secondary modern schooling was disadvantaged from inception.

Despite a national consensus around policy, the enactment and delivery were unspecified and consequently there was variation in approach locally. The 1945 Labour government had to manage a wide remit for change of which education formed only one strand. The social contract with the people and meritocratic approaches did not significantly change relationships in education. Additionally, there was a failure to provide clarity of direction or precision for future development.[179] Tomlinson accepted that there was intention to remove class distinction in access to education but this competed with a needs based approach to provide the workforce crucial for economic reconstruction.[180] Benn, more

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[175] Bridge, *My Liverpool Schools,* p 66.
[176] Local Education Authorities.
[177] Jones, *Education in Britain 1944 to the Present,* p 24.
[178] Benn and Chitty, *Thirty Years On,* p 4 refer to an advisory pamphlet from the Department of Education in 1945 later reissued in 1947 explaining that the new modern schools would be for working class children whose future employment would not demand any technical skill or knowledge.
[179] Todd, *The People,* pp 158-9.
[180] Tomlinson, *Education In A Post-Welfare Society,* p 16.

optimistically, considered that war had fuelled the appetite for change in education and anticipated that the skills of the people might ultimately match the demands of an emerging global economy. [181] While there was broad agreement in purpose at national and local level, the structural and systemic delivery mechanisms for achieving those aims was less assured. The war-time and post war debate had considered the creation of multilaterals (later to be known as comprehensives) but a reluctance to create a completely new framework for education was shared by politicians and educationalists who believed that a school with a clear, if more limited objective, was more likely to succeed.[182] Additionally, creating a completely new system would have required challenging infrastructure changes at a time when inner city energy was focused on post war reconstruction.

The 1944 Act provided Local Authorities, head teachers and teachers with autonomy with which to run their schools and gave LEAs the option to develop policy at local level.[183] Consequently, although there were opportunities to improve and contextualise education to support future employment there is little evidence of this taking place and advice from the DOE had already set limitations on the expectations of education and life chances for working class children. [184]Independence of action around the curriculum was intended to reflect the individual characteristics of schools based on the individual preferences of teachers and head teachers. The variation in local conditions and resources

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[181] Benn, *School Wars,* pp 37-42.

[182] Fenwick, I., *The Comprehensive School,* London, Methuen,1976,Kindle edition p 822. Unable to access paperback due to COVID so alternative location numbers for the Kindle edition have been provided. Where the footnote identifies the Kindle edition has been used, the location reference has been given as a page number.

[183] Ibid p 836..

[184] Benn, and Chitty, *Thirty Years On,* p4 refer to an advisory pamphlet from the Department of Education in 1945 later reissued in 1947 explaining that the new modern schools would be for working class children whose future employment would not demand any technical skill or knowledge.

made it hard for schools to deliver the hope established by the 1944 Act that the nature of a child's education should be based on capacity and not by circumstance.[185] While the political philosophy with regard to education policy during the period was outwardly meritocratic doubt as to the efficacy of the policy in delivering this.

Responding to the need for selection instruments identified by the 1944 Act, selection at 11 was governed by centrally developed tests defining children as either 'academic' or 'technical'. The results of the tests determined the offer of school places in the secondary system with successful pupils at 11 being awarded places the grammar school system. The tests were a blunt instrument based on theories of intelligence which were later discredited and the tests themselves were subject to scrutiny and debate from the moment these were operationalised.[186] The methodology of selection at 11 was threefold; psychology, measurement and governance. Underpinned by the philosophy of the psychology of fixed intelligence, this characterised the nature of measurement tools. Additionally, the test created a uniform measuring tool which could be delivered within the capacity of educational administrators at local and national level. Governance of selection at 11 defined policy delivery as a pragmatic response to the measurement of capability. The emphasis was on

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[185] Jones, *Education in Britain*, p 13-15
[186] The Newsom Report 1963 argued against the examination which was based on assumptions of fixed levels of intelligence and considering instead that intellectual talent was a variable which could be modified by social policy and educational approaches. Ministry of Education, *The Newsom Report (1963) Half Our Future,* http://www.educationengland.org.uk/documents/newsom/newsom1963.html [Accessed 21/10/2019].

process and neither the child nor the environment of the child played a role in the development of policy at that time.

Psychologists, such as Burt, argued throughout the interwar period that intelligence was innate and amenable to measurement and intelligence tests, and this view, according to Fenwick became seen as the key to socially objective selection. [187] Inevitably, the measurement tool used reflected the values of the psychologists who produced the tests. Fenwick also comments on the vested interests of psychologist in maintaining the credibility of a testing regime they created. Burt claimed that intelligence was innate, fixed and general so avoided the need to account for schooling, domestic or social background as it was believed that these would have little effect on intelligence and outcome.[188] The policy context for this period initially sought trust and belief in the population for a selection process based on the validity of intelligence testing. The tripartite system defined by the 1944 Act was designed to offer academic, technical and secondary education but, in reality, the technical element was poorly developed leading to a binary divide. Concerns about the validity of testing and outcomes resulting were increasingly raised from the end of the 1950s although research in this area predated the 1944 Act.[189] Pedley, felt that the testing had been unable to distinguish between what had been learned and what was natural talent.[190] Selection by examination was increasingly seen as being distorted by disparities in housing and a healthy environment and this was increasingly recognised through the 1950s and 1960s culminating in the Newsom Report which directly

[187] Burt, C., The Education of the young adolescent; implications of the Norwood Report, British *Journal of Educational Psychology* ,Vol 13 p 131; Fenwick, *The Comprehensive School,* Kindle edition, p 643.
[188] Ibid
[189] Chitty, *Education Policy in Britain*, pp 16-31.
[190] Pedley, R., *The Comprehensive School*, Harmondsworth, Penguin, 1963,pp 16-17.

challenged the view of fixed intelligence as an underpinning principle for selection. The report, titled Half Our Future, concluded that the tests applied in selection at 11 were measuring largely acquired characteristics. [191] From the left of the political spectrum, there were concerns about entrenched inequality while the right were concerned that the reforms were not providing the competitive edge industry needed.[192] The accessibility and inclusion of the education policy of selection at 11 was questioned more vigorously from the late 1950s onwards. This was fuelled by research reports such as that from Simon in 1953 and Vernon in 1957 suggesting that intelligence testing was based on a false premise and that it was unlikely to be inherited after all.[193]

Equality of outcome was poorly established and Gillard noted, in particular, the gender bias relating to selection outcomes with far more grammar school places being available for boys rather than girls.[194] The exploration of gender difference is not being specifically addressed in this work but Gillard's evidence relates to the expectations of the education system in relation to future prospects of pupils and these being reflected in the curriculum. Liverpool was, and remains, a city with a significant number of single sex schools. This is linked to religious affiliation and the nature of schools in the Church of England and Catholic systems. Religious affiliation created a further dimension of complexity for LEAs and the

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[191] *The Newsom Report (1963) Half Our Future.*
[192] The Labour Party on its left wing were focused on social inequalities while the Conservative right were more concerned with failure to improve economic output. This was not a clear cut distinction, as grammar schools found favour with those in the Labour Party who had themselves been beneficiaries of such as system.
[193] Simon, B, *Intelligence Testing and the Comprehensive School;* Vernon, P.E., *Secondary School Selection* both sources in Benn, and Chitty, *Thirty Years On,* p 8.
[194] Gillard, Chapter 11, 1951-1974, www.educationengland.org.uk [Accessed 21/10/2019].

government in efforts to equalise the experience of school children and so is an element of the post-war educational experience that requires further discussion.

The positioning of religious education within the curriculum was controversial and the compromise reached resulted in differential state funding for church schools dependant on denomination. The difference between Church of England and Catholic schools was of particular relevance to Liverpool. R.A. Butler, a Conservative politician helping to reconcile religious differences in the shaping of the 1944 act traded funding for governance positions and pledges that non-denominational religious education would be at the heart of state schooling. [195] This money for influence compromise placed church schools within the state system. The Catholic Church, however, was not prepared to accept either control over the teaching of religion or give up governance control and were, accordingly, funded at a much lower level. Elliott gives a detailed account of the opposition from the Catholic hierarchy and laity to educational reform. [196] Initially, Catholics felt excluded from the war time consultation, and anger about the proposals resulted in protests in many Northern cities.[197] The distinct nature of funding for Catholic schools held the parish and the school in a closely knit bond of fundraising.

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[195] The 1944 Education Act is often referred to as the Butler Act acknowledging the role of this politician.
[196] Elliott, K., Between Two Worlds: the Catholic Educational Dilemma in 1944, *History of Education*, 33.6, Oxford, Taylor and Francis, 2004,pp 661-683.
[197] Associations to protect the control of Catholic schools had been formed throughout the 1930s and 1940s and the Catholic hierarchy in England rejected the Butler compromise. Catholic education relied on fundraising through the parishes and intensive money raising activities in schools and churches served to strengthen the ties between the Catholic church and their communities. Elliott, *History of Education,,* pp 661-683.

The ties between church and community were ultimately weakened not only by a breakup of traditional communities but also because of a decline in religious beliefs and the emergence of a more secular values in society.[198] By 1967 only 15% of the English population attended religious services on a Sunday with Perkin attributing this to apathy and the availability of other diversions rather than a conscious loss of belief.[199] In Liverpool, alongside secular schools, there was an admissions policy relating to religious affiliation and religion formed part of the education experience for children in the period 1944-1979.

The focus of reform immediately post war was on replacing single age elementary schools and ultimately a binary system of grammar and secondary schools from the age of 11 became the most widely used model. The third strand of the tripartite structure envisaged by the Act, technical schooling, was less well developed proving to be too complex and too costly.[200] The 1950s saw the development of comprehensive schools, mostly urban, and mostly in war damaged areas such as Everton.[201] From their inception the secondary modern schools were at a disadvantage. Governments had reassured LEAs that secondary modern schools would have parity in buildings and class sizes with grammar schools, but this proved difficult to achieve in practice. Brooks noted that raising the school leaving age and providing a free secondary education up to the age of 15, involved local authorities in providing a tenfold increase in the size of the secondary cohort.[202] This commitment would have been huge for a

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[198] www.faithsurvey.co.uk concludes that church membership has declines from 10.6 million in 1930 to 5.5 million in 2010. [Accessed 18/09/2020].
[199] Perkin, *The Rise of Professional Society*, p 435.
[200] Lowe, R., reports in *The Changing Secondary School,* London, The Farmer Press, 1989*,* that by 1951 only three new technical schools had opened in England and Wales p 7.
[201] Ibid, pp 7-9.
[202] Brooks, 'The role of external examinations in the making of secondary modern schools in England 1945-1965', *History of Education,* p 454.

country enjoying economic prosperity but was extremely ambitious for a country newly emerged from war.[203] At local level it proved hard to deliver on aspiration. For the war-ravaged Liverpool and inner-city wards like Everton, education was a lower priority than that of housing.

In addition to the infrastructure problems facing local authorities, Brooks questions the extent of knowledge about the contribution of the secondary school sector. [204] Research into secondary schools tended to be focused on matters of selection rather than pupil outcomes or educational culture. For areas, such as Liverpool, where the decision to move into comprehensive education was piecemeal, the failure to understand the culture of the secondary modern school left areas of potential unexplored. Liverpool was slow to move into creating comprehensive schools and where such schools were established, they competed with the established grammar schools which remained intact during reorganisation. The reorganisation in Liverpool was complicated by the loss of a school age population from the city centre resulting from housing relocation policies. [205] It can be argued that the continuation of some grammar schools through selectivity compromised the comprehensive ideal by retaining some of the most able students into grammar school system. In terms of resources and facilities the comprehensive schools were closer to the secondary modern than the grammar school structure. However, through streaming and adopting some old grammar traditions, the new comprehensives continued to bring with them

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[203] Fenwick, *The Comprehensive School*, p 41 comments that the replacement of bombed schools, the raising of the school leaving age, the abolition of single age schools and the creation of parity of esteem in secondary schools would have been adventurous and costly for a buoyant economy but was a real struggle for an economy recovering from war with multiple demands on its infrastructure.
[204] Brooks, V., *'The role of external examinations in the making of secondary modern schools in England 1945-1965'*, pp 447-467.
[205] This is further explored in an exchange recorded in Hansard between David Alton and Robert Parry concerning a school with a possible intake of 2,000 which had a pupil roll of under 300. www.api.parliament.uk Education (Liverpool) (Hansard 8 February 1984).

some of the stereotyping and assumptions of the previous system. The early advocates of comprehensive schools envisaged very large populations with a diverse choice of options and courses. Pedley, who had also designed such a system in Leicestershire, enthused about specific delivery of a curriculum designed to meet the needs of a heavily segmented school population specialising in science, engineering or catering.[206] Linked clearly to a preordained relationship with the labour market, this model from Pedley admires the variety of subjects on offer. It was this choice, Pedley argues, that would differentiate the comprehensive school from both the grammar school and the secondary modern school. The philosophical interest in mixing ability is ignored in this model and comprehensive models subsequently were often segregated through streaming. This was particularly the case once the examination policy was changed to bring in a parallel stream to GCEs in the form of CSEs.

The rise of the comprehensive system as a piece of political and financial expediency also challenged the value of the secondary modern. While grammar schools remained, the more popular, lower risk option for parents lay with the comprehensive school not the secondary modern.[207] Bridge noted that parents and children soon understood that grammar schools were the way to the professions and that secondary modern pupils would proceed to the economically essential but lower skilled and paid occupations, predominantly factory work. [208] Young female school leavers were seen as particularly suited to work in factories due to dexterity, docility and low cost and Todd notes that Ministry of Labour expectations for young women leaving school emphasised the availability and

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[206] Pedley, *The Comprehensive School*, p 90.
[207] Mays, *Education and the Urban Child*, p 89. In his work Mays highlights what he perceives to be an unbridgeable gap between grammar schools and comprehensive schools.
[208] Bridge, *My Liverpool Schools*, p 117.

suitability of such work.[209] As domestic responsibilities were felt likely to restrict the number of years young women spent in the labour market, the cultural landscape was one which expected little from working class women in the labour market. Options for young men included apprenticeships and a wider range of options but many of these were potentially precarious as evidenced by the labour system on the docks. The bridge between education and the labour market existed as a policy intention but for some, the opportunities for advancement were limited.

Labour controlled LEAs supported a move to a totally comprehensive system but progress was negatively impacted by the inadequate building stock, the need to consult with church authorities and uncertainty about the relationship with local direct grant schools. Neither political party had internal unity on the position of selection at 11. [210] Kerckhoff noted this inconsistency. Many Labour politicians who had benefited from a grammar school education expressed confidence in the selection system, despite evidence that the selection tools might not be fit for purpose.[211] There was also evidence of some erosion in the operation of selection. In Yorkshire, for example, selection had morphed into recommendation from the headteacher. The extent to which selection to a grammar school mattered to families and communities is expressed by Hattersley in his autobiography; 'A Yorkshire Boyhood', Hattersley describes how caps, scarves

[209] Todd, S., *Young Women, Work and Family in England 1918- 1950,* Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2005, p 50. Cousins, L., Davies, S., et al also quote from the Financial Times where an unattributed source suggested the local target for employment would be women with O level qualifications in Nightingale, M.,(ed) *Merseyside in Crisis*, Manchester, Manchester Free Press, 1984, p16.
[210] Kerckhoff, A.C., in Crook, D., Local Authorities and Comprehensivisation in England and Wales, 1944-79, *Oxford Review of Education, 28.2-3,* Oxford, Taylor and Francis, 2002, p 260.
[211] Crook, *Local Authorities and Comprehensivisation in England and Wales, 1944-79,* p 200.

and blazers made the passing or failing visible to every neighbour. [212] There was social cache in a grammar school uniform.

Throughout the 1950s, the Labour Party continued to defend the tripartite education policy but gradually credibility was lost and there was public and press disquiet about selection at the age of eleven. As early as 1954, the advantages of being middle class within the admissions system to Grammar Schools had been recognised. [213] By 1959, the Labour party had replaced support for the tripartite system with a commitment to supporting comprehensive education on the grounds that this would reduce class distinction. Nationally, the plans of local authorities to reorganise into a comprehensive system were moving faster than thinking at central government. Benn reports that before the government had issued reorganisation guidance, a number of local authorities including Liverpool put forward their own plans.[214] However the requested rather than required changes left many authorities with the half-way house compromise investigated by Benn, C and Simon in 1970. [215] The later 1950s were characterised by debate and some controversy about the autonomy of the LEAs in determining the scope of school reorganisation and school closures. This was exemplified by a case in London where an established grammar school, Eltham Hill Girls' school was set to close to make way for Kidbrook Comprehensive. [216] The relationship between the power of the LEA and government in deciding on closures varied not so much

[212] Hattersley, R., *A Yorkshire Boyhood*, London, Hogarth Press, 2018, p 100.

[213] Jones, *Education in Britain,* pp 23-25.

[214] Benn, School Wars, pp 50-51.

[215] Benn, C and Simon, B, *Half Way There: Report on the British Comprehensive System*, *2nd ed*, London, Penguin, 1976, p 71.

[216] Limond, D., Miss Joyce Lang, Kidbooke and 'The Great Comprehensives Debate.' *History of Education*, Oxford, Taylor and Francis, 2007, pp 339-352. The refusal of central government to approve the closure of Eltham Girls Grammar was felt to be significant in undermining the planning for closures ahead of the opening of the newer comprehensive schools, Kidbrooke, in this case. Fenwick, *The Comprehensive School*, pp 153-154.

between political parties but by individual ministerial beliefs on education.[217] Some high-profile grammar schools became comprehensives in the mid-1950s in the London area. However, as with many parts of the country, including Liverpool, the 11 plus examination continued to operate so denying comprehensive schools a full intake.

Despite the philosophy underpinning comprehensive education, reforms leading to the development of comprehensive schools did not mean the end of categorisation. Both Tomlinson and Benn refer to the continuation of streaming in comprehensive schools.[218] Streaming could be based on potentially subjective data such as reports and test results coming out of primary schools. Such reports were neither standardised nor controlled. The top streams in comprehensive schools often followed a similar curriculum to one found in Grammar schools. Lowe suggested that the new comprehensive schools sought to establish academic credibility and parity of esteem by including Latin and Greek in their subject areas for top streams and having schoolteachers wearing academic gowns.[219]

During the 1960s, the limitations of the 1944 Act were increasingly evident and were described by McCulloch as the disappointments and failures in respect to progress in the quality of education.[220] While the post-war coalition consensus remained broadly in place and there was a continuation of social policy from one government to the next. Both Labour and Conservative administrations accepted

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[217] The positions taken on education policy reflecting individual political beliefs is an area which could form a useful further study into impact.
[218] Tomlinson, *Education In A Post-Welfare Society*, p 17.
[219] Lowe, *The Changing Secondary School*, p 43.
[220] McCulloch, *Educational Reconstruction*, p 45.

that investment in education was necessary to support the economic growth of the post war economy.

While the prevailing narrative in policy development remained one of meritocratic advantage, these advantages were recognised as not being equally distributed. Concern about this inequity was growing and, during the Wilson administration, comprehensive school numbers increased. The mid to late 60s also saw substantial increases in the numbers of university places available with a financial grant system in place to open up entrance to those from more disadvantaged financial backgrounds.

For the Labour party in the Gaitskell years there was a persistent issue around how to make a mixed economy work with public service delivery. While this investment in the Wilsonian white heat of technology was based on developing Britain as a leader in technology there was remained little by way of operational drivers towards this end.[221] Contradictions can be identified between political parties and also within political affiliations and there was a significant body of support arguing in favour of the continuation of selection at 11 believing that the grammar school system was envied and copied across the globe. [222] However, throughout the 1960s and early 1970s public awareness and dissatisfaction about the selection system had increased. While the 11 plus achievers may have had windows of opportunity opened, the 1963 Newsom Report provided a picture of inadequate facilities and low expectations for those school pupils defined as

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[221] Harold Wilson made a speech at the Labour Party Conference in 1963 using the phrase 'white heat of technology' to reference a plan to build technological capacity through a university of the air. The ideas were tested in Glasgow a few days prior to the conference and have been preserved: www.open.ac.uk/library/digital-archive/download/1963WilsonGlasgow.pdf .

[222] Benn, and Chitty, *Thirty Years On*, pp 249-267. Kynaston also reports in *Family Britain* p 144 about the frustration in having staunch supporters of grammar schooling in senior Labour positions; Kynaston, D., *Family Britain*, 1951-1957, London, Bloomsbury Publishing, 2009,

being of average or below average ability.[223] The contrasts in the quality of education provision were increasing during the 1960s in complete contrast with the hopes of the architects of the 1944 Act.[224] Secondary schools formed the largest section of school place provision from 1944 to 1972.[225] The secondary modern schools were viewed with fear by the middle classes and a sense of inevitability by many working class families, but were the primary providers of education nationally.[226] Williams discusses the resentment felt when children failed the 11 plus because they could see how this failure constrained future job opportunities.[227] If the secondary modern schools were failing to provide a supportive and developmental framework for young people, then education policy was failing a substantial proportion of pupils. By the time the Robbins Report of 1963 was accepted, unemployment was rising, and Conservative thinking had moved towards the advancement of a comprehensive system of education. The political stance on comprehensive schooling was influenced by parents who viewed comprehensive schools as an avoidance of risk. Secondary modern school allocation was seen as a poor choice and Labour went into the 1964 election with a manifesto pledge for inclusive education in the form of comprehensive schools.

Crosland, in 1965, referred to selection as a brake on economic and social progress and the DES published 'The Organisation of Secondary Education'

[223]Ministry of Education, *The Newsom Report (1963) Half Our Future*
http://www.educationengland.org.uk/documents/newsom/newsom1963.html
[224] Lowe, *The Changing Comprehensive School*, p 9 recognises that instead of providing coherence in provision and opportunity the structure of English education had become more fractured and variable.
[225]Simon, *Education and the Social Order*, p 583 quotes statistics from DES Annual Reports and Statistics in Education 1944-1977. A summary of these related to the timespan of the thesis can be found in Appendix 4.
[226] Lowe, *The Changing Comprehensive School*, p 8.; Benn, M., *School Wars* p 58.; Williams, S., *Climbing the Bookshelves,* London, Virago Publishing, 2009, p170.
[227] Williams, *Climbing the Bookshelves*, p 171.

which stated an intention to eliminate separatism in secondary education. The rhetoric was strong but, again, there was no compulsion on the LEAs to comply. Prevarication around the mechanisms for removing selection continued to allow LEAs to interpret the rules in line with local pressures and demands. This inconsistency of approach fuelled an acceptance of partial comprehensive policy and development. Accordingly, the challenge to selective education at the local level, in whichever form, was not made through government policy. Although circular 10/65 now required every LEA to submit plans for going comprehensive, the fractured nature of compliance and structure left the vested interests of regional authorities with the devolved power to interpret government directives. [228]

For children educated in the 1950s and 1960s, and for most working-class children, the secondary modern school was the normal point of transition at 11.[229] The grammar school entrance continued to skew the population of the secondary schools towards the less advantaged as did the continuation of private provision. [230]There was no appetite for opposing private education but Labour's protection of the privileges of private education helped to preserve the idea of difference and distinction in education among the middle classes.[231] Grammar school and private education spoke of aspiration. Todd refers to a speech by Sir Hartley Shawcross asserting the sacrifices of parents to support the best possible education for their children as being the reason for excellence in the professions.

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[228] 10/65 was a government circular requesting that LEAs begin converting schools to the comprehensive system and the political background to requesting not compelling is discussed in McCulloch, British Labour Party education policy, *History of* Education vol 45, Oxford, Taylor and Francis, 2016, pp 225-245. Also in Williams, S., Climbing the Bookshelves, p 170.
[229] Appendix 3 shows the numbers of students by year and classification of school.
[230] Private schooling is outside the range of this research but the protection of privilege within education as a political concept informs some of the discussion in relation to policy development.
[231] Todd, *The People,* p 167*:* pp387-388.

[232] Throughout the 1960s there was a sense of entitlement within the professional and growing semi-professional classes. This sense of ambition translated itself into parental anxiety. Comprehensive education offered an alternative to the secondary modern school.

After the 1964 election, the Labour government did not legally enforce the change to comprehensive education, instead, local authorities were invited to change and submit plans for moving towards such a system. However, dates for the submission of these plans were not enforced. It was left to the local authorities to move at their own pace and prolonged the reform where opposing authorities took very little action. Approved plans could be overturned when local authorities changed hands and where there were powerful vested interests such as the religious bodies in Liverpool, there was no centralised control or imposition. The question of whether this was a national reform or in the hands of the local authorities was unclear and was left undecided while Labour had a small majority between 1964 and 1966. In 1966 Labour had a clear majority so should have been able to take a comprehensive mandate forward.

Labour had attempted the use of financial levers to persuade local authorities to comply and Williams noted that funding approval was given only to new (comprehensive) and not selective school building. [233] There was growing support for alternatives selection at 11 within the electorate and the cost to the economy of maintaining a two-tier system was being questioned. As the timeline moves towards the 1970s, it can be seen that the social and economic disadvantage

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[233] Williams, *Climbing the Bookshelves*, p 170-171. Williams discussed the difficulty the Minister for Education, Crossland, faced in managing the local authorities.

associated with children arriving in schools was increasingly recognised as a significant factor. The creation of the Education Priority Areas between 1968 and 1971 was an attempt at positive discrimination to negate some of the social deprivation causes of underachievement. Liverpool was such an area and gained additional funding for teachers and equipment although there did not appear to have been a significant impact in the Everton area. When Short became Minister for the DES he claimed to value the freedom of LEAs but he was also determined that the LEAs would not frustrate national policy on the development of comprehensive education.[234] Short was inclined to finally legislate to enforce the national policy but the 1970 General Election brought a change of government and a new minister, Thatcher, who confirmed that the LEAs would have greater freedom in determining their position.

When, in 1970, Harold Wilson lost power to the Conservatives, the draft Bill on school reorganisation was lost also. This meant that in terms of organisation and central policy the uncertain strategy regarding comprehensive education continued. The deteriorating economic situation gave the Heath Government in 1970, a political need to make cuts in public expenditure. The new Secretary of State for Education, Thatcher, abolished the universal provision of free school milk setting the political direction in relation to recession. Reductions in education expenditure continued under the subsequent Labour government and the oil crisis of 1973 set the tone for budget restrictions. Alongside financial constraints, the critique of more progressive styles of education instigated by the Black Paper condemnations of comprehensive education, led Callaghan to announce a return

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[234] From a discussion in Williams' autobiography. Williams, *Climbing the Bookshelves*, pp 182-183.

to more traditional forms of education through the Ruskin speech.[235] Greater partnership with industry and a loosening of the ties to the LEAs were to be authorised alongside the first steps towards governmental influence on the curriculum.[236]

By 1976, the Education Act brought in by Williams had the stated intent that there should be no selection 'by reference to ability or aptitude' but there was still no legal requirement to end selection. The substance of the 1976 Act gave local authorities plenty of opportunity to continue selection. At local level, however, the interests of religious groups played a part in the interpretation of the national policy. As admissions policy in Liverpool was still dominated by religious affiliation the lack of clarity at national level offered little incentive to dismantle the selection process in controversial restructuring. Although there were comprehensive schools in Liverpool during the 1970s, the influential religious sector continued with selection throughout the period of this research. The limitations of political aspirations for equality and the extent to which these aspirations might be considered genuine are revealed in the lack of coherence between national policy statements and local reality. As interpretation of policy was devolved to local level an understanding of the local context becomes important and this moves the literature into a consideration of Everton as a place.

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[235] The Ruskin speech was critical of standards in both primary and secondary education and was informed by the Yellow Book report compiled by the Department of Education and Science in 1975. www.oxfordreference.com/view/10.103/oi/authority.20110803125315636?rskey=CEpZyu&result=19
[236] Lowe, *The Changing Secondary School,* p 44.

The importance of place - Everton

Liverpool is a city which attracts opinion. There is a claim to exceptionalism, expressed by Belcham, or a view that the city and its people had an air of impertinence, implied by Bennett, writers and politicians are rarely neutral about Liverpool. [237] Pye described Liverpool as a city that had always stood on the Mersey with its back to Britain and its face out to the world. [238] Within the city boundaries, Everton, despite having been built on shipping affluence, carries the reputation for poverty, poor housing and low educational achievement. During the time period considered, there was a shared experience of frailty in terms of both infrastructure and economy. While social capital in the form of influencers and networks can moderate the educational experience, there is less variability if education is viewed through the lens of a community with similar environmental influences. [239] For this reason, a consideration of Everton as a place is relevant to an understanding about the nature of the interacting forces producing individual working class responses to education. Bourdieu recognises various forms of capital representing these forces; economic capital, social capital, cultural capital and symbolic capital but would view these as being owned by those more privileged than the residents of Everton during the time period.[240] Massey proposed that places are much more than points on a map but are envelopes of time as well. [241] Memories recalled are influenced by this sense of place and the historical stories told in relation to that place. The geographical landscape matters

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[237] Belcham, J., *Merseypride: Essays in Liverpool Exceptionalism*, 2nd edition, Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 2009; *Belcham and Biggs, Liverpool City of Radicals,* p 1.

[238] Pye, *Liverpool,* p 165.

[239] Lin, *Social Capital* pp 12- 15.

[240] Richardson reflects on the work of Bourdieu in relation to the forms of capital in: Richardson, J.G., *Handbook of Theory and Research for the Sociology of Education,* Connecticut: Greenwood Publishing, 1986 p 241-258.

[241] Massey, D., Taking on the World, *Geography*, Vol 99, Issue 1, Sheffield, Journal of the Geographical Association, 2014.

to participant recall and people would identify with a place on the ground. An appreciation of the place, Everton, forms part of the supporting literature for the thesis.

There had been a gradual decline in Liverpool's fortunes from its status of being a prosperous Victorian port to the poverty of the interwar and subsequent years. Geographical positioning and changes in patterns of trade influenced this decline as did the containerisation of the docks in later years and Everton was buffeted by the downturn in maritime fortune. Life for those dependant on work from the docks was made tougher by the system of casual hiring which was not abolished until 1972. Dockers assembled each morning not knowing whether there would be work or not. Murray comments on another practice, piece work, and quoted Jack Jones as saying that piecework made men work quickly and dangerously and that this and the absence of safety policy led to accidents.[242] Strike action was part of the social and economic landscape. There was also a power shift between Trade Unions, Labour Party and workers engaged in disputes. [243] Between 1960 and 1968, Taaffe and Mulhearn report that 90% of the strikes were unofficial. Trade union action resonated particularly with a Merseyside region dependant on the docks for employment. Merseyside gained a reputation for being difficult to manage. In 1966, the national docks strike, convinced Wilson that he needed to deal with trade union militancy and the result was Castle's white paper 'In Place Of Strife.' [244] A reputation for industrial unrest and an unstable

[242] Murray, N., *So Spirited a Town: Visions and Versions of Liverpool,* Liverpool, Liverpool University Press, 2007, pp 140-147.
[243] Taffe, P., and Mulhearn, T., *Liverpool - A City That Dared to Fight,* London, Fortress Books, 1988.
[244] 'In Place of Strife' referenced p 41 Taaffe and Mulhearn *A city that Dared to Fight.* Ministerial Briefing Notes and Discussion on Policy for Industrial Relations. PIN 7/623: *Industrial Relations White Paper ('In Place of Strife.'* Cmnd 3888)

economy created an environment where the national perception of plentiful jobs for school leavers in the 1950s and 1960s would be replaced by a more precarious employment environment in the local Liverpool economy.

Despite the cultural and sporting successes of the 1960s, Liverpool from 1944-1979 was predominantly viewed as a declining commercial environment in contrast to economic vibrancy associated with the nineteenth and early twentieth century. In addition to the fragile local economy and entrenched unemployment the residents of Everton faced displacement through local housing policy, which had the effect of fracturing old neighbourhoods and loosening family and community connections. The working-class areas of Everton and Netherfield Road consisted of densely populated terraces pre-war. This changed in the so-called slum clearances of the 1960s and 70s. Although frequently referred to as slum clearance, there was a huge emotional attachment to the terraced communities and these 'slums' were much loved homes to some of those living there. As Harvey noted, changing physical and social infrastructures change the nature of social and economic capital.[245] In creating new spaces, old areas and communities such as Everton are devalued and redeveloped. Respecting the views of many local people, with a sense of belonging, the movement of people out of Everton will be referred to as a housing clearance policy not slum clearance in this work.[246] The steep incline from the city to Everton had been densely populated with terraced housing, some substandard pre-war and some bomb damaged. A decade after the war, in 1955, housing conditions in inner city

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[245] Harvey, D., *Justice, Nature and the Geography of Difference,* Chapter 12.Oxford, Blackwell, 1996.
[246] Evidence for the disparaging tag given to the slums of Everton is supported by personal life experience of living and working in the area and from the statements made by participants involved in interviews for this project.

Liverpool were defined as desperately deprived.[247] The Liverpool Echo 9th July 1959, reported on the public inquiry into the Everton Heights Redevelopment Scheme. Dr W. Parry the Senior Medical Officer of Health added that most properties were over 90 years old and worn out, damp and not fit to prepare food in. The views of residents are not directly reported by the Liverpool Echo but objectors stated that there were well maintained properties in the area which were not being taken into consideration. [248] There was also criticism that too much land was being cleared for the proposed buildings with only a vague and not specific proposal for a school to be built in the area.

Home environment and access to basic amenities are seen as part of the network of variables supporting educational success. The nature of the physical home environment for children in Everton, in the 1950s and early 1960s could not be viewed as compatible with preparation for the formal demands of an education system that did not understand the domestic or community environment.[249] Given the importance of the LEAs in determining the delivery of policy the political alignment of the council was important to understanding responses to government policy. Liverpool had been slow to shake off sectarian voting patterns. Council representation was fractured and for a city with a radical reputation, it was only in 1955 that Labour controlled Liverpool city council for the first time.[250]

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[247] Todd, *The People*, p 179.
[248] 600 Houses in Liverpool slum clearance plan' *Liverpool Echo* 9th July 1959, 7. The British Newspaper Archive. Online. Available
https://www.britishnewspaperarchive.co.uk/viewer/BL/0000271/19590709/374/0031 (accessed 12th December 2019).
[249] Gaine and George, *Gender, Race and Class in Schooling,* pp 111-115.
[250] Belcham, J., *Popular Politics, Riots and Labour*, p 18.

Local policy on the ground was dominated by housing clearance programmes in Everton between the 1950s and early 1970s. The programmes subsequently created a collapse of the pre-war community with the population of the area being moved to Kirkby, Tuebrook, Croxteth and later Skelmersdale – all places geographically removed from the city and the Everton area.[251]

Murray reflects on the views of Anthony Kenny a curate in Everton who recalled collecting money from parishioners who either lived in substandard housing or in flats built to replace them but who were all missing lost friends and family who had been rehoused in outlying suburbs like Kirkby. [252] Long-time residents of Everton were displaced. Pye estimates that, across the city, over 160,000 people were moved away from traditional neighbourhoods leaving community and family support systems fractured.[253] In fragile economic times, the loss of these sustaining patterns of family and community potentially further disadvantaged a child from the Everton area. In the 1960s and 1970s, council housing was inhabited by families with a range of incomes and job roles.[254] However with the rise of semi-skilled and white collar employment perceptions about class became more volatile, particularly as disposable income gave access to goods and activities previously the preserve of the middle classes. In 1964, Crossman came to visit Everton housing projects and Crossman was pictured at the top of John F Kennedy Heights a recently completed multi storey block in Everton.[255] Crossman expressed concern that Liverpool still, nearly twenty years after the

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[251] New housing estates and new towns were built outside the city centre moving population centres a distance of ten or more miles from the traditional centre of Everton. Transport and deprivation compounded the sense of dislocation caused by the housing policies but these fall outside the scope of this work, although would provide a valuable addition to archive material.
[252] Murray, *So Spirited a Town*, p 130.
[253] Pye, *Liverpool,* p 65.
[254] Williams, *Climbing up the Bookshelves,* p 173.
[255] Richard Crossman was elected a member of Parliament in 1945 and was Cabinet Minister for Housing in the Wilson Government 1964.

end of the war, had not been able to rehouse the population of the area. Although both visits are detailed in the Liverpool Echo but there is no reference to any meetings with residents, it would appear that both visits concentrated on discussions with local politicians and a few senior council officials. The working-class resident voice does not appear to be included. [256]

In Everton, the population decreased as bomb damaged and unsanitary housing was replaced. However, even as this happened a folklore recollection of the old neighbourhood communities was being built, emphasising community and shared resilience to poverty. Physical change came slowly and bomb damage was evident well into the 1960s. The clearance programme displaced almost a third of Liverpool's population and changed the nature of the segregated religious boundaries. Opinions differ as to the motivation behind the housing policy. Dudgeon refers to the ethnic cleansing of the old waterfront Irish communities and suggests that the break- up of the old Catholic and Protestant strongholds was the stimulus behind the clearance policy. [257] However, Belchem, while acknowledging that the clearance policy changed the cultural ecology, viewed the actions of Liverpool City Council as motivated by socio-economic factors rather than a customised policy to break up the religious ghettos. [258] While there was considerable regret at the break-up of the neighbourhood communities such as

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[256] '600 Houses in Liverpool slum clearance plan' *Liverpool Echo* 9th July 1959, 7. The British Newspaper Archive. Online. Available
https://www.britishnewspaperarchive.co.uk/viewer/BL/0000271/19590709/374/0031
(accessed 12th December 2019).

[257] Dudgeon, *Our Liverpool*, pp 308-310, where Dudgeon argues that the clearance programme went beyond the demolition of unsuitable housing destroying the fabric of live communities, moving the working class out to areas beyond the city, such as Kirby, where land for alternative housing had been purchased. Dudgeon refers to the clearance programme as wholesale ethnic cleansing of the working class.

[258] Belcham and Biggs, *Liverpool City of Radicals*, pp 8-10; Roberts, *Liverpool Sectarianism*, p 130 discusses an interview with Belcham in which Belcham suggests that the housing clearance programme removed the infrastructure of sectarianism – the parish and the pub.

Everton, the policy also offered an opportunity to move into a more secular and tolerant environment.

The economic environment was changing in the 1970s and unemployment statistics were rising. The children who had been able to find work, regardless of a paucity of qualification in the preceding decades now faced a very different situation. Although preparing children to take their place in the labour market remained a cornerstone of education policy, the link between education and progression in the labour market was hard to establish. Against a national culture of reducing resources, Liverpool internal politics changed, a strong Liberal party emerged which, in 1973, became the largest party on Liverpool city council.

With the world economic recession 1974-75 came conflict between Wilson's Labour government and the workforce of the UK including those on Merseyside. However, Taaffe claimed that Merseyside had felt the impact of the economic downturn before the rest of the country.[259] The imposition of cuts from the IMF meant that Liverpool, already one of Europe's most deprived cities, were set to suffer disproportionately. [260] As a maritime city, the fortunes of Liverpool had always been inextricably linked to the docks. When containerisation brought huge job losses, the decline was felt throughout the city as the manufacturers, suppliers and professional services linked to maritime industry were no longer able to sustain business and unemployment became entrenched. The Liverpool workforce was largely blue collar and unskilled. The newer industries tended to be short lived and Liverpool became an unemployment black spot.[261]

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[259] Taaffe. and Mulhearn, *The City that Dared to Fight,* pp 42-48.
[260] International monetary fund.
[261] Pye, *Liverpool,* p 171.

The situation worsened in Liverpool between 1974 and 1979 as an increased need for public expenditure in education and other services was met with a decline income. Liverpool suffered a 33% population decrease in this period so the income from rates and grants declined proportionately. Allied to a housing policy which moved people out of the city to neighbouring Knowsley, the more affluent and mobile moved out of Everton to the suburbs. The resultant population tended to be older and poorer, dependant on council services suffering from declining budgets. Although successive governments had tried to bring investment and regeneration many of these schemes were short lived.

Housing poverty combined with financial poverty to create an environment where it was difficult for families to comply with the needs of their children in attending school. The absence of finance to support children in education was not restricted to the immediate post war years but evidenced throughout the period. The minutes of the Liverpool Education committee in the 1960s identified family poverty as an established reason for removing children from school to whatever work might have been available.[262] School ended formal prospects of education for most children for although the 1944 Act referenced Further Education, Todd notes that the message that additional training or education might be available was not widely known.[263] Todd, speaking of her own parents, acknowledged that they owed their education to routes other than those provided by the state.[264]

Informal access to education in a broader sense developed through cultural routes. Being a port city, Liverpool enjoyed a diversity of music brought in by

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[262] Liverpool City Council Education Committee minutes 1962-1964, Liverpool City Library Archive accessed March 2019.
[263] Todd, *The People,* pp 242 -246.
[264] Ibid, p 3.

mariners and when the Cavern Club opened in 1957 it was part of a growing culture of jazz and blues coffee bars. While a major popular culture shift was happening across Britain, Liverpool seemed to lead the way and many artists, most notably, The Beatles, became famous and brought the city to the forefront of national consciousness. It would have been easy to think that this wave of appreciation and success spread across Merseyside but many of the structural issues remained and the cultural boom did not translate into sustainable commercial success. A short distance from the city centre, Everton was still experiencing housing blight and precarious employment at the height of the Merseybeat era.[265] As the post war boom ended and inflation increased, Liverpool struggled economically and by the 1970s the city was in rapid decline. Pye, describes the decline as an economic storm which no amount of optimism or self -confidence could easily weather.[266] Levels of deprivation and income favoured the security of the job and income into the family over education. The relationship between the community and the churches provide a further layer of complexity when examining the importance of place in understanding the experience of education.

The role of religion in organising and reorganising education on Merseyside was considerable and Lowe notes the major role played by the Catholic Church. [267] In Everton, sectarianism was fuelled by allegiance to the churches in Everton and post war education was frequently linked to adherence to these allegiances. Belcham and Biggs recognised that the ethno-sectarian formations of 'Orange'

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[265] Marren, *We shall not be moved,* p 24-27 charting the economic collapse on Merseyside but also noting the position had not been a strong one even in the 1950s for the area and that post war prosperity had mostly passed Merseyside by. By 1971, unemployment in Liverpool was at 10.6 % rising to 20.4% by 1980 compared to national rates of 4.1% and 8.6% respectively.

[266] Pye, *Liverpool,* p 167.

[267] Lowe, *The Changing Secondary School,* p 42.

and 'Green' remained firmly entrenched in communities during the period of the research.[268] Although a consideration of the impact of religious affiliation is associated mostly with the context of education, economic competition between the two religious communities, compounded the more ancient and cultural rivalries. Both the Orange and the Green offered mutual support through the churches, and they, along with the pubs played a larger part in the lives of many workers and their families than trade unions or work-based affiliations. The Labour party came to influence Liverpool politics much later than in other urban centres in the UK. Liverpool politics were also fractured and old religious allegiances made decisions on school reorganisation difficult to achieve. Taaffe and Mulhearn, in discussing the nature of elected power in Liverpool in the 1940s and 1950s, note that only in Walton (the constituency of which Everton is a part), argued for a general socialist programme. Elsewhere in Liverpool, the right wing of the Labour party dominated. [269]

Despite the levels of structural disadvantage, children from Everton did pass the 11 plus and proceed to grammar school. For some, however, the burden of alienation and dislocation, combined with financial inequality proved too overwhelming to allow successful participation in the selection process. Even where children passed the 11 plus, not all successful pupils were able to take up the offer of a place. Reasons for this vary and while some limitations may be at the level of the family or individual, communities and expectations in areas such as Everton appear to play a part in educational outcomes. Marren considers the

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[268] Orange represented the Protestant churches and Orange order and Green the Catholic population and churches. The relevance of sectarianism to school allocation and culture was also recognised by Rogers in *Lost Tribes of Everton and Scottie Road*, Liverpool, Trinity Mirror Media, 2010; Belcham and Biggs, *Liverpool City of Radical,s* p 141-146.
[269] Taaffe and Mulhearn, *Liverpool A City That Dared to Fight,* pp 49-52.

views of Lloyd and Belcham that Irish immigration had resulted in an incapacity of the social infrastructure to provide for the inhabitants of the city. [270] The argument from these writers was that over many years, Liverpool failed to capitalise on the periods of relative prosperity to make sustainable change to the social fabric of the city. The next section will look at the way the economic and political climate impacted on local people.

Social Cultural and Political Influencers

The impact of inequality in education associates closely to notions of class relationships and class mobility. McCulloch looked to the social inequalities in education when developing critical thinking in social class and culture but frames this in a consideration of the political consequences of making changes reflecting on the lack of involvement from working class parents.[271] This section will explore some of the social influences on childhood education to including the ties to religious affiliation.

Bourdieu's concept of 'habitus' is described by Reay, as interlacing past and present, individual and collective experiences.[272] Reay suggests these experiences could be used to understand the attitudes and dispositions of groups of people. The concept of habitus suggests that those living in close proximity will share common characteristics however, Goldthorpe and Lockwood and Toomey argue that additional to these common characteristics there will be distinct family

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[270] Marren, *We Shall not be Moved,* p 21 quotes work from Belcham, *Merseypride*, attributing the influx of poor, unskilled and largely illiterate Irish immigrants.

[271] McCulloch, British Labour Party Education Policy and Comprehensive Education Policy, *History of Education,* , pp 225 – 245.

[272] Reay, D., Finding yourself or losing yourself? *Journal of Education Policy,* Oxford, Taylor and Francis, 2001. pp 333- 346.

histories with unique qualities.[273] Accordingly, while some responses to education may have their roots in the neighbourhood, others will be distinct and related directly to family circumstances. Hanley understands that family positioning and the size of family mattered where education was concerned noting that being an only child gave her a bedroom of her own. Levels of disadvantage were not evenly distributed even within the confines of a tight knit working-class community. Being a youngest child, an only child or having two nurturing parents afforded advantage. Hanley called this a position of being the least disadvantaged of the most disadvantaged stratum in the community. [274] The least disadvantaged were those most likely to be able to benefit from an opening up of educational opportunities. The ability to provide uniform and support school activities differentiated the least from the most disadvantaged in their responses to school. While there is evidence that school was respected the range of other concerns facing disadvantaged families meant education was rarely a priority. Tomlinson discussed the relationship of the working class families to schools and considered that working class parents and pupils internalised the message that education was not for them. [275]

The lack of engagement with education outside of the school gates and the emphasis on behaviour rather than attainment has contextual links to the reality of life in a Liverpool left somewhat battered by the interwar depression, wartime challenges and subsequently, entrenched unemployment. Employment and the ability to support family were the primary concerns and Hanley stresses in her

[273] Goldthorpe, J. and Lockwood, D., 'Affluence and the British Class structure', *Sociological Review,* Oxford, Wiley Blackwell, 1963, pp 133-163.
[274] Hanley, L., *Respectable: The Experience of Class, London, Penguin, 2016,* p 51.
[275] Tomlinson, *Education in a post-welfare society*, pp 15-19.

work closely related respectability and poverty were.[276] Homelessness following the blitz, unemployment, sickness or bereavement were potentially lethal blows to the survival of the family unit. The finding and keeping of precarious work and the fear of unemployment affected families and entire communities.[277] Social class and social capital influence perceptions about the value of education. The discussion about the relevance of social capital has been part of the educational debate since the 1950s with Floud and Halsey, recognising that, in 1956, parents and pupils were guided by the probability of success, but also the costs of failure.[278] Resources from their family and community and the opportunity costs associated with the educational choice form a significant part of decision making in working class communities. The costs and risks of additional schooling at the expense of an earned income is perceived to be higher by working class children. The concern that the perceived value of education was linked to the social capital of parental networks was explored by van de Werfhost when he concluded that the working class child equated potential for failure in life with having wasted time and or resources in the education system. [279] The cost of continuing education or attending a school with higher associated costs in terms of uniform or materials was likely to be felt keenly by working class children. The fragile nature of the home economy was understood even by the youngest child and the need to contribute or to avoid additional expense governed attitudes and behaviour towards education. The prevailing values of the education policy makers in the post war years may have aspired to equality but for disadvantaged communities such as Everton, the socio-economic barriers made it difficult for individuals to

[276] Hanley, L., *Respectable* p x-x1v Introduction.

[277] Marren. B., *We Shall Not Be Moved*, pp26-27.

[278] Floud J. and Halsey A.H., 'Homes and Schools; Social Determinants of educability'*, Educational Research* pp83-88.

[279] van de Werfhorst, H., 'A Detailed Examination of the Role of Education in Intergenerational Social Class Mobility', *Social Science Information* pp17-29.

directly benefit from this intent.[280] Goldthorpe and Lockwood also discuss the importance of traditional working class networks in establishing attitudes to education. [281] The double dislocation of attending a secondary school outside the community of streets and the dislocation from these streets, left children in Everton without a traditionally strong network.

The relationship between location relationship and educational outcome and attainment are considered by Gordon and Monastiriotis.[282] Their research considers the impact of neighbourhood capital on attainment. This work supports the notion of an interconnecting web of influences. Policy and school, home and family influence but also there are community and neighbourhood expectations and cultures which may also impact on the educational outcomes. Viewing Bourdieu and Gordon and Monastirioitis there is evidence to suggest a multifactorial approach is needed to understand the behaviours of individuals in relation to education.[283]

For working class communities, such as Everton, the barriers to entry into the 'better' schools are not governed by selection criteria alone. Poverty and the need to provide uniform and additional expenses resulted in places being rejected or a level of social isolation for those pupils unable to conform to the school culture and norms. Gaine and George mapped out a web of interacting processes relating to social factors and education and Halsey (1986) commented that

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[280] Todd. *The People,* p 150.
[281] Goldthorpe, and Lockwood, 'Affluence and the British Class structure', *Sociological Review* , pp 133-163.
[282] Gordon, I. and Monastiriotis, V. (2006) Urban Size, Spatial Segregation and Inequality of Educational Outcomes, *Urban Studies,* Vol 44, London, Sage, 2007, pp 1203-1228.
[283] Ball, S., *Education Policy and Social Class*, Abingdon, Routledge, 2006, discussing Bourdieu p 211; Gordon, I and Monastiriotis,V (2006) Urban Size, Spatial Segregation and Inequality of Educational Outcomes, *Urban Studies*, Vol 44, pp 1203-1228.

genuine engagement with the working class in education was not just about access to schools but required consideration of a broader number of social issues. [284] By the early 1960s, a study of Liverpool schools by Mays indicated belief in an unbridgeable divide between grammar and secondary modern schools to the extent that it amounted to having two distinct nations in education.[285] Selective entrance to university entrance and the professions meant that despite post war rhetoric of meritocracy the power structure remained relatively unchanged. Within working class communities, there were few role models for children to emulate so even the aspiration to move away from traditional occupations was framed by uncertainty and risk. Risk was not just the potential for failure but the more emotive and critical risk of alienation from family, friends and community.

In making their choices, people are guided by the probability of success, the costs of failure, the resources they bring with them from their background and the costs that are associated with the educational choice. A code of behaviour and expectation, unscripted rules, and relationship with authority all combine to create an environment which is unfamiliar and potentially hostile to the working class child from a community such as Everton.

The complexity of interacting process in communities such as Everton, is discussed by Belcham, referring to an urban mosaic of socio-economic, ethnic and sectarian variables.[286] Whereas other historians refer to the maritime heritage to understand the variables impacting on Liverpool, Belcham considers

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[284] Gaine, and George, *Gender, Race and Class in Schooling,* p 110.
[285] Mays, *Education and the Urban Child*, p89.
[286] Belcham, *Merseypride*, Preface to first edition, pp xxxiii – xxxvi.

the Irish influence from the 19th century to be the primary reason for Liverpool to be considered to be 'exceptional' in terms of its lack of deference to the establishment. Although the architects had hoped for improved equality by way of educational outcome, it is possible that the legacy of the 1944 Butler Education Act was to sustain class division and the sustained contribution to social mobility more limited than envisaged.[287] Major and Machin consider that oversubscribed, academically successful schools have a protected intake due to inflated property prices in their catchment areas.[288] Instead of providing a nurturing vehicle for attainment, education has been viewed by such writers as an ever-escalating arms race where knowledgeable parents are able to provide the address or specialist admissions criteria required by the schools.

Literature reporting on educational attainment through the selective processes vary depending on the perspective of the story teller. Dudgeon reports interviews with children successful in the education system who overcame class differences to achieve. [289] However, not all children were equally placed, even within working-class communities to benefit from this chance. Family wellbeing which can be defined by having enough income to avoid a precarious financial situation took precedent over a valuing of education. Archive minutes of the Education Committee from Liverpool City Council refer regularly to requests to avoid school withdrawal fines because a child had secured a job with much needed income to supplement the family finances. [290] The relationship with place, family and community in educational choices and experiences will be examined further through the lived experience case histories. Bourdieu is unimpressed by data

[287] Todd, *The People*, quotes Tawney in her discussion of the impact of class on education, pp 150 – 167
[288] Major, L.E., and Machin, S., *Social Mobility and its Enemies,* London, Pelican, 2018, pp88-89.
[289] Dudgeon, *Our Liverpool,* pp 342-348.
[290] Minutes of the Education Committee 1960-1964, Liverpool City Library Archives, accessed March 2019.

provided through analysis of the lived experience describing it as frequently being no more than a thinly disguised projection of the researcher's own lived experience.[291] The developments in oral history perspectives would tend to refute this view and the importance of the focus on revealing individual lives is discussed further in the methodology chapter of the thesis with particular reference to the work of Mauthner and Doucet.[292]

The established literature presents some contrasting views about the attitudes at home to education. Parents in working class communities respected schools and tended to leave school and the business of education to the school remaining remote from the process. This view of respect for the school and teachers is portrayed in the case history memories but other accounts such as Mays present a more negative view of Liverpool. [293] The reality for Everton and other working class districts is that resources and social capital are not distributed equally within areas of the city boundaries and that the more affluent suburbs with more engaged parents and a louder voice tended to nurture stronger schools. Bridge talks about the requirements of a good school as being achievable but the leadership and resources need to be in place. The establishment of the EPAs in the late 1960s was intended to reduce the level of disadvantage resulting from socio economic deprivation. These were a response to the sociological studies of the 1960s which recognised that the home environment was a greater determinant of educational success than the school environment [294] Liverpool

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[291] Bourdieu, *Distinction*, p 94.
[292] See Methodology Chapter; Mauthner, N. and Doucet A., 'Reflections on a voice centred relational method: Analysing Maternal and Domestic Voices' in *Feminist Dilemmas in Qualitative Research*, ed. by J. Ribbens and R. Edwards, London, Sage, 2011), p 3.
[293] Mays, *Education and the Urban Child* p 188.
[294] Floud J. and Halsey A.H., 'Homes and Schools; Social Determinants of educability'*, Educational Research* 2.2 , Oxford, Taylor and Francis, 1961), pp 83-88.

was chosen as an EPA and one primary school in Everton was part of the project. There did not appear to be, however, any significant difference reported as a result of the additional funding. Within Liverpool, the reorganisation of schools in the 1970s continued to support clusters of schools which were selective either by examination or some more circuitous route often aligned to religious affiliation.

Conclusions

The multivariable influences on education have been viewed through the literature which considers chronological and geographical context as well as the development of education policy and its relevance to the working class child of the period. The legacy of the war time environment persisted into the 1960s. While there was a communal political attraction to notions of equality and fairness responses to education were also pragmatic.

Although political intentions to prepare for post war education had been signalled as a priority and Ellen Wilkinson, had an ambition to provide a more equalitarian experience for all children this view was not universally held and a deterioration of standards was feared. From the 1930s onwards, education policy and reform had been subject to parliamentary reports and discussion and there was cross party consensus for education to be at the heart of the post war social reconstruction of Britain. Bates recognises the importance of this consensus, creating an environment where those of either party with political power, felt the need to be able to claim that they governed in the interests of all the people. [295]

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[295] Bates, J., Lewis, S., and Pickard, A., *Education Policy, Practice and the Professional,* London, Bloomsbury, 2011, pp 37-55.

The war had fed an appetite for change but also created a political consensus. There was a need, during this period, for those with political power to claim that they governed in the interests of all the people.[296]

The 1944 Act provided Local Authorities, head teachers and teachers with autonomy to run their schools. [297] While the government retained power over education policy, the delivery was in the hands of local authorities struggling to cope with the needs of the local population. [298] The emphasis of the political and administrative structures reflected infrastructure needs and reality but, other than the selection process, there was little focus on the child or their family. It was up to the child to fit in with the system in order to thrive and some simply failed to do so. The placing of responsibility on the individual and their family as opposed to the system or the environment has resonance with those writing in the field of disability studies. The medical model of disability considers the 'problem' to be with the person, emphasising functional limitations as the cause of disadvantage.[299] In the same way, education policy has more frequently focused on disadvantage inherent in individuals, families and communities rather than consider the processes and environmental conditions which might change to mitigate the levels of disadvantage. The disability literature and considers the changes that might be needed in the environment – a social model which examines systemic and environmental barriers. Disability was defined by Oliver as disadvantage or restriction in social activity caused by social organisation which results in exclusion from mainstream social activities. [300] The exclusion and

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[296] Benn, *School Wars*, pp 61-80.

[297] Bates, *Education Policy, Practice and the Professional,* pp 37-55.

[298] Jones, *Education in Britain,* p 17.

[299] Goering, S., Rethinking disability: the social model of disability and chronic disease, *Current Reviews in Musco- skeletal Medicine,* New York, Springer, 2015,.pp 134-138.

[300] Oliver, M., *Understanding disability: from theory to Practice*, New York, St Martin's Press, 1996, p22.

alienation reported in working class participation in education has a level of synergy with the disability model. In her review on disability Goering notes that the disadvantage felt through disability could be less debilitating than trying to navigate a world which has been historically designed to exclude and where preconceived attitudes dominated. The focus on organisation of schools and assessment with little consideration of culture or inclusion could be viewed as disabling those without the social capital to navigate the processes of education. Morgan views disability studies as a diverse discipline and believed it could inform social policy but also education as the work evaluated the extent to which societal structures processes and cultures are disabling.[301] Durrell concurs with Morgan and notes that the social model lens helped to look at how individual experiences of exclusion might be changed through political and policy change.[302] Without a voice or an alternate lens through which to view working class participation, the institutional norms and expectations sustained a level of disadvantage for working class children particularly those who experienced levels of deprivation.

Deprivation was a common feature of working class experience during the post war years. [303] The fractured nature of the infrastructure and economy over a forty year period contributed to a difficult environment in which to nurture education. There is little evidence of a working class parent or child voice in the literature. While there are some references to consultation around housing, education does seem to have been regarded as the preserve of the government, local authorities and the schools themselves. Benn believed that the impact of the Education Act

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[301] Morgan, H., The Social Model of Disability as a Threshold Concept, *Social Work Education*, London, Taylor and Francis, 2012, pp 215-226.
[302] Durrell, S, How the Social Model of Disability Evolved, *Nursing Times,* London, Metropolis International, December 2014, Vol 110, pp 20-22.
[303] Todd, The People, p 160.

1944 could still be seen in the 1980s and potentially beyond. [304] The framework of the Act and what McCulloch refers to as the gaps and silences contained within it provide a stimulus for engaging with working class education, in the neighbourhood of Everton 1944 – 1979. [305]

The narratives from the streets of Everton use memories to inform the literature of the lived experience. The next chapter will explore the methods involved in researching the individual narratives from those who experienced school and education policy during the time period 1944-1979.

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[304] Benn, M., Discussion contained in the Introduction to *School Wars,* A view from the ground, pp xi – xxiv.
[305] McCulloch, *Educational Reconstruction,* p 44.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY: APPROACHES TO ANALYSING

PARTICIPANT NARRATIVES

Introduction

The thesis is based in the tradition of oral history and seeks to understand experiences of education from the perspective of adult memory and recall. Oral testimonies test the ability of education policy and practice to influence educational outcomes for working class pupils during the period 1944-1979. The importance of resources and social capital have been defined and discussed from the perspective of Bourdieu and Lin in Chapter Two and are investigated through analysis of the oral testimonies collected.[306] Contextualised alongside the educational reforms of the period, childhood experiences of education are investigated using an oral history framework taking Thompson's view that memory could be a legitimate and valuable historical source.[307] Ten narratives from the Everton area of North Liverpool in the period 1944-1979 provide the qualitative data for the research. In defining the number of participants, the work of McCall and Wittner was taken as guidance. [308] McCall and Wittner consider that every life history might be viewed as important but recognised that it not possible, nor necessary to collect data from everyone. Indeed, Magnusson and Szijarto contend that there is a risk, in enlarging the investigation, to the

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[306] Social capital can be defined as capital which has been captured through social relations: it is a social asset developed through connections and access to resources primarily through networks. This definition is discussed in Lin, N., *Social Capital*, p19 and relevance of social capital has been discussed in detail in Chapter Two of this thesis.

[307] Perks, R., and Thomson, A., *The Oral History Reader,* London, Routledge, 2006, p3.

[308] McCall, M., and Wittner, The Good News About Life History, Chapter in Becker, H.S., and McCall, M., M., *Symbolic Interaction and Cultural Studies*, Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 1990, pp 46-89.

understanding of the complexity of the past.[309] Adding more data reduces the level of focus on the detail of the participant contribution. Sources using oral testimony do not always place the individual in context, using a singular quote or paragraph which does not give the reader an insight into the life experience which may have shaped the quotation used. Using the lens of history from below, oral narratives have been evaluated recognising timeline positioning. This process places the narratives in context, the value of which has been recognised by historians such as Tosh and Thompson.[310] The thesis recognises the importance of using flexible variables in the interpretation of the narratives to enrich the social analysis of the narratives. The narratives of memory are informed by historical positioning but also sociology and geography with the additional richness of the human relationship formed by undertaking the interview.[311] While acknowledging a micro-historical perspective in relation to contextualisation in a small inner city neighbourhood, the broader chronological positioning is viewed as relevant to the appreciation of the case narratives. The philosophical position of the thesis has been influenced by the thinking of Pomata who believed that the effort of the analysis of micro groupings would be pointless were this not connected to greater wholes. [312] The voice of the participants are central to this work and the analysis follows the conceptual framework of oral history and history from below.[313] History from below recognises that the narrative of those lives usually excluded from the formal narrative of the time can reveal a new and different perspective on historical events. Oral history as a methodological approach constructs new

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309 Magnusson S.G., and Szijarto, I,M.,*What is Microhistory?* Oxon, Routledge, 2013, p7.
310 Tosh, pp 236; 292; Thompson, *The Voice of the Past* pp 129-134.
311 Perks and Thomson, *The Oral History Reader*, p. xiii.
312 Pomata discussed Thompson, *The Voice of the Past,* pp 99 – 124.
313 History from below has been defined as history which takes ordinary people and their experiences as an alternative to traditional political history focused on those who achieved greatness. http://www.archives.history.ac.uk (Accessed 20/01/2020).

narratives recognising that these may well compete with each other and existing, more formal narratives. Abrams discusses the increased importance of the use of narrative as a historical method. [314] In recognising the credibility of the oral historical methodology there is also acknowledgement that multiple, competing and non-definitive representations of the past, form new narratives providing different insights, which will themselves change over time.

The narratives of ten working class participants in Everton, in north Liverpool, reveal experiences of the education system of the period and challenges some of the assumptions about the operation and impact of education policy. While the circumstances at the level of the individual or family may differ across the timeline, structural poverty affected the area uniformly.[315] While the community lens may have had areas of commonality, the relationship to education may be shaped by multiple factors all of which may be interlinked.[316] The focus of the narratives relate to personal experience of education.

An inductive approach has been taken in the design of the research. Inductive approaches seek to establish characteristics and patterns and do not start with any predetermined theories or conceptual frameworks.[317] The inductive approach assumes that the world and reality are interpreted by people in the context of historical and social practices. For interpretivist researchers there are multiple

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[314] Abrams, *Oral History Theory,* pp 106-129.
[315] The entrenched poverty of the area is discussed in more detail in Chapter 2 – Place.
[316] Gaine, and George, *Gender, Race and Class in Schooling* – they suggest an interacting web of factors – discussed in Chapter 2.
[317] Blakie, N., *Approaches to Social Enquiry,,* Polity Press, Cambridge, 2007, pp 59 – 66, pp 80-81.

possibilities by way of analysis, different interpretations rather than one true meaning. [318]

The ontological position of the thesis is that reality is socially constructed and as such there are multiple realities. This has a good fit with oral historical theoretical positions recognising that there may be more than one truth when an event or period is scrutinised. As researchers we choose our ontological position and this directs the responses to the participant voice. In placing the work in an ontological framework, the researcher has drawn upon the concept of relational ontology. Relational ontology views human beings as embedded in a complex web of intimate and larger social relationships. [319] This supports the view of Gaine and George who recognise the interdependence of people and factors.[320] Epistemology is concerned with the view the researcher has of the world and the assumptions that are made about what constitutes valid and acceptable knowledge. In accepting that the evidence from memory of an individual who has lived experience of the area of research as valid the epistemological stance is defined. The work of Mauthner and Doucet has been used to inform the analysis of the narratives and they consider some of the epistemological discussions relating to validity as abstract in essence and suggest that the greater focus be on revealing the lives of the participants involved in the research.[321] Using their approach to interpret the narratives through a series of alternative lenses, the impact of the personal bias is lessened as the researcher places emphasis on

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[318] Blakie, *Approaches to Social Enquiry,* pp 124-131.

[319] Mauthner, N., The past was never there to begin with, and the future is not simply what will unfold. *International Journal of Social Research Methodology,* London, Routledge, 2015 Vol 18 pp 321-336. The interrelationships between factors adding layers of complexity, relational ontology is important in the construction of analysis within this thesis.

[320] Gaine, C., and George, R., Gender, Race and Class in Schooling p 110.

[321] Mauthner and Doucet, 'Reflections on a voice centred relational method: Analysing Maternal and Domestic Voices' in *Feminist Dilemmas in Qualitative Research*, ed. by J. Ribbens and R. Edwards (London: Sage, 1998), p3.

reading the narrative through the eyes of the participant as well as their own. Further, Mauthner and Doucet believe in the importance of exploring relationships with neighbouring people and the broader social, cultural context the relational context.[322] This signals the relevance of contextualisation of the narratives within a historical timeline and supports the development of a framework moving from narrative into the practice of data analysis.

Participants all experienced schooling in the area of Everton during the period 1944-1979. Geographically, the post-code or electoral ward definition of Everton changed during the timeline period but each of the participants identified themselves, as children, living or going to school in Everton. Everton, like Merseyside itself, has unclear boundaries but a strong emotional identity. [323] In recognising that there are broader forces than the delineation of a line on a map, the complexity of the individual narratives is mirrored by the complexity of understanding Everton as a place as discussed in Chapter Two.

The articulation of the participants varied from confident story-tellers, to those who struggled to create a coherent narrative from disparate memories. Pre-interview discussion by phone call, email or social media message established expectations and the nature of the interview. Participants were encouraged to ask questions and to set the environment and timing of the interview slots. Interview sessions were recorded but participants were reassured that the recordings were to support the writing up stage and would not be made public. Additional notes were taken during the interview session. The format was semi-structured in that

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[322] Mauthner, and Doucet, 'Reflections on a voice centred relational method: Analysing Maternal and Domestic Voices' in *Feminist Dilemmas in Qualitative Research*, pp 3-6.
[323] Benbough Jackson, *Merseyside,* Chapter 1 p 2.

the context given was memories of education. Prompt or confirming questions were used to support the flow of the narrative. In conducting the interviews there was recognition of the tension discussed by Grele between the power of the participant and the researcher.[324] The narrative, even where lacking in coherence, belongs to the participant and there was awareness of the possibility of destruction of the narrative where the authentic voice may be drowned by the editing and direction of the researcher. Every element of the narrative has a part to play with pauses, silences and distraction contributing to the insights provided by the words in the narrative. Narratives recognise how people represent themselves in the wider context and the confines of memory and these narratives, the stories, are the main focus of the research. The raw narratives themselves, however, are only the first part of the process in producing alternative narratives and the first stage of the analytical framework will follow a six- stage structure identified by Abrams.[325]

Stage one is the abstract, where the individual circumstances of the participant and their relationship to the research context is introduced. Secondly, the cases are placed in context to orientate the narrative within the historical timeline of the day. Recognising the multivariate influences on education, this will include the political and social climate at both local and national level. The third stage is to introduce the specific event, the voice, the memory of the participant. This stage recognises the value of the voice as representing a potentially different narrative, the construction of history from below. The voice is collected using oral history methodology. As established by Yow, interviews were conducted to minimise the

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[324] Grele quoted In Abrams, *Oral History Theory*, p 29.
[325] Abrams, *Oral History Theory*, pp 2-15

formality and to build rapport. [326] The interview structure was deliberately open to allow participants to self-select their memories of education rather than have these directed by the researcher. This was felt to be important in balancing the power dynamic of the interview leaving the participant with control of their narrative. There is a focus on naturally occurring ordinary events so the individual stories have the possibility of reflecting a real life context; the 'lived experience'. The staged process helps to draw out the meaning from the interview voices. Stage four introduces the evaluation. The data from the narratives is grouped into areas of commonality to create themes. Within the themes, where multiple influencers or causes could be identified, the way in which these combine together was also highlighted. In stage five, there is a consideration of the complexity of real, historical cases, and the analysis considers how the variables might work together. Becker recognised that identifying multiple influencers or causes, the way in which these combine together might be a more appropriate way of viewing the outcome of an individual story. [327] Consequently, geographical location, parental involvement and school ethos may all be individual influencers but they may also combine with other factors to produce the stage five narrative seen through the analysis of the research. The coda, the final stage, signals areas of impact or importance to inform and broaden the narrative of the past and consider implications to reflect current thinking on education in working class communities. The six element structure has been used to inform the thematic analysis. The final stage, stage six, is supported with reference to Benbough-Jackson who supposed that the lack of clearly defined parameters provided an

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[326] Yow, V., Interviewing Techniques and Strategies, Chapter 11 in Perks, R., and Thomson, A., *The Oral History Reader*, pp 157-162.

[327] Becker, D., et al, Voices from the Eighties and Beyond, *Journal of Gerontological Social Work*, Oxford, Taylor and Francis, 1984,pp 83-100.

opportunity to engage more broadly to establish meaning.[328] Additionally, the work of Mauthner and Doucet informs the final stage through an understanding that the narrative qualitative data could be interpreted through different lenses when coding that differing interpretations needed to be considered when considering impact. [329] The final stage analysis seeks to understand the lives of the participants in their own terms. The differing lenses focus on alternative interpretations of the data. The first lens through which the research was examined was that of historical positioning placing the participant narratives in the context of the local and national environment to provide perspective. This ensured that the story was understood. Secondly, the lens looked for areas of contrast or agreement with the predominant views and knowledge of the time so adapting the stories with the eye of a researcher. Finally, the lens used was that of a working class participant considering the relevance of the content chosen, by the participants themselves, for inclusion. This third lens considered the relationships and networks forming a web of interacting forces through which responses to education might be made.[330]

Parameters of the Research

The relationship between the personal narratives and interpretations of the time period covered by the timeline is multi layered, as the stories are likely to be culturally influenced by class, gender and the conventions of the time. The context for the participants reflecting on war-time and immediately post war experiences would vary greatly from the contextual framework needed to view

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[328] Benbough - Jackson, *Merseyside,* p 2.
[329] Mauthner, N. and Doucet A., 'Reflections on a voice centred relational method: Analysing Maternal and Domestic Voices' in *Feminist Dilemmas in Qualitative Research*.
[330] Mauthner and Doucet suggest a four lens reading in their work but this has been adapted to a three lens method with the third lens lending participant weight to the chronological record and researcher interpretation of the previous two lenses.

the narratives of those completing school in the 1970s. The need for understanding of the historical context and conventions supports the contextual linking of case histories to the timeline. While each of the decades 1940s to 1970s would merit individual consideration, the research focuses on themes emerging from the chronological time frame. This acknowledges the relevance of reflection on changes over time. The Education Act (1944) had been developed with the hope of real educational reform and the use of the timeline provided an opportunity to capture living memory. In looking at experiences over a forty year period, there is the capacity to consider a longitudinal exploration of the impact of educational experiences on individuals from a working class background. Through contextualising the education policy of the period, the individual narratives can show the aspirations of the policy makers and politicians were actually experienced and so add a more nuanced contribution to the record of the time. The inclusion criteria to support selection are discussed in the next section. The decision of the oral historian in selecting participants has been the subject of debate with Thompson pointing out that a self-selected group emanating from an open meeting or similar will rarely be representative of the local community. [331] Thompson felt that the very poor and less confident would be less likely to come forward using an open methodology. In selecting participants, there is a responsibility to identify the criteria for selection and this is discussed in more detail in the next section.

Participants

Written records, whether documents of the time or subsequent historical analysis, are the product of an educated elite and will have been edited and transformed

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[331] Thompson, *The Voice of the Past*, p 22.

into a narrative. Few take into account the priorities of the non – elite or capture their way of expressing the experience of the time.[332] In using oral testimony, the risk of is that interpretation, may deny the original intention of the participant. This can be mitigated by reflecting the cultural positioning and motivation of the participant and this is discussed further in the section on interview analysis. Potential participants for the research began to identify themselves through neighbourhood and community channels once the intention to carry out the research became known. The researcher lives in the Everton area and has done for over thirty years, which contributed towards a level of trust with possible participants engaging through community and neighbourhood organisations both real world and online. Everton has specific events such as the 'Lost Tribes of Everton and Scottie Road' reunion, an archival group, a local history society and a number of social media groups providing an active pool of local people interested in their own history. Given the level of interest, volunteers for taking part in interviews came readily and so the initial work was to look at an inclusion matrix. The inclusion criteria for participants was multivariate. Firstly, participants needed to have undertaken some portion of their schooling in Everton in the time period 1944-1979. Secondly, the participants needed to be part of a non-elite group defined by education level and employment of parents and also the housing conditions experienced during the time they were at school. Informed by the literature, a mix of gender and school was identified to diversify the experiential narratives across the timeline, sectarian and selection divide.

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[332] While some voice has been alluded to through newspaper columns of the time, the focus of this work is based on oral testimony. An analysis of the testimony linked to news reports of the period would be an extension to the work of this thesis and one which might contain valuable insights linking memory to archive in the period.

Wrightson believed that, for historians, there is a need to discern long term shifts in social organisation and relationships.[333] The inclusion criteria supported the prospect of such discernment. The final selection of ten participants ranged from those in school during the war years and shortly after to those completing schooling towards the end of the 1979 timeframe. In interpreting the recollections of ten participants the question of quantity might be raised and this is acknowledged but quality, relevance and previous exclusion were prioritised over the total number of participants. Accordingly, a sample, however imperfect, has been identified using the inclusion criteria of timescale, geography and social background. The thesis has been informed by the methodology of history from below and microhistory but its core is in the oral history tradition. The voice of the participants has pre-eminence. The official records reflect the priorities of those storing and recording at the time so unless captured, the unofficial and informal accounts do not transfer into the archive material on which future appraisals of the period will be made.

In seeking to have broad coverage across the timeline and due to the nature of schooling in Liverpool, a gender balance, the selection of participants was purposive in that it served a purpose by illuminating a period of the timeline, a particular religious affiliation or gender. de Vaus considers that there is little point in having representative samples as they are not being used for statistical generalisation.[334] Equally, he considers that there is no correct total number of cases although recognises the need to have confidence in the findings. Qualitative data samples tend to be purposive. A random sample of current

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[333] Wrightson, K., *Mutuality's and Obligations: Changing Social Relationships in Early Modern England*; The Ranleigh Lecture on History given in November 2005. The proceedings of the British Academy 2006 139, pp157-194. https://www.thebritishacademy.ac.uk (Accessed 23/01/2020).
[334] De Vaus, *Research Design in Social Research*, p 240.

residents geographically might not achieve the aim of recognising the impact of education policy along the historically significant timeline. Equally a self-selected group will rarely be representative of the community either as the groups most likely to self-exclude may well be the very voices adding richness to the study. [335] While it would have been possible to gather data from a larger number of students attending school in the period, the level of personal detail and recall of engagement with education would have been more limited. Given that consideration has been given to the enabling conditions influencing education decision making, the persistence of conditions such as poor housing and limited employment opportunities might not have been revealed by a larger number of participants using a more limited range of questions. The design of the research was influenced by de Vaus who considers that there is no correct number of cases and research can be based around a singular or multiple cases dependant on context and motivation.[336] Yin agrees that it is a matter of judgement for the researcher.[337] Magnusson and Szijarto summarise the work of Kracauer noting that the higher the level of observation, the poorer the historical reality may be.[338] The driver in deciding on a smaller number of cases was to include the detail, to be led by participant recall about what might be considered significant and reflecting Kracauer in seeking for historical reality.

Patton discusses two possible sampling options, as part of a typology of potential qualitative sampling methods, which have particular resonance with this thesis. [339] The first of these methods is stratified purposeful sampling which illustrates

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[335] Thompson, *The Voice of the Past,* p 152.

[336] de Vaus, *Research Design in Social Research,* p 240.

[337] Yin, R.K., Case Study Design and Research quoted in deVaus, *Research Design in Social Research* p240.

[338] Magnusson, S.G., and Szijarto, I,M., *What is Microhistory?* p 20.

[339] Patton, M., *Two decades of developments in qualitative inquiry,* Chapter in Blakie, N., *Approaches to Social Enquiry.*

subgroups. In terms of the sampling for this research, subgroups included those experiencing one of the three periods within main timeframe, the history of education, gender and attending different classifications of schools. The second method is snowball or chain sampling where the knowledge of who else might hold relevant information is part of the knowledge held by previously identified participants. Contacts made through participants produces a snowball effect. Sampling for the thesis related to both stratification and to snowballing. Although ultimately, an interview may not have resulted from a contact, participants often signposted others who might be able to add to the experience.

The inclusion criteria for participants shows some diversity in terms of gender, the classification of schools attended and variation in the historical period in which schooling took place. [340] Areas of commonality included the geographic location of home or schooling and the working class background of the participants. None of the participants had parents in professional or semi-professional work. The primary inclusion criteria defining the sample are those of geographic boundary and fit with the historical timeframe.

Accessibility and Ethical Approval

Accessibility, particularly in the earlier part of the timeline where participants were now in their 80s, played a part in selecting participants and influenced the design based around one interview. Although time considerations play a part, socially, the participants needed to be comfortable with the interviewer and setting. Contact through phone calls, emails and social media direct message created expectations and understanding ahead of the interview itself. Interviews were

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[340] See Appendix 2

timed to ensure participant comfort and that there were no time pressures on the researcher to end the interview before the participant was ready. Ethically, participants needed to be capable of independent decision about participating and capacity to take this decision formed part of the inclusion/exclusion criteria. While work is ongoing on dementia and historical memory, for the purpose of this research, none of the participants suffered from mental impairment at the time of the interview. To reduce the risk of distress to participants or their families, individuals will have the capacity to give informed consent to take part in the research conforming to the guidance given by the British Society of Gerontology. [341] Known and possible consequences of the research have been detailed in the participant consent form, which also confirms that the participants have control of the data and can request that their contribution is withdrawn at any time. This is in line with Oral History Society guidance.[342] Dissemination details and subsequent publications, will be made available to participants. The research does not claim to be representative of the city of Liverpool or England as a whole but provides a set of narratives across a time-period in a defined local context. Selectivity provides the researcher with a framework and a sense of alternative perspectives across time.

Tosh recognises that the interviewer is a part of the interview process and impacts upon it and that part of that impact is the selection of participants. [343] Had the research been built solely on self-selection, the self-selected group would rarely be representative of the community as a whole and the groups most likely to self-exclude are potentially the voices the study, by selection is striving to hear.

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[341] https://www.britishgerontology.org (Accessed 23/03/2017).
[342] https://www.oralhistory.org.uk (Accessed 23/03/2017).
[343] Tosh J., *The Pursuit of History* pp 313-321.

Support for purposive sampling is gained from authors such as de Vaus who noted that both older people and those with lower levels of education are more likely to decline to participate in studies. [344] None of the participants had taken part in any research relating to themselves or their families previously. Using established community groups and connections meant that participation could be achieved more readily as there was already a degree of trust within the relationship.

Participants were approached through local community groups including the Everton Local History Society which meets monthly at The Albion community centre, through the community groups and archival group active at The Shewsy (a local community centre), and from resident and education groups in or in close proximity to Everton. Additionally, there are a number of Facebook sites dedicated to local history including – "L5 History as we knew it, back in the day", "The Lost Tribes of Everton and Scottie Road" and the "Liverpool History Group". Requests for participants were posted on these sites. The response rate from the Social Media sites was encouraging by way of interest and good luck wishes but the community centres were a more fruitful source of actual participants. The numbers participating in such sites, however, did reveal local interest in documenting and sharing life histories and stories. The inclusion criteria for the sample selected reflected the need to have been schooled in Everton in the years 1945 -1979 with a spread to include a gender balance, a balance in terms of positioning on the timeline and a balance in terms of religious affiliation. Each of these factors are potentially relevant to the analysis of the narratives.

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[344] de Vaus (2001) Experimental designs, Chapter in *Research Design in Social Research,* p 84.

In creating a framework for the participant interviews, Abrams was seen as a key source and her view that the interview process was one of having a conversation in real time shaped the connection with participants. [345] The six stage structure previously outlined by Abrams has also been influenced by Portelli, and Mauthner and Doucet to create a framework for analysis.[346] Stories were collected from the participants using semi-structured interviews. The fluid nature of the interviews allowed for consideration of the impact of multiple variables in identifying attitudes, engagement and aspirations in education during the period. Oral history is distinct from the examination of other documents or artefacts in that the humanity of the participant, and their own awareness of self, influences the narrative and subsequent analysis.

Portelli believed that oral history differed from other forms of historical investigation in a number of ways including orality and narrative. [347] Orality refers to the tone and accent, the way in which the oral word is transferred to the context of the interview. While recognising the need to interpret the primary interview data and to present it in a form accessible to a reader, orality requires that the emotion of the content is not lost and the analysis section opens with a consideration of orality for each of the participants. Narrative responds to the way in which participants will make and use stories to make sense of both their past and present world. Warham understood that the collection of data in story telling form provides personal perspectives viewed through the cultural lens of the time. [348] Portelli would recognise that this lens would be modified by subsequent

[345] Abrams, O*ral History Theory* pp 106-115.
[346] Portelli in Abrams, L., *Oral History Theory,* pp 24-27.
[347] Portelli, (1991) "What makes oral history different?" pp 45-48.
[348] Warham, K., Engaging with young people through narrative co-construction: Beyond categorisation, '*Educational and Child Psychology*, London, British Psychological Association, 2012, 29.2, pp 77-86.

experiences and cultural perceptions. [349] Mauther and Doucet understand the impact of different lenses in interpretation and suggest a four reading approach. [350] On first reading, the narrative, the story itself is understood. The second reading builds in the researcher response to the narrative. In responding, it is understood that the researcher brings with them a world view that will influence the interpretation of the analysis.[351] Oral history interpretation carries with it the critique that there may be a distortion of the data to fit with the position of the writer but Thomson considers that all historical documents are equally distorted as the raw materials of history reflect the priorities of those trusted with their preservation. In acknowledging the perspective of the researcher, there is honesty about the lens used in the analytical framework and, in the case of this research, an awareness that these memories would not otherwise have been preserved.[352] Concerns about the objectivity are debated in literature reflecting on the insider or outsider perspective of the research and the view reflected by Thompson above suggests that objectivity, in as much as this could ever be achieved in such a research framework may not be the most relevant judge of validity. Wilkinson and Kitzinger concede that the notion of insider status may need to be acknowledged but recognise that the similarities and differences between the researcher and participants may be partial and shifting as the research progresses. [353] They suggest that as both insider and outsider status shift across the course of an interview the identification and acknowledgement of

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[349] Portelli referenced in Abrams, *Oral History Theory,* pp 80-81.

[350] Mauthner, N. and Doucet A., 'Reflections on a voice centred relational method: Analysing Maternal and Domestic Voices' in *Feminist Dilemmas in Qualitative Research*, pp 119-146.

[351] This world view is acknowledged by the researcher, who appreciates that personal societal and educational perspectives influence the interpretation of the participant case studies.

[352] Thomson, P., 'The Voice of the Past: Oral History', in *The Oral History Reader,* 2nd edition p 26-27.

[353] Wilkinson and Kitzinger, Representing our own experience: Issues in "Insider" Research, *Psychology of Women Quarterly.*

common ground should be sufficient to deal with criticism of insider contamination of the data collected.

Whereas written records are traditionally produced by learned elites, the narrative in non - elite transcripts will be sharper, potentially less structured and coherent and this should be respected by the researcher. Given scope to include or exclude areas of interest through the open ended questions, the analysis will also need to understand the weighting of areas of discussion brought in by participants when finalising themes.

The strength of the structure proposed by Mauther and Doucet is that it introduces alternative lenses in the third and fourth reading. On the third reading, the researcher is alive and alert to the relationships and networks contained in the narrative and on the fourth reading the structural and political issues, the culture and norms of society form the lens for analysis. These two final stages in the model support and relate to the extended timespan acknowledging that political and cultural conditions need to be seen over an extended period and may be invisible if the timescale is too short.

Abrams discusses the recognition of cultural norms being identified through 'plentiful tea and biscuits' and time taken outside the interview to become familiar with the participant and their place in the community. [354] The connectivity to the local community and shared connections supported the researcher in building trust and gaining agreement to take part in the study. None of the participants had ever spoken previously to a researcher about their experiences. These pre-

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[354] Abrams, *Oral History Theory*, p 22.

stages are important in building trust and may not always be reflected in the design structure or discussion. Although the recorded element of the process is documented and the transcription process understood the earlier connection and communication elements are vital in developing a shared understanding of what will happen alongside the tea and biscuits. For some participants the interview day was a performance, an event, with hospitality forming a major part of this. Trust and the effort to represent the meaning of the memories correctly can be built through the pre-stages and during the hospitality elements of the interview itself. Spradley identifies four stages to an interview situation and sees these as happening within the formal interview itself. [355] In holding trust building and pre-stage interventions to reach a shared understanding of the nature of and motivation for the research then more time in the interview can be spent in stage four, i.e. the actual participation.

The open nature of the interview with few questions and a focus on listening meant that participants held the power to frame their memories based on their priorities. The focus of the narrative reflected what was recalled as significant or what had been chosen to be shared rather than those preordained by the researcher. In the telling of their story, subjectivity holds power in an oral tradition of research. It is the personal experience, the memories and later held views, which culminate in the participant responses and which may have relevance to a wider population or indeed society. This more fluid approach to both the interview and the interpretation provided information on the enabling conditions, the environment in which education related decisions were taken. Subjectivity is part of the process for both the participant and the researcher. The participants chose

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[355] Spradley, J., *The Ethnographic Interview*, New York, Holt, Rinehart and Winston, p 79.

the direction and areas for inclusion. Subsequently, the researcher must reflect on the content through the identification of themes and ensuing analysis.

Memory and concerns about the frailty or accuracy of memory apply to any review of secondary data as well as to oral primary data. The minutes of meetings, diaries, journalistic reporting have all been subject to recording inaccuracies and memory lapses and so oral history is no different in this respect. Where memory differs from established sources or from an ingrained cultural narrative then the analysis of this can reveal new perceptions. Critics of oral history may suggest unreliability, faulty memory and undue influence by subsequent life experiences and external interpretations. However, factual accuracy may not be the primary aim of the oral historian. Abrams notes that it is the involvement with real living people which provides a unique edge to oral history but also reflects on the analysis which will be different to a more conventional examination of documents and archives.[356] Memories are living histories and the subjective, personal meanings of the lived experience document aspects which tend to be missing from other sources.[357] This approach to interpretation differs from the view of Bourdieu who is dismissive of the lived experience regarding it as little more than a reflection of the experience of the researcher.[358] Bourdieu appears to take a one dimensional approach to the relationship of the researcher and participant. Abrams viewed the analysis of the lived experience differently, seeing it as a complex and multifaceted approach with a view to achieving a meaningful interpretation of the research evidence collected.[359] Although the researcher

[356] Abrams, *Oral History Theory*, p 18.
[357] Perks, and Thomson, Introduction to the Third Edition, *The Oral History Reader,* p xiii.
[358] Bourdieu, *Distinction,* p 94.
[359] Abrams, *Oral History Theory*, p 27.

experience is honestly acknowledged, the vibrancy and colour from the oral testimonies reflect participant views of relevancy and inclusion.

While cross referencing context and significant historical milestones gives structure ultimately the valuing of the lived experience of the participant is the dominant concern of the thesis. From the lived experience, different perspectives and points of comparison with the dominant cultural norms of the time can be examined. Memories of participants may focus on different aspects of their time in school. The range of social and cultural, political and economic references may differ in emphasis. For this reason, the analytical framework requires fluidity to avoid losing valuable insights.

Data Collection

Thompson considers that the use of interviews by historians is compatible with scholarly standards and that such interviews may serve to change the focus or open up new lines of enquiry. [360] The interview methodology reflects the desire to understand the experience of the child and not the aspirations of the policy makers or politicians or subsequent historical reviews of the period. [361]

Abrams considers the differing power positions in oral interviews and part of the imbalance related to the taking of an academic, theoretically objective stance. [362] While every effort might be made to retain an informal, conversational approach, the reality is that research is being conducted and that the researcher belongs to an educational institution, the carrying of a notebook and recording device, are

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[360] Thompson, *The voice of the Past,* pp 51-73.
[361] Warham, *Educational and Child Psychology*, pp 77-86, considers the importance of focusing on the voice of the childhood memory.
[362] Abrams, *Oral History Theory,* p 27.

all ways in which a power imbalance can be created between researcher and participant. In developing the interview setting, there was an awareness of the importance of power relationships. In the setting of the interviews, every effort was made to give the participant control of the venue, the timing, and the ability to control which areas of school life to focus on.

Empathy and respect combined with genuine personal experience of working class education in the time period framed the construction of the interviews. The adoption of an educated working class perspective does not, according to Reay equalise the relationship or redress the power relationship when it comes to interpretation and analysis. [363] Recognising this imbalance, care was taken to position the interviewee as the person of prominence, the keeper of a personal story only they knew. The decision to include participants followed the pre-interview contact which established school attended and dates attended. Of those who volunteered and were not selected the primary reason for exclusion was related to geographic location.

Interviews took place over an extended period of data collection due to the part time nature of the researcher. Research was conducted in blocks of time when other forms of academic commitments were less intense. Interviews were recorded and transcribed verbatim which allowed different lenses to be applied when analysing the data. The participants were aware that any recordings would only be used to support the writing of the narrative and would not be made public. The choice of venue was given to the participant to redress some of the power

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[363] Reay, Finding yourself or losing yourself? *Journal of Education Policy* pp 333- 346.

imbalance and to improve rapport. Most chose to invite the researcher into their homes with a sense of ceremony as discussed previously.

Table 1 summarises the information used in reaching decisions on inclusion. The table identifies the connection with the participants, pre-interview contact, decision on venue and the outline inclusion criteria in terms of chronology, gender and religious affiliation.

Table 1: Sampling Decision and Pre- Interview Protocols

	Identification and Connection	Pre-Interview Contact	Interview location	Inclusion
Mary	Community Centre, Shewsy	Informal conversation in community environment Mobile phone text messages to confirm interest and arrange dates and ethical approval documentation	Home of participant at their request	Pre 1944 experience of education and evacuation. Education during the blitz. Church of England and non-denominational schools
Tom	Family recommendation. Knowledge that stories were being collected and suggesting involvement	Informal conversation with participant's daughter who was aware of the research through posts on Facebook. Interview and documentation arrangements made with daughter	Home of the daughter of the participant at the family's request	Wartime and immediate post war experience of education. Educated in the Catholic system.
Jane	Connected through community group knowing research was being conducted	Informal conversation via phone and text messaging to arrange documentation and interview date	Home of the participant at their request.	Post war experience of education. Educated in non-denominational schools.
Linda	Came forward as volunteer having heard about the research. Approached researcher directly.	Text messaging to arrange documentation and interview date	Home of family member, venue chosen by participant	Post war experience of education. Educated in the Catholic system.

Frank	Approach from partner to suggest participant for the research	Email arrangements for interview and pre interview, view of documentation and initial questions	At family home, as requested.	Passed 11plus to attend selective Catholic school 1950s-60s timeline
Ann	Family recommendation. Knowledge that stories were being collected and suggesting involvement	Email arrangements for interview, and pre interview view of documentation and initial questions	At family home, as requested.	Attended non-denominational secondary modern 1950s-1960s
James	Connected through community group and contacts	Email arrangements for interview, and pre interview view of documentation and initial questions	Interview held in University premises Redmonds Building at the request of the participant.	Passed 11plus to attend prestigious Church of England secondary school 1960s
Sarah	Connected through work colleagues who were aware of research	Informal conversations in a work environment leading to the review of documentation and setting up of interview date.	Interview held in University premises Redmonds Building at the request of the participant.	Attended secondary modern school 1960s
Edward	Approach from partner to suggest participant for the research	Informal conversation via phone and text messaging to arrange documentation and interview date	At family home, as requested.	Passed 11plus and attended prestigious Catholic grammar leaving to attend a secondary modern school after 18 months 1970s
Bob	Came forward as volunteer having heard about the research. Approached researcher directly.	Came forward as volunteer having heard about the research. Approached researcher directly.	Interview held in local Arts venue café at the request of participant	Only participant to have stayed in school for Sixth form and go to University 1970s

Interview transcripts were coded and areas of similarity allowed for the allocation of content into clusters which would later become themes. This transcription involves interpretation which potentially results in some changes in emphasis. The content was organised recognising the framework promoted by Ragin which

promotes the use of a wider set of concepts such as poverty or access to resources. [364] This model has informed the thematic analysis, and, while the defined variables such as school attended is recognised, it is the wider concepts which later contribute to the thematic analysis. Ragin believed that this method would preserve authenticity and complexity while simplifying to a smaller number of combinations. This part of the process helped to make the content manageable and in using multiple readings with diverse lenses there was greater security that key areas of content were not lost through the coding process. In coding the combinations the method used is a tabular comparison based on participant words and phrases. The more complex algebraic coding used by Ragin was not felt to be needed given the nature of the narrative data collected and the emphasis on understanding the lived experience. Within the primary themes, subthemes, for example, economic frailty, could be identified. The relationship between the themes is generative in that new connections may be made. The narratives have been analysed through a review of the content to build core themes.

Themes and subthemes were formed following the organisation and subsequent analysis of the narratives. In addition to chronological positioning, three themes emerged from the data analysis. The first was the impact of national and local educational policy on the experience of the child as recalled through the narratives. The policy theme included issues of school structure and governance. The second theme evolved around social influencers and family networks and this theme included consideration of mates, place, culture and religion. The third

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[364] Ragin, C., referenced in Becker, *Tricks of the Trade* pp 184-226. Ragin, C., et al, Assessing Discrimination: A Boolean Approach, *American Sociological Review*, California, Sage, 1984, pp 231-234.

theme was associated with the labour market, with aspiration and lost opportunity.

Care has been taken to retain the voice of the participant and the local idiosyncrasies of language are used only where they serve to make a point in relation to the story or context. There has been no attempt to recreate the local accent through phonetic spelling. The participants had expressed pride that their story was being told and that someone would tell it 'properly'. It was a deliberate act of communication to construct the interviews without over-referencing local dialect. The relative status positions within an interview are complex. The participant is the holder of knowledge and decides what will be shared and what will be hidden. The researcher decides on inclusion of content and placing in context. As the primary point of contact was through community associations or historical society links the distance between the researcher and the participant was possibly less than it might have been had the visiting academic role been the primary one. It helped the initial relationship that the researcher lived locally. There was a spoken and unspoken perception of being 'one of us'. The participants were interested in the researcher's background. Learning that there were similarities of background helped to create the trust and the sense that there would be no judging of themselves or their education. Participants were assured of anonymity and while some seemed to view this as important others would have been happy to have been named. For consistency all participants have been given pseudonyms.

Analytical Framework

The participant narratives have been organised by the researcher into themes as above. The creation of the themes began with a chronological overview of participant environment. Chronology is a key influencer in terms of social and economic conditions over which the participant has no choice. Chronological positioning influences the context and allows for a longitudinal analysis of changes in attitudes and responses to policy over time. Initially, the cases have been considered in the context of some of the local and national historical milestones of the day.[365] The context provides a framework for analysis and discussion of the memories and while not being used to test the accuracy of the narratives, it is useful to see how the recall of the participants corresponds to established literature or news reports from the period. The chronological positioning of the narratives allows for exploration of the impact of the delivery of education policies deriving from the 1944 Act as change in education policy may take time to result in different lived experiences.

With regard to chronology the participants fall into three distinct historical periods. The first group can be identified as those who were educated in war time or immediately after so would have been in school during the 1940s and 1950s. The second group would have been educated in the 1950s and 1960s so the immediacy of the war impact would have been lessened and this group should have been in the position to benefit from post war educational reforms. The final group were in school during the 1970s and the 1960s changes to education policy and practice should have been evident in their lived experience. Children who

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[365] Milestones include the outbreak of World War Two, the blitz and evacuation, the reconstruction of the city and housing relocation policies, education policy subsequent to the 1944 Education Act.

were schooled during and immediately after the second world war were those the improvements made by the 1944 Act were intended to support. By the 50s and 60s by which time the central and local authorities had enough time and improved resources following reconstruction to develop education at local level. The participants for this section completed their education in the 1960s but though avoiding the trauma of war did not escape the poverty and dislocation. For this second group, futures were framed by familial attitudes differing little from the post war participants. The relationship with and understanding of the education system appeared to be better developed but the economic necessity meant that the outcomes during this time changed little for the working class participants of the study. Finding their place in the labour market was a primary concern for all three school leavers in the middle time period and each appeared to take advantage relative prosperity of the post war boom. In the final section, the 1970s there is an opportunity to see how the move to compulsory secondary education for all had fared after thirty years of development. The analytical framework seeks to identify and subsequently understand the way in which the variables contributing to education experiences interact with each other.

Carr comments that historians seek to establish a hierarchy of causes or even to find a cause of all causes. [366] However, Becker recognises that where multiple influencers could be identified then the way in which these combine together, the weighting and relationship of the variables may be the most appropriate way of viewing a particular story. [367] The exploration of themes broadly follows the six stage structure Abrams identified but has been informed by the theoretical

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[366] Carr, *What is History?* pp 13-30.
[367] Becker, *Tricks of the Trade*, pp 183-186.

perspectives relating history from below and oral history convention. [368] These approaches allow core themes to reflect the participant voice while permitting variability and flexibility in the analysis process. The perspective gained from using history from below supports the research by treating the experiences of ordinary people as having weight and relevance. Ordinary people and their testimonies are regarded as more than passive recipients of political decision making and play a more significant part of the historical narrative. Oral history has been examined in detail earlier in the chapter and remains the primary methodological construct. Guided by historical and qualitative research frameworks, the narratives are placed in the historical context and culture of the time but follows advice from Carr that the interpretation of the context should look beyond the archived facts and evidence. [369] The process of identifying themes drawn from the participant narratives involved data reduction summarising transcript information and organising the summary data into themes. In seeking to organise material from the transcripts, historians look to reveal larger patterns that might otherwise have been hidden.[370] Patterns of behaviour, or events which presented as of particular significance to the participant have contributed to the creation of the themes and subthemes.

Participants were allocated a number (A1- A10) at the data reduction stage but were also given a pseudonym to protect anonymity as the transcripts were prepared for thematic analysis. As the participants were invited to approve and comment on the transcripts and interpretation, the name helped to retain the humanity of the research interaction. The ability to show a participant, perhaps a

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[368] Abrams, *Oral History Theory*, pp 10-15.
[369] Carr, *What is History?* p 13.
[370] Magnusson, and Szijarto, *What is Microhistory?* p 127.

more elderly one, their story, as depicted by this fictional name, helped to show how their contribution had supported the work. Using a name, for example, Mary, humanised the relationship in a way A1 never would. Table 1 summarises the participant involvement and positioning within the scope of the timeframe.

Table 2: Pseudonyms and timelines used for analysis of the narratives

A1	A2	A3	A4	A5	A6	A7	A8	A9	A10
1940s	1940s 1950s	1950s	1950s	1950s 1960s	1960s	1960s	1960s 1970s	1960s 1970s	1970s
Mary	Tom	Jane	Linda	Frank	Ann	James	Sarah	Edward	Bob
1	1	1	1	2	2	2	3	3	3

The framework has been informed by Abrams with the aim of creating a fluid approach to allow the oral tradition to drive the structure.[371] Although all participants were given the same broad request to talk about their memories and experiences of schooldays, the responses varied in scope and direction. In empowering participants to reflect their own priorities and tell the story that mattered to them, there is more fluidity in the range of responses. Participants use the time to interpret stories in their own way. The freedom for participants to interpret the question and their response is fundamental to a methodology incorporating the ideas from oral traditions and history from below.

Tables 3 and 4 contains a brief outline of the stages taken in the creation of themes for analysis. It draws from qualitative research theory and the philosophy of history from below in that the voice of the participant drives the thematic

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[371] Abrams, *Oral History Theory,* p 111.

analysis. It is a more fluid framework in that it considers relative weighting of data in terms of relevance to the individual. This method requires tolerance of flexibility with regard to the content of the interviews but in compensation there is a deeper richness to the participant voice enabled without the rigidity of a static interview process. Table 3 summarises the analytical framework used to create the themes. The themes reference relative weighting and context. The framework provides a measure of consistency and reliability of approach. [372] It also reassures about replication so that the application of the framework in a similar community would potentially generate evidence equating to the broad headings outlined in Table 4.

Table 3: Stages of the Analytical Framework

Stage 1	Data Collection – Oral narratives	Face to face interviews Conducted in line with ethical considerations The abstract - hearing the voice of the participant in their stories
Stage 2	Data in context - Chronology	Case history narratives placed in the context of the chronology
Stage 3	Understanding voice and memory	Appreciating the transcripts through different lenses Lens 1 – Chronological context and positioning Lens 2 – Researcher interpretation linked to education policy and practice and wider socio-economic influences Lens 3- Working class child as remembered by the adult considering networks and relationships. Reading with

[372] de Vaus, *Research Design in Social Research*, pp 30-31.

		different perspectives to bring richness to the analysis [373]
Stage 4	Coding new ideas or redefining concepts	Vocabulary and memories captured
	Data Reduction to group the voices and memory into themes	Dominant themes recognised by frequency of reference and level of detail given
	Thematic review completed	The themes reference relative weighting and context
Stage 5	Understanding how the variables influencing the themes work together	Impact and relationship between themes and participants
Stage 6	Synthesising the data acknowledging the differences in lenses and culture	Informs conclusions

Following data analysis and reduction the table below summarises the key themes emerging from the participant narratives. The themes will reference relative weighting and context. The research takes a holistic approach with the inclusion of class, place and family as impacting factors and seeks to understand the gap between national, local and personal perceptions of education. This potentially leads to new insights being discovered. There are collective themes linking all ten participants as a group one to the other regardless of where they sit on the timescale or school attended. Poverty and dislocation; a view of the collective community identity; a transactional view of education itself were features held in common by all the participants. The impact and level of knowledge relating to local and national education policy does appear to vary

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[373] Concept of using alternative lens perspectives when analysing narratives adapted from Mauthner, N. and Doucet A., 'Reflections on a voice centred relational method: Analysing Maternal and Domestic Voices' in *Feminist Dilemmas in Qualitative Research*, ed. by J. Ribbens and R. Edwards pp. 119-146. The model has been adapted to use three lenses as described in Table 3.

between participants. Where the relationship between their experience and policy is considered there is a commonality in understanding that school lives and achievements were determined by policy makers remote from the local context.

Table 4: Data reduction content analysis

	Chronological relevance	Policy and Governance	Social/Place/ Culture	Labour mkt
Mary	Evacuation Blitz Infrastructure	Coherent school structure Church of England Distinct junior and secondary No access to 11plus No access to secondary level public examinations	Locality – all the same Poverty Respectability Bereavement	Fragility Wages Acceptance
Tom	Evacuation Blitz Infrastructure	Unsupportive school structure Access Disability Catholic weighting in curriculum Teachers	Bereavement Housing Poverty Locality	Literacy Wages Acceptance
Jane	Infrastructure	Supportive school structure Awareness and access to 11plus No access to secondary level public examinations Teachers Positioning Lost opportunity	Bereavement Locality Collective Respectability	Examinations Use of references Factory option Expectation Lack of acceptance
Linda	Improved Resources Friends as a collective	Positioning Lost opportunity No access to 11plus Catholic emphasis	Family income Expectations Locality	Factory option Family expectations Acceptance
Frank	Housing policy displacement	Supportive family and primary Passed 11plus Attended Grammar National examinations taken Catholic emphasis	Locality Expectations Housing policy Family	Qualifications to support labour market entry No identification of additional educational opportunity Acceptance Lack of guidance

Ann	School reorganisation Housing policy	Not prepared for 11plus No external examinations taken Facilities not used Teacher expectations	Housing policy Colamendy Respectable Family Locality	Job opportunity barriers Non acceptance Lack of guidance
James	Labour market	Passed 11plus Grammar Left without qualifications	Bereavement Poverty Gap in school culture	Access to labour market Economic necessity
Sarah		Cross religious divide Teacher support for her and family Took 11 plus Brother who passed didn't go Went to secondary modern	Bereavement Housing policy Local cultural history	Accessible job market Liverpool and Spain Economic necessity
Edward	Education policy	Passed 11plus Went to Grammar school Left Grammar school Went to local Secondary Modern Took GCEs Teacher qualities	Younger sibling Locality Friendship groups	Into work briefly and then self - employment Education provided skills needed to support independence
Bob	Housing and education policy	Transported into Everton school Took GCEs and A levels Went to University	Ill health Behaviour Admissions Sixth form University	University Teacher driven not expected

Using this framework, a series of themes and subthemes were derived which were subsequently used to organise the narratives from the participants in Chapter Five. Using data reduction based on the participant narratives, the primary themes identified are local and national policy on education; social influences and labour market. Within each of the themes, subthemes emerged and this arrangement of the narratives aided both analysis and an understanding of the chronological impact on individual perspective. Local and national education policy, for example, has focused on areas directly referenced by the

participants during their interviews. Within this theme, four subthemes emerged: selection and admissions, curriculum, teachers, assessment and support. In this way, using themes and subthemes derived from the interviews, the data informs the organisation of chapter five. This chapter has considered the methodological framework used to analyse the data from the participants in the context of an oral historical convention. The next chapter introduces the case participants grouped into three chronological segments. Understanding the context of the participant supports appreciation of the lens through which the participant viewed their participation in the education process.[374]

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[374] Table 3 of the analytical framework recognises the need to introduce the participants and place their narratives in the context of the historical timeline. Table 4 outlines particular aspects of the time potentially influencing the lens through which the participant might have viewed their education.

CHAPTER FOUR

CASE STUDY PARTICIPANTS – MEMORIES FROM THE STREETS OF EVERTON

Introduction

As discussed in the methodology chapter, the participants were adults who, as children, attended school in Everton during the time period 1944-1979. To understand the impact of educational reforms over time, participants are spaced along the thirty year span of research.[375] The immediate family and locality are seen to be relevant in their accounts. Everton, as a place, exists both as a politically recognised council ward in the city but also in terms of the local consciousness. Although the ward boundaries were subject to change during the time period of the research, all participants self -identified as being from Everton. The narratives provide a study of educational experience in Everton over a period of time which reflected change in the nature of education. From the narratives we can see the changes brought about by education policy and practice and understand more about how this was received by those who lived through it. Data was collected over a two year period between 2017 and 2019 through a series of semi-structured interviews. Interviews were purposively set to give the participant place of prominence. The informality of the interview setting allowed participants to break off to tell other related or non-related stories, to make tea or show photographs. A bank of prompt questions had been prepared to help the researcher keep focus but for the most part the participants told their stories in their own way, with their own structure. An initial 'Could you talk to me about your

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[375] See Table 2 p134; Table 4 pp 138-139 Chapter 3.

school days?' was normally enough to encourage participants to talk about themselves, the time and the places they recalled. Because the researcher did not wish to impose their will on the participant story, a more fluid structure to the interview resulted.

The segregated nature of school admissions in Everton suggested that there would be merit in looking at memories from children who had experienced schooling based on religious affiliation, those in more secular institutions and some who crossed between the two. When considering saturation point, the thesis is informed by the view of Mauthner and Doucet suggesting that a focus on the issues and their inter-relationship is of more value than increasing numbers of participants. [376] Recognising the multi-layered content of the narratives, the range of influences shaping research at the data analysis stage can be brought into play so that the issues themselves rather than the number of participants becomes the more relevant analytical factor.

At the point of selecting the participants, knowledge about their personal family circumstances and ultimate achievements, examination based or otherwise was unknown. Geographical and chronological positioning, gender and the nature of school attended were the inclusion criteria for selection. While levels of family support for individual participants varied, none of the group felt that they had been subject to any unusual practice with regard to their schooling. In keeping with this, collective vocabulary was used by the participants suggesting that their experience was not isolated or unusual. The voices have been edited post

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[376] Mauthner, and Doucet 'Reflections on a voice centred relational method: Analysing Maternal and Domestic Voices' in *Feminist Dilemmas in Qualitative Research*, pp. 119-146

transcription to allow for coherence and later analysis. The participants were fully aware that the stories would be edited and participant agreement to this was obtained. For the participants, there is commonality around place and geography. War, evacuation and the impact of bombing on families dominate the earlier participant narratives. Efforts to rebuild the city through the housing clearance programmes and issues associated with housing feature prominently in the narratives ranging from the impact of having been bombed and being homeless in the 1940s to a continuing absence of good quality housing in the late 1960s and mid-1970s. The relationship between the home environment and the capacity to learn has been discussed in the literature chapter and in their memories, participants recalled the impossibility of doing homework when the family housing position was simply inadequate. In this chapter, the introduction of the participants provides some insight into the positioning of participants as relational beings existing in a complex web of larger social relationships.[377] The link between social factors and education existed at the micro level of the individual family but also at the macro level of the local authority and central government. Education competed with housing and infrastructure projects for funding at both local and national level and the literature chapter reflects on the importance of resource priorities as a driver for education policy. The importance of economic conditions in shaping habitus is recognised by Bourdieu and the chapter considers economic determinants at a macro and micro level.[378] Economic survival was the priority with financial support for the family unit was seen as a common point of reality for all but the final participant and a number of

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[377] Mauthner, N and Doucet, A., Reflexive accounts and accounts of reflexivity, Sociology, Vol 37, London, Sage, 2003, p 422.

[378] Bourdieu, P., *Distinction* p 95. Although Bourdieu is primarily concerned with the economic determinants of taste in this portion of his work, the impact of economic restraints on applicability to education responses is recognised also.

participants reflected on their position within the family as influencing the extent of the focus on education with younger children feeling less economic pressure than their elder siblings.

This chapter introduces the participants informing the themes and gives a brief summary of their relationship with the themes identified in the literature. The chapter supports clarity about inclusion of narratives and their relevance within the research framework. The purposive nature of the sampling indicates that the sample is neither random nor based on those who might have happened to be available.

Participants in Time Period One: War time and Post War Leavers

Table 5: Participants Period One

Time Period	A1 1940s	A2 1940s 1950s	A3 1950s	A4 1950s
Pseudonym	Mary	Tom	Jane	Linda
DOB	1929	1934	1943	1946
Interview date	27/03/2017	16/08/2018	24/07/2017	28/08/2018

The participants during this section of the timeframe are three female, one male with different religious affiliations. Two of the participants had experienced evacuation during the war and had returned to Everton during the war years despite the bombing. During this period, Liverpool suffered continual bombing and considerable loss of life. The first bombing took place in August 1940 and

continued until January 1942.[379] The consideration of the nature of education itself was secondary to survival for war-time participants but, although their experiences differed greatly, school as a place to go; to be safe, or to be fed featured strongly in the early accounts. However fractured or deficient schooling might have been the immediate prospect of employment gave hope and the prospect of security to the school leavers of the period. Mary and Tom show the dislocation of education in wartime and the fractured nature of education for evacuees. Jane and Linda show the return to peace time education and early awareness of the opening up of educational opportunities. The participants in this section reveal the power of religious affiliation in education for some children of the time period.

A1 "Mary"

The participant in this case study is female, born in 1929 and attended school during the war. The interview took place in her home and her daughter was also present. Contact by phone and text messages confirmed the timing and the nature of the meeting which took place on 27th March 2017. The interview took three hours to complete but there were two tea breaks in this period. Mary was focused and told stories with confidence. It was clear that some of these stories were cherished memories retold to her family. Mary was at school when the war broke out and faced the additional trauma of having a seriously ill mother who died shortly after the war ended. The efforts made by her father to create comfort in very difficult and traumatic circumstances were recognised by Mary.

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[379] Towers, B., *Waterfront Blues,* Lancaster, Carnegie Publishing, 2011, pp 206-213. The May blitz resulted in fatalities of 1,900 across Merseyside with 450 seriously injured, 66,000 homes destroyed and 70,000 made homeless, Towers, B., p 208.

> *" ..they were all cellar houses round h*ere. *Government reinforced the cellar and night times were spend down there. Dad made little bunks on the walls so we had beds to sleep in…and a stove, and rugs."* [380]

Mary, the oldest participant, started school pre-war and has memories of learning English, Maths and History as well as the Arts and domestic subjects and skills. Mary had access to schooling up to the age of fourteen, although this was a fractured experience due to the war and evacuation and bomb damage to the Everton area.

An early happy memory of primary school relates to the Christchurch primary school days and highlights the supportive environment Mary recalled at school and at home.

> *"I was to be a cockleshell. The cockleshells were to be dressed in white; white dress, white shoes and white socks and I remember the family made sure I had that dress to be a cockleshell. (Pause)…. They must have gone to Paddy's market and washed and pressed a second hand one. We had rehearsals and our parents came and it was a lovely summer day and I felt more special than anything else in the world."* [381]

Mary's early memories of primary school are happy and detailed but the war was to disrupt childhood memories and she recalls hearing about it through the radio. She was evacuated to Shropshire but Mary was homesick and quickly returned to Liverpool despite the dangers.

> *"We were put on a bus and then the bus people selected you for a family. The people were kind. We were kept together. We had a bedroom. We*

[380] Interview A1, Mary, interviewed at home 27/03/2017.
[381] Paddys market is an open air market with food, new clothing and household items and a thriving set of second-hand stalls situated on Great Homer Street within half a mile of Mary's childhood house.

must have gone to school in Whitchurch but I can't remember anything much about it. Anyway, we just wanted to come home. So, we wrote home and Mum came to get us."

Education was important to the family and this family made every effort to keep the child in school.

"When we'd get up in the morning the air would be all smoky and we'd look to see what had been hit but mostly we just went to school."

There was a detachment about this statement suggesting that the morning check on overnight damage had become normalised but talking about houses in the street being hit, there was more a sense of acceptance, a feeling that there was nothing else to do but go to school and that it was good to have a school to go to. In her story she speaks of respectability, recognising the extreme difficulties faced but emphasising the decency of the family and the community.

"We were a respectable family. We were all the same." [382]

In what was to become a familiar phrase in subsequent interviews, Mary expressed the view that everyone was the same resonating with Bourke's view of working class identification.[383] Mary attended Church of England and Liverpool Education authority schools. Despite the blitz, tragedy and poverty, Mary's relationship with education was a positive one.

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[382] The notion of respect and of being respectable is discussed by Brown who sees religion as being replaced by the concept of respectability. While respectability certainly features in the narratives, the supplanting of religion by this concept is not evidenced through the transcripts. Brown, C., *The Death of Christian Britain*, London, Routledge, 2001, p2
[383] Bourke, J., *Working Class Cultures in Britain 1890-1968*, London, Routledge, 1994, p 113.

A2 "Tom"

Tom was the oldest of a family of eight, there were seven boys and a girl. Tom was interviewed in his daughter's home as she was the connection bringing Tom into the project. The interview took place on 16th August 2018 and took nearly four hours to complete. It was the longest interview but was punctuated by stops for tea and an array of afternoon tea cakes and biscuits. Tom was initially hesitant but his confidence grew as he continued to talk. There are some lengthy silences as he discusses the trauma of the war years. I continued to check that Tom was able to tolerate continuing conversation but he was very keen to have his story told. He felt that the plight of children similar to himself had been ignored and that there was an opportunity to have his say. Early years education was fractured for Tom. He was evacuated to Wales after his family home was bombed:

> *"They all used to be in one class…. 140 kids all in one class …. the ones that were in there were older ones… they were ahead of the field, so you were just sitting there listening to them. Anyway they give us pencils to draw and we started drawing.*[384]

While in Wales, a tragic accident resulted in the loss of his brother and a return to Liverpool during the war years.

> *"We were playing with anti- tank grenade found in the fields, I'd been sent for a nail to open it then boom off it went. There was a signal box near but the man said it was against the rules and wouldn't ring an ambulance."*

The story is of hardship, sadness and resilience. The war dominates the narrative.

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[384] Interview A2, Tom, interviewed at home, 16/08/2018.

"We were in the street playing with kites and we saw the plane and the bomb coming to the house…. me ma was falling down the stairs and me brother was under the table …. no sirens that night just three or four planes across the sky. We had no clothes for about a week when we were bombed out."

There was little time to consider the psychological impact of the bombing as day to day survival dominated concerns in an environment where basic help and support was in short supply. Tom's memories of school are not happy.

"Teacher used to walk up and down the rows and pull kids ears if things were wrong. I remember a drop of mercury being passed around and it dropped so went into hundreds of little balls so we all got the stick for that."

He relates stories of the dominance of religious education and the lack of resources.[385] Tom was born in 1935 so his schooling spanned the war and the immediate post war years. He left school at 14 in 1950. Tom was educated in the Catholic school system.

A3 "Jane"

Jane is female, born 1943 and went to Penrhyn Street infants immediately post war 1948 then Prince Edwin Street Juniors, completing her education in Roscommon Secondary school. Jane was interviewed on 24th July 2018 in her home which was less that quarter of a mile from her infant school in Penrhyn Street. The interview took 2.5 hours with tea before we started and at the end. Jane was very clear when setting up the meeting that she wanted to talk about the 11 plus and said that her and her friends still talk about what might have been

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[385] This is discussed in more detail in Chapter 5 in the section on education policy.

had they passed. Jane was very positive about her school experience and friendships.

> *"Loved infant school…. I think I was quite bright because I remember being moved one day…. teacher moved me one day because of my maths".*[386]

> *"Got a photo from Prince Edwin Street of the girls when we were nine…. I still see them…. we all lived along Great Homer Street. Used to call on people in the morning so maybe ten or so kids going together to school."*

Jane was very aware of the 11plus examination and continues to think about it.

> *"Me and my friend talk about this…. she's been my friend since we were five. Three in our street passed to go (to the grammar school) two were only children and they got the places and I can remember thinking that I could have had a uniform like that."*

Jane was orphaned at an early age and brought up by an older sister. Jane retained many connections to her school days and her memories are often phrased in the collective "we" recognising a commonality of experience with those who lived around her, went to school and later to work with her. There is a real sense of lost opportunity.

> *"Getting to 14 we had to start thinking about we wanted to do – I wanted to be a nurse. That was the thing then but hardly anyone went on to do it."*

Jane did not suffer from the trauma of war but the social upheaval was still felt and Jane believed her life chances to have been negatively affected by selection at 11.

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[386] Jane, A3, interviewed 24/07/2018.

> "*When we got up to 11 and the 11 plus well, I got a bit frightened then….
> not because of the exam…. quite confident but was worried because if I
> passed I knew I wouldn't be able to go because at the time…. the position
> we were in…. there was no money.*"

Jane spoke clearly and with a strong level of detail. She had photographs and memorabilia. The story of the 'loss' of a grammar school place was strongly recalled.

A4 "Linda"

Linda is female and was educated in the Catholic school system. Born in 1946, she started school in 1951, the youngest of a family of five. Linda spoke for a shorter period of time than other participants about school feeling that there was nothing very remarkable about her schooling. The interview was conducted at home on 18th August 2018, lasted for an hour and focused rather more on her older siblings who had been to school during the war years. Linda felt that comparatively, she had fared well in her school environment.

> "*We got paper and books and all that. It was a nice school.*"[387]

Materially, Linda's family were shielded from some of the insecurity of the dock related labour by having the means to earn money. Linda knew she was in a better position than some because her Dad had a horse so money could be made.[388]

> "*Like me brother said we were born in a stable. We lived down where me
> dad looked after the horses and so we were born down in the stables.*"

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[387] Jane, A4, interviewed 18/08/2018.
[388] Horses were in demand to pull carts and deliver so were a safe source of income for a family.

Linda spoke about play and the importance of local friends. Linda remembered being happy and always having friends to play with:

"That's the way my childhood was we'd play out all day."

"We would play shop, make a shop out of the bricks, when you think about it we must have only been about four or five, making sweets out of the broken glass."

Linda did not feel disadvantaged by the education system, she felt that her experiences were commonplace and had no expectation of anything different or better. In recalling her school days, the emphasis on religion and preparation for life as a home maker was apparent. Linda said of her school day:

"Started you off with sewing, cooking, Maths and English but religion was the first thing you did. Every day and before and after your dinner. Every Tuesday we went to Mass with the school."[389]

 Jane and Linda had the benefit of not having been to school during wartime and both benefited from an improvement in resources into the education system. The impact of wartime schooling on Mary and Tom, though very different in recall give testament to the fractured nature of schooling and the precarious living conditions endured by themselves and their peer groups. None of the participants felt that their experiences were particularly unusual and Jane, in particular, used 'we' rather than 'I' when considering her memories.

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[389] Spencer, S., *Gender, Work and Education in Britain in the 1950s*, p 54 considers research from the 1950s suggesting that the gendered nature of education supported a dual need to underscore the primacy of the domestic role for women but also to keep a reserve bank of semi -skilled labour.

Participants in Time Period Two: Time of Change and No Change

Table 6: Participants Period Two

Time Period	A5 1950s 1960s	A6 1950s 1960s	A7 1960s
Participant	Frank	Ann	James
DOB	1951	1952	1956
Interview date	07/09/2017	06/05/2017	14/04/2018

A5 "Frank"

A male, born in 1951, Frank had four male and one female siblings and was a middle child within the family group. Frank was interviewed at home on 7th September 2018. The interview lasted an hour and a half without a break although it started with tea. Frank spoke quickly with few pauses and with confidence. Frank had a memory game he wanted to share and listed the names of all the children in his primary school register. Unusually, in terms of the narratives, there was an early family intervention by way of school attended, intended to provide some advantage.

> *"Originally went to the Friary for nursery but me Mum moved me from there.[390] Took me to SFX and left me in class and that was it. Mum waved goodbye and that was it."* [391]

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[390] Brown, *The Death of Christian Britain,* p 9, noting that women were the principle influencers in matters of religion.
[391] Frank, A5 interviewed 7/9/2018.

Frank originally lived and went to school in the Everton area but was rehoused as part of the redevelopment of the area which saw a dispersal of many long established communities to developments on the fringe of or outside the city area.

> *"Everyone in the class went their separate ways. With the moving out, there was no one locally I had known when I was younger. They did it wrong. They moved everyone out so there were few people left and so got little grant money for those left. We lost a generation of friendships and community. They moved everyone out to Kirkby. The community was huge in Everton, Walton."*

Educated within the Catholic framework, Frank expresses views about the time taken for religious instruction during his school years. There were happy memories of early year's education and secondary education revealed a structured approach to a wider curriculum than seen in the experience of previous applicants. Frank took and passed the 11 plus examination; the first of the participants to do so. Successful in his school life, coping well with the rigours of a grammar school education, Frank was ultimately guided by the same labour market considerations as previous participants.

> *"I got a trade, training to be an electrician in a company. All through my school life I was happy and things were going well."* (Frank) [392]

Educated within the Catholic system, the dominance of religion in some parts of his schooling is noted and he is open about the rivalry with another local school managed by the Church of England.

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[392] Spencer, S., *Gender, Work and Education in Britain in the 1950s*, London, Palgrave Macmillan, 2010, p 50. Frank attended a prestigious grammar school and was positive about memories of schooldays. Spencer concluded that the majority of working class children shared similar expectations and ambitions regardless of the school attended.

A6 "Ann"

Ann attended school at a time when selection for secondary school from junior school was well established in Everton. Ann was interviewed at home and the interview lasted over three hours, one of the longest sessions, punctuated by tea breaks. The interview took place on 6th May 2017. Born in 1952, much of Ann's schooling took place in the 1960s. Ann did not pass to go to the grammar school and attended the local state secondary modern school, Roscommon. While there was awareness of the 11 plus and a grammar school system the expectations were that the local school secondary modern school would be attended. The social rehousing policy meant Ann was not schooled alongside peers from primary school and local community ties were being fractured as families were rehoused out of the area.

Ann remembered good times from her school years but a lack of encouragement or expectation.

> *"Teachers all knew there were no outcomes for us we were the secondary modern kids and we were just going to the factories."*

For Ann, there was little evidence that the capacity and promise hoped for in the educational reforms since 1944 were being realised by the school attended.

> *"I remember lots of kids being really good at Art and Arts subjects…. "JOC" …. local well known musician, he was in the same class as me. He was great at Art but got no encouragement…. nobody mentioned Art School or anything like that."* [393]

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[393] Penrhyn St and Roscommon secondary modern school.

By the time Ann was in secondary school, the reforms of the previous decade and a half should have been evident in her schooling but this did not prove to be the case.

A7 "James"

James was born a few streets away from Ann but he did pass the 11plus and attended a prestigious grammar school in Everton, The Collegiate. James was interviewed in a private space in The Redmonds Building, part of Liverpool John Moores University. The interview was arranged via email, took place on 14th April 2018 lasting for 1.5 hours. James felt a frustration that he had wanted to learn but had not felt able to do so and that his education had primarily been as a mature adult learner. This interview reveals the differences in school structure and culture and the challenges facing a working class child in a grammar school environment. Family bereavement at a young age and poverty were significant in his story. Essentially for James, despite the 11 plus success and the grammar school opportunity the aspirations and expectations continued to be self- fulfilling:

> "*My dad had been a Drayman, manual work and I suppose it was just expected that we would all do manual work as well."* [394]

His narrative speaks about difference and the cultural gap faced by a local boy attending a prestigious school. There continued to be little by way of parental expectation in the case of James and the children passing to go to grammar school were still very much the minority. However little the expectation, success was met with pride.

> "*I think there were three of us from my junior school who went up to the grammar. My Dad walked me in the first day. My Dad died when I was 12*

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[394] James, A7, interviewed on 14/4/2018.

just after I went to the grammar. My Dad was made up when I passed to go to grammar School and went to The Collegiate."

However, family circumstances meant that support to achieve success and integration into the Grammar school environment was not achievable. The Collegiate Institute, according to Sharples, had been structurally designed in such a way to separate students coming in to the school from different social classes. [395] Even without such direct segregation, the streaming system ensured there was limited social mixing. James was in one of the lower streams and recognised that whatever was intended for the lower streams, they would not be regarded as equal to the higher streams or gain attention from the teachers.

"it was a big school 25 to 30 in a class with forms running from A to F". [396]

Essentially for James, despite the grammar school opportunity, the economic necessity of the family continued to determine educational outcomes and he became an early leaver. [397]

"*You were part of the family income – it was the way it was."*

The participants of this time period should have been able to benefit from educational policy reform and improvements to school infrastructure. Although the trauma of the war years no longer dominates, poverty and the consequences of economic frailty continue to be referenced. Frank enjoyed school and successfully completed a series of national examinations, GCEs. Neither Ann nor

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[395] Sharples, *Liverpool,* p 62.

[396] The Collegiate – one of the most prestigious schools in Liverpool. Formed in 1843 it was structured around three day schools which admitted students based on class and three levels of variable fees reflecting this. In 1907 it became part of the school structure of Liverpool as a grammar school and became a comprehensive school in 1973, closing in 1985. www.liverpool-collegiate.org.uk. (Accessed 23/01/2020).

[397] School leaving age was determined by birthday rather than the end of the academic year and it was common for pupils to leave as soon as it was legally possible for them to do so. Tomlinson refers to a government report 'Early Leaving' in 1954 which noted that pupils from lower socio-economic groups were more likely to leave school early regardless of the type of school they attended. Tomlinson, *Education in a Post-Welfare Society*, p18.

James left school with qualifications although the structure for national examinations was well established. The relevance of the national qualification structure will be further explored in the next chapter.

Participants in Time Period Three: The Beneficiaries

Table 6: Participants Period Three

Time Period	A8 1960s 1970s	A9 1960s 1970s	A10 1970s
Pseudonym	Sarah	Edward	Bob
DOB	1958	1961	1961
Interview date	17/06/2018	04/08/2017	12/03/2019

A8 "Sarah"

Sarah is the first of the participants to represent the later part of the timeline. Her father died when she was a baby and while the family were Catholic, Sarah was christened a Protestant and remained so. Sarah is the first of the participants to have attended a purpose built comprehensive school; Anfield Comprehensive. Sarah's interview took place in a private space in The Redmonds Building, part of Liverpool John Moores University. The interview was one shorter than some others being completed in 1 hour and ten minutes. The interview took place on 17th June 2018. Sarah's memories of school are happy ones despite difficulty and poverty and had particular memories relating to school food.

> "*I was at Heyworth Street Primary until 11 and I can still remember the smell and the little bottles of milk. I remember school dinners; chocolate sponge with chocolate custard was the main favourite.*"

> "*We used to have different coloured blocks for counting in the infants and I remember liking the different colours but the teachers were so strict it was unbelievable.*" [398]

She recalls friendships from her primary school days and these memories were important to her:

> "*Me and my mates were in a photo which has been displayed in the museum, we looked so happy. We didn't know the photo was being taken, we were skipping around the playground, there was no question about not being happy when you were at school.*"

Sarah's stories reflect pastoral care and the support she and her Mum received from teachers and schools.

> "*You could go to the teachers about everything – they were always good to my mum, they would talk to her.*"

Sarah felt safe at school but understood that she didn't really take the education side of school very seriously. The transition to secondary school was remembered not so much for the selection process at 11 but, for Sarah, by the changes housing policy had made to her life. From being at a primary where she knew all the children well, the transfer to secondary was to feel very different:

> "*There were only a few of us from infants left. The boys went to Campion. There were 6 girls left and we all went to Anfield. I never passed the 11*

[398] Sarah, A8, Interviewed 17/6/2018.

plus because I didn't listen in class but there was no animosity and we all did well enough"

A9 "Edward"

Edward is a male who passed the 11 plus and attended a prestigious Catholic grammar school outside Everton but left it after eighteen months to return to an Everton secondary school where he thrived and felt more comfortable with his surroundings. Edward was interviewed at home on 4th August 2017 and the interview lasted for 2 hours and 10 minutes. Born in 1961, Edward was considerably younger than his other siblings and felt that this made life a little easier for him.

> "*I was a lot younger than my brothers and sister and was academically ahead. My primary school … was close to home, a small school and 45 years later I am still mates with some of the lads I went with in that first week.*" [399]

In trying to define this difference between the school and home culture Edward recalled that it was a forty minute bus ride away and:

> "*I remember some houses just had a name not a number.*"

Thinking about the other pupils in the school, he felt the majority were from the more affluent south of Liverpool suburbs:

> "*I had more in common with the non- grammar streams back home. Looking back I didn't feel inferior about where I came from. The best things about school were the mates, mates who are still mates, from around here …. all cut from the same cloth.*"

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[399] Edward, A9, interviewed on 4/8/2017.

He did not feel intimidated by the grammar school ethos, it was more that he sensed that he was not suited to the environment or the culture.

> *"There was nothing appalling or bullying at Cardinal Newman but I avoided going….I just didn't like it"*

On returning to Everton to St Gregory's secondary modern school, Edward felt the benefit of a different school culture. He felt that he was supported in his school work but also that discipline worked because there was respect between teachers and pupils.

> *"There was trust…I still work with this today, school taught me what I needed to make my life work…. I like flexibility, I like to work when I'm ready not at prescribed times."*

Overall, Edward felt that school had given him the tools he needed to make his way in the world.

> *"The love of history, especially political history and geography and travel has stayed with me. Other uses from school days…. I guess I use Maths on a daily basis in business life."*

Edward's relationship with formal education became more positive when he changed schools and the development of a wider range of options in the curriculum becomes apparent through this narrative.

A10 "Bob"

Bob was the only one of the participants who chose to be interviewed in a neutral public venue although all were offered this alternative. The interview took place in the café at the Everyman Theatre. It lasted for 2.5 hours and was punctuated by coffee breaks. The interview took place on 26th September 2018. The last of the participants in chronological terms, Bob, who was at school in the late sixties

and into the seventies, continued to feel the impact of the housing shortage in Liverpool.

> "Where we lived was quite damp. We got moved to Knotty Ash from Edge Lane because of my health. We thought it was dead posh compared to Edge Lane. There were six of us in this flat in Edge Lane, mum dad and four of us. Got points because of my illness." [400]

Bob was also born in 1961, suffered ill health as a child and was educated apart from the mainstream because of this. Although protected in his primary education, Bob was allocated to a secondary school outside his area, Campion, which had falling roles due to the housing policy and falling population of the Everton area. Bob was bussed into Everton to go to Campion due to falling admissions.[401]

> "*Lessons were frequently disrupted. Some teachers would lose their temper others were strict and controlled the classes but anyone perceived as weak, young, not from Liverpool, were just hassled all the time.*"

The last in the timeline cases, Bob describes the safety he finally felt on reaching sixth form. Although it was unplanned, thirty years after the Education Act 1944, Bob was the first of the participants to go to University. On reflection, Bob felt that the experience at Campion had helped him in his future career as a schoolteacher.

> "*We were prefects and we were left to prefect the school…. and we were to be on duty with the hard knocks but maybe the future teacher in me was there cos I remember that if you said to some of them 'get out' that wouldn't*

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[400] Bob, A10, interviewed 26/9/2018. Spicker, P., *Allocation of Council Housing*, London, Shelter, 1983. In a report published by Shelter, Spicker discusses the system which was intended to allocate housing on the basis of need which would have included additional consideration for a child with health issues.
[401] Campion Catholic High School became a comprehensive school following amalgamation in 1981. Website: www.liverpool-schools-co.uk (Accessed 3/9/2020).

work so I would just talk to them about the match… did you go see Everton

and then…. would you mind going out" [402]

Bob focused on the importance of having a sixth form in the school was to him as he would not have had the grades to take A levels in a College and so would have been unlikely to continue his education. Bob also felt that the lack of employment options helped him to opt for continuing studies which at that time was fully funded with a maintenance grant based on family income. Bob's narrative illustrates the falling enrolment in Everton schools as the population diminished. It further presents a route through the system from school into Higher Education due to supportive admissions criteria into sixth form.

Conclusions

This chapter introduces the participants and identifies their positioning on the timeline and describes the interview preparation and environment. The chapter provides an abstract relating to each of the participants building a framework from which to view the more detailed consideration of themes relating to the interviews. The chapter introduces individual and familial circumstances, and a taste of the voice of the ten participants. In addition to tracking the progress of education policy at the level of the individual, the mix of participants provides some insight into responses to education across the timeline noting gendered and cultural differences. The value of purposive sampling can be seen through the selected range of participants giving appreciation of the differing cultures and values of as a cohort of entirely male, female, catholic, or protestant participants might have had more in common but would not have provided evidence of variance and

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[402] Colloquial – tough kids

similarity across different school cultures. The physical proximity of the schools attended and the commonality of poverty indicators within the testimonies suggest that the economic frailty and inadequate housing were shared contextual elements for all participants. The experiences reveal diversity in quality of schooling both synchronously and across the timeline. The relationship between consistency of experience and positioning on the timeline allows for an assessment of the direction of travel in the development of educational outcomes. These differences, as articulated by the participants form the next chapter which will develop the themes emergent from the data.

CHAPTER FIVE

EXPERIENCES AND PERSPECTIVES EXPRESSED IN THEMES DERIVED FROM THE NARRATIVES

Introduction

The participant voice will now be considered within the analytical framework identified in the methodology. As discussed in the methodology chapter, the framework will utilise chronological positioning, themes identified through data reduction and significant experiences revealed through multiple readings using different lenses to interpret the data.[403] The participant voice is viewed across the themes which taken together, provide a case study of experience in Everton. The recognition of the importance of Everton as a basis for the case reflects both theory and the memories of the participants. In building a case study of Everton, the views of Yin have been acknowledged. [404] Yin recognised that in building the narratives into a case there is the opportunity to understand the nature and complexity of relationships between the themes.

The themes identified following data reduction are local and national policy on education, social influences and labour market. The themes are influenced by data reduction and historical context over the thirty year period. In defining the themes, weighting was given for elements included in multiple narratives and the extent of the coverage of the element in relation to the overall interview.

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[403] Discussed in detail in Chapter Three.
[404] Yin, *Case Study Research Design and Methods,* p 240.

Responses to National and Local Policy on Education

National and local education policy decisions influenced the school environment experienced by the participants. The interplay between national intent and local delivery was considered in the literature and this chapter now focuses on the relationship between participants and policy. Within this theme, four subthemes emerged: selection and admissions, curriculum, teachers, assessment and support.

Selection and admission to secondary school was referenced and entwined with the 11 plus for many participants. While the initial intent to widen opportunity did produce working-class success stories for others education was a source of disappointment and frustration. The grammar school environment did not appear to appreciate the different cultural and social attitudes relating to children who passed the selection. The Crowther Report of 1959 noted the wastage of talent amongst working class leavers, and this wastage is underscored by the oral testimonies of some of the participants. [405] While national guidance on school organisation remained advisory for much of the period covered this left the management of school policy at local level. Local interests, primarily religious affiliation and geography played a major part in the lived experience of school children in Everton. While there is no claim that these narratives are representative, they do highlight the way policy interacted with school culture to enhance or thwart the learning experience.

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[405] The Crowther Report, *15-18*, A report of the Central Advisory Council for Education, HMSO, 1959. (London: Her Majesty's Stationery Office, 1959)

An example of the disparity between national policy and the experiences of the participants can be seen in the final experience of school years and the transition from school to work. The qualification or reference on leaving raised many questions about entry to public examinations. While some well-established processes existed to include children in a formalised qualifications process a number of participants left school with only a reference having not been entered into national examinations. In part, this could be explained by the disparity in school leaving age set at 15 as GCE examinations were taken at 16. However, the raising of the school leaving age at 16 did not always result in examination achievement.[406] The GCE (General Certificate of Education) only features in the later testimonies within the research and Spencer comments that those attending secondary modern schools were actively prevented from taking GCE qualifications.[407] The GCE was supported by introduction of the CSE examination in 1965.[408] CSE assessment differed from the GCEs with diversity of assessment in vocational as well as academic subjects. Despite the existence of both forms of national qualification, the school reference continued to be the primary provider of evidence in the experience of one of the participants attending secondary school.

In addition to national policy, social influencers were examined and appear to suggest a more complex area as the memories as were multivariate. However, three significant subgroupings emerged: family and networks; importance of place and geography; culture. Culture has been very broadly defined in this work

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[406] Brooks, 'The role of external examinations in the making of secondary modern schools in England 1945-1965', p 454.
[407] Spencer, *Gender, Work and Education in Britain in the 1950s*, p 51.
[408] Certificate of Secondary Education was introduced in 1965 to ensure that pupils leaving school had some formal documentation beyond the school report.

to include religious affiliation. Family circumstances, economic frailty and expectation influenced responses to education from all participants regardless of positioning across the timeline. Fragmentation and dislocation were also commonly reported. While earlier participants suffered fragmentation of their education due to the war, in subsequent years, dislocation was discussed in relation to the housing clearance policy of the local authority.

The final theme considers the relationship between school, environment and entry into the labour market. In reflecting on their school days, participants were united in a desire to comment on what happened immediately after school and their thoughts have been assembled into two sub-themes: aspiration and lost opportunity.

Admissions and School selection

The conditions of a wartime childhood create the context for participants in the early part of the timeline and the difficulties of maintaining coherence in education in the chaos of war can be seen through the narratives. The allocation of children to schools was disrupted by bomb damage and by the exit and return of evacuated children.

Mary, the oldest participant, was educated pre 1944 and experienced a school conventionally organised into primary and secondary elements. Mary remembered that you went to the school allocated to children on your street,[409] originally Christchurch, but schooling was disrupted by the blitz.

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[409] The application to and allocation of children to schools was to become more complicated than the geographical distribution described by the pre-war and wartime participants.

"*…the war was on and both the church and the school were bombed. After the bombing I went to Penrhyn Street for two years until I was 11. After the juniors I went to Roscommon which was a bit more serious but I was happy".* (Mary)

The bombing of her Christchurch school was reported in a very matter of fact way. For Mary, it simply reflected the reality of the time. Mary recalled the night a class-mate died in the bombing; just a few blocks away from her own house. They were sad, she remembered, but they went to school as normal that morning. It was, she remembered, what you did. Mary remembered that schooling continued during the war years and that the family respected and valued both the school and the teachers providing the education. [410]

Both Mary and Tom returned to the city during the war after being evacuated. The extent to which the city infrastructure was affected by the wartime bombing becomes apparent through the narratives and the returning children did not necessarily return to a place of learning. While school organisation for Mary was conventional even in wartime, Tom recalls:

"Should've gone into juniors being my age but no spaces…. with the bombing…. so went to infants. Don't know how long was in the infants for."

"Neither the infants St Francis, or SFX the juniors had enough teachers. [411] There were 60 or 70 kids crammed into a room. (The infants) That was crowded, packed out too…. they had no books they gave you a pencil and if you lost it that was it - nothing at all." (Tom)

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[410] Despite the chaos of the war the efforts of families to educate their children was evidenced in the narratives.
[411] Everton based Catholic schools St Francis Xavier known by the abbreviation SFX.

Mary remembered the allocation of places at secondary school as being purely dependent on which end of the street a child lived. Geography defined school allocation and the pre-war population of Everton was predominantly segregated on religious grounds meaning that the schools were inevitably segregated too.

If there was a selection element in the transfer to secondary school, neither Mary nor Tom were not aware of it. Mary recalls Roscommon Street as being a modern school, with facilities for science and domestic classes, which played a major part in the school day for her. For both Mary and Tom, school allocation was dependant on availability and the extent of bomb damage to the institutions they were attending.

As children, Tom and Mary would be viewed by the education system as having concrete rather than intellectual skills and were perceived as having 'interest only in the moment'. [412] Young women's relationship with work was shaped by family, by needs, relationships and this was understood by Todd in discussing changing working patterns for women.[413] However, it was also shaped by expectation or perhaps, more accurately, a lack of expectation and in this way, the additional years schooling served only to reinforce the existing social order.[414] A few years younger than Mary and Tom, Linda started school just after the end of World War 2. Linda concluded that movement from primary to secondary was seen by her and her peers as automatic, although the 11 plus well established and was taken, it was not a significant event. Linda did not recall preparation for the test nor the implications of the pass/ fail.

[412]The Norwood Report 1943, Committee of the Secondary School Examinations Council, *Curriculum and Examinations in Secondary Schools*.

[413] Todd, *Young women, Work and Family in England*, *1918-1950*, p 53.

[414] Halsley, 'Higher Education' in Trends in British Society since 1900*, Chapter in *: A Guide to the Changing Social Structure of Britain* ed. by A.H. Halsey, pp 268-296.

"Went in for the 11 plus but didn't pass it, got told you nearly passed…. don't know what that was supposed to mean." (Linda)

School transfer at eleven, however, was remembered vividly by one of the participants, Jane, who opened her narrative with stories around the taking of the examination and continued to refer to it at times throughout the narrative. Jane was later to go to Roscommon secondary modern school and her recall about the transition to secondary school seems to be more of a priority than for any of the other participants across all three time periods. Jane remembers feeling really frightened as the time came for her to take the 11 plus.

"I was worried because if I passed I knew I wouldn't be able to go because at the time…. the position we were in…. there was no money…no money for uniforms" (Jane)

"What I was thinking was if I pass this exam and I go to another school I would have to have a new uniform and…. and I remember making deliberate mistakes." (Jane)

This participant was very aware of the impact a grammar school education would have had on family finances which were precarious. [415] Awareness of the financial position of the family was not unusual in participants irrespective of their positioning along the timeline. Recalling a belief that she had made deliberate mistakes to avoid putting financial pressure on a fragile family economy, Jane felt the burden of the lost opportunity:

"I can't say I would have passed that exam but that's how I felt."

"Anyway…. when I got there, I loved Roscommon Street." (Jane)

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[415] Brown, The *Death of Christian Britain*, p 175. Brown believed that the 1950s was a period of submission to family values and duty and the narratives show examples of how as children and young adults the participants understood their responsibility to the wider family.

Linda, who had little recall of the 11 plus herself, talked about her brother, who passed to go to the Collegiate but didn't take his place due to economic pressures on the family. [416]

> "*We were too proud. My mum wouldn't have any help for him to go to school…. she was bringing him up and that was that.*" (Linda)

Jane felt that the pressure on her family would be too great if she passed to go to grammar school. From her primary school days she remembered:

> "*Three girls I knew went on to Queen Mary High…. this girl… she had a gorgeous uniform…. it could have been me but I remember deliberately making two mistakes on the paper*". [417] (Jane)

Opportunity to sit the 11 plus, ostensibly open to all, was in itself limited as, until 1959, children were entered only if parents expressed a desire for them to do so. [418] This would have excluded children from homes where the business of education was seen as the property of the school and parental involvement was more limited. For the participants of this research, home was quite separate from school and the school ethos directed the outcomes for the child. James remembered taking the 11plus but not being prepared for it:

> "*Nobody made a fuss about the 11 plus at home or at school, we just did it one day – it was just another test.*" (James)

The lack of engagement with education outside of the school gates and the emphasis on behaviour rather than attainment has contextual links to the reality of life for Liverpool families. Frank was moved from The Friary to SFX infants as a direct parental intervention but other than that example, school both primary

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[416] A prestigious grammar school on Shaw Street, Liverpool.
[417] Became Holly Lodge High School.
[418] Mays, *Education and the Urban Child*, pp 126-128.

and secondary was decided by religious affiliation, a feature of geography, or by selection at 11. There were some alternative methods of entry to secondary school but these were only cited by one participant. When he reached final year in primary, Frank recalled singing tests for entry to the Cathedral Choir which would give you a place at SFX College. [419] Frank auditioned but was happy not to get a place as choir practice would have clashed with football. Similar to James, Frank remembered taking the 11 plus without much attention:

> *"Did the 11 plus just went in and did it. But you took exams all the time anyway so it was just another one."*

He remembered that the test contained Maths, English and an Intelligence test. After all this time, the recall of a question that he couldn't do was still strong. It signals that some of the questions would be culturally exclusive using vocabulary that might not form part of school preparation for the 11 plus.

> *"Always remember on the intelligence test…. I did 99 questions. But there was this one …. you had to find the word. The question was dwelling and there was a gap, ____ and then the word galow. So, …..galow meaning dwelling – It was bungalow…. I'd never heard of it… I knew what a prefab was but had never seen or heard of a bungalow."* (Frank)

With regard to the choice of school, Frank remembered that the Headteacher told the pupils what to put in as school choice and then to take the letter home. There was no consideration of alternative choices from the child or the family.

> *"We just did what we were told."* (Frank)

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[419] The Catholic Cathedral – Metropolitan Cathedral of Christ the King has a choir for which primary age children audition for a place at a prestigious school, previously SFX College, now St Edwards College.

In the inner city wards and districts, the social stratification of education continued to afford limited opportunity despite the rhetoric and expectations of the politicians and policy makers. Ann recalls of her school days:

"Even when people passed the 11 plus they didn't always go to the school ….it was hard…. uniforms, tennis racquets… people couldn't afford it. Parents weren't confident enough to send them there…. couldn't deal with it …. affordability but also fear…." (Ann)

Ann eloquently discusses the realities of life and the culture clashes. There is pride at both the family and community level in not wanting to be seen as the poor relations in a grammar school culture. There was also the very real fear of how this might work, not just financially but in terms of fitting in socially.[420]

For James, a love of sports supported him in making the jump across the primary to grammar school divide, but the relative freedom of the primary school was missed. James recalls:

"everything was very structured, big timetable, very formal…. masters wearing gowns…. I had never seen anything like that." (James)

Edward also passed the 11 plus but spent only eighteen months in the grammar system which involved a bus journey of about 40 minutes to another part of the city.

Family and personal pride in passing the 11 plus was in evidence from the narratives of Bill and Edward, but there is also a sense of the culture shock for the children involved. For the children, they left a comfortable and flexible primary system into a structured, rigid regime which did not appear to understand or

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[420] Reflects the work of Bourdieu and Gaine (p99). The literature of social exclusion and alienation is discussed in Chapters 2,6 and 7.

respect the needs of children from a different background. When Edward made the decision to return to school in Everton, it was to a school which was intended to cater for the secondary modern streams but was under-populated.[421] In making the decision to return to be schooled in Everton, the most important factor for Edward was to be back with the community he had grown up in. Even where children had enough family support to be able to be able to take up their place in a selective school, there was no support available to prepare pupils for the cultural and social differences they would face.

Selection at 11 was a political issue over the whole of the time period and formed part of the election campaign in 1966 when Labour won with an increased majority. This should have influenced choice for the participants but there was no compulsion for local authorities to reorganise into comprehensive systems. When the Conservatives came to power in the 1970's they were pragmatic about the comprehensive alternative to selection at eleven. In part, this was led by financial imperatives, but there was also concern about Conservative voting, risk averse, rising suburban populations. The growth in professional and semi-professional jobs and attitudes increased the tendency for parents to view comprehensive schools as a less threatening alternative for their children then prospective failure and a place in a secondary modern school. [422] Within the narratives there is clear separation of school and parental involvement until Bob in the 1970s by which time nationally parents were recognisably a vocal stakeholder in education.

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[421] One of the consequences of the housing clearance was that schools in the Everton area were left with a much smaller population, resulting in reduced funding and a smaller pool of school age children to draw applicants from.

[422] Middle class views on comprehensive education: Lowe, *The Changing Comprehensive School*, p 8; Benn, *School Wars*, p 58; Williams, *Climbing the Bookshelves*, p 170.

In Everton, during the time period, both religious and secular schools operated the 11 plus system. The participants who passed the 11 plus were all male and the female participants all went to the nearest allocated secondary modern schools. In addition to considering the impact of selection for school, the nature of the curriculum while at school was a consistent theme raised through the interviews.

Curriculum

Participant content regarding the school curriculum reveals some insights on educational limitations of working-class children, reflecting class and gender assumptions about requirements in life. The content of the curriculum reflected a lack of ambition for the wartime and immediately post war children.

Mary particularly remembered being good at needlework and the creation of an embroidered butterfly chair back which the teacher took home with her on completion. History and Geography were recalled fondly and showed an interest in a world outside their own. Mary was particularly interested in:" *learning about Egypt".* (Mary)

The curriculum recalled by Mary and Linda includes some of these gender specific 'concrete things', e.g. cookery, sewing, domestic hygiene but the school week also included formally structured singing, painting, music and country dancing classes. Mary and her peers, destined neither for the grammar school nor technical school their relationship with education was defined by the policy makers as having interest only in "concrete things" [423]

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[423] The Norwood Report 1943, Committee of the Secondary School Examinations Council, *Curriculum and Examinations in Secondary Schools*.

Mary, Linda and Jane attended school at a time when domestic subjects influenced the curriculum nationally and across all categories of school. There would, however, still have been quite a degree of variation as the schools themselves were arbiters of the curriculum. The lessons were recalled quite vividly by the participants. Domestic science and needlework were distinct areas as were cookery, baking and hygiene. Linda remembers:

"You started sewing class and you started making an apron. By the time you'd finished your pinny and your hat that you'd go onto cookery then. [424] You went to cookery but you didn't cook, you learned how to wash dishes, clean the cooker, clean the cutlery drawers, wash clothes and starch clothes. That was good." (Linda)

Jane remembers a more conventional curriculum:

"I loved handwriting and English and was good at the spelling tests. I wasn't bad with the maths either." (Jane)

The narratives revealed considerable variation in curriculum content particularly with respect to the level of religious education. Individual schools retained control of the curriculum and school governing bodies and headteachers had the power to direct teaching practice. Although the syllabus was set for national public examinations, where schools were not preparing their pupils for these, localised curricula responses appeared. This practice did not solely apply to those pupils in wartime or immediately post wartime schooling as is illustrated by Ann's testimony.[425]

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[424] Pinafore to be used in cookery.
[425] Ann, A6, interviewed 6/5/2017.

The recall over time is interesting and bears additional analysis. Informal learning associated with the Arts and non - traditional classes were remembered with greater clarity than more traditional academic learning by some participants. Two decades later, Sarah recalls visits to the museums and local history such as learning about the building of the cathedrals as being memorable parts of childhood learning:

> *"I loved history. We learned all about the cathedrals, even though it was a Church of England school, we learned about the Wigwam."* [426](Sarah)

If there were limitations to the curriculum, these were not felt by Sarah, who felt content with the education she received:

> *"We learned 'everything' we needed to know…. school visits to the museum and the Walker art gallery. Every month we all went to Margaret Street baths. I was goal attack in the school netball team."* [427] (Sarah)

Physical education featured in the narratives of all the participants. James had very positive memories of his early years schooling

> "*What I remember most are the occasions like the Harvest Festival and football…we were always playing football*" (James)

Sport in some form, visits to Margaret Street Baths, physical movement was a consistent memory for the children in all time periods.

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[426] The Metropolitan Cathedral of Christ the King – the Catholic Cathedral was known locally as the Wigwam due to the design.

[427] Margaret Street Baths was referenced by Tom, Frank and James also as a place visited primarily on school trips. Although it does not fall within the scope of this study a history of Margaret Street Baths and memories of the Baths would provide an interesting cultural study. Margaret Street Baths opened in 1863 and did not close until 1985. A posting from @Liverpool1207 on Twitter attracted memories of using the baths for swimming and also to take a bath. (Posted 18/06/2020; Accessed 01/05/2021).

The curriculum was heavily gendered in terms of content but both male and female respondents enjoyed sporting activities and the PE classes. Jane remembers: *"I loved netball and PE; Country dancing…. wouldn't do that now would they?"* (Jane)

Mostly there was a fond remembrance of sporting activities but the last of the participants, Bob, commented that:

> *"Everyone talked about football, played football…. it would be a really intolerant place if you didn't conform to the football scene, culture was macho and violent constant fighting."* (Bob).

For children attending Catholic schools, the extent of religion in the curriculum was remembered vividly. The Catholic hierarchy had opted out of the funding compromise agreed by their Church of England counterparts so the freedom to influence the content of the curriculum was devolved to local level.[428] An area which demonstrates this local school power most effectively is within the teaching of religion, particularly in Catholic schools. Having opted out of the funding regime that would have given local authority oversight, the Catholic schools embedded religion in the classroom. Control of the teaching, text- books and organisation of the schools had been part of the reason for not compromising and taking a different path to the Church of England. The impact of this decision was felt deeply by the participants educated through the Catholic system.

A normal day at primary school was described by Tom:

> *"At the time, it was all religion…. that was all they ever taught us. An hour religion first thing – hymns and the catechism. You had to learn the*

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[428] Elliott, *Between Two Worlds: the Catholic Educational Dilemma in 1944,* pp 661-683. Jones, *Education in Britain*, p 42.

catechism. Little yellow book…. you had to take it home with you too. Then about half past ten we went to play for half hour. Then just a story and then dinner time. Come back at half past one. After dinner another hour religion, then time to go home. That was the pattern of the day." (Tom)

The primacy of religious education in the Catholic system was also referred to by Linda and some years later by Frank. Without any centralised input into the curriculum the space given to religious education was remembered by the participants as disproportionate. Frank recalls:

"I remember religion thrown at you, it was all religion, religion, religion. Assembly first thing…the priest would come in you were asked about going to mass and benediction and the colour of the vestments." (Frank)

Linda said of her school day:

"Started you off with sewing, cooking, maths and English but religion was the first thing you did. Every day and before and after your dinner. Every Tuesday went to mass with the school." (Linda)

The extent of religious content at the expense of a wider perspective and attention to core skills is particularly revealing about the expectations of some religious leaders in relation to their young. For Tom, Frank and Linda following the rules, respecting the system and expecting little were culturally ingrained. Frank remembered that the teaching of religion was by repetition and that:

"We learned all the things about Communion and Confirmation. We learned it all by heart even if we didn't have a clue what it meant." (Frank)[429]

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[429] Brown, *The Death of Christian Britain,* p 150. Although based in an earlier time period, Brown asserts that only a small proportion of the working class attended church services with the exception of Irish

Sectarian divides in the city of Liverpool were still evident in the 40s 50s and 60s although less violent and less high profile than in previous generations. There remained a feeling of separation for some children and many streets were segregated by religion so that some children did not naturally mix with children from other schools. By the mid-1960s, there is evidence of this having broken down in some circles, for example, in Sarah's story, but for others religious segregation continued to be a theme throughout their school lives. [430] Curriculum content is clouded by the impact of large tranches of religious doctrine for a number of participants and gendered and class based assumptions about educational need. For the female participants, cookery and home related subjects were consistent parts of school life. These brought challenges in themselves; Jane was aware of the difficulty some households felt in providing ingredients for cookery lessons and recalled the positive support from Miss Connolly and the school:

"If the mothers didn't have the stuff for the cookery class to take in then they bought it themselves at school" [431] (Jane)

Some of the more positive memories of formal and informal education come from the primary school years and the aspiration for broader education can be seen in this memory from James: "*I do remember doing French and enjoying it."* (James) However, his clearest memory was of a practical skill:

"*I loved it when we made things with our hands. We made a Viking Village with papier mâché, lots of detail in it…"* (James)

Catholics. The positioning of religion in a community such as Everton may not fit with the national picture and as such, its importance to education policy and decisions may have been overlooked.
[430] Further discussion of Sarah's family position can be found in the section on Social Influences later in this Chapter.
[431] Miss Connolly was Head of Roscommon Secondary School at the time Jane attended.

This is one of the references indicating that the absence of a technical option for children of this time and place may have been a real loss by way of educational outcome. A lack of resources and clear direction from the politicians and policy makers meant that the technical option was available to relatively few in England and simply unavailable for the participants in Everton. The participants who revealed a real interest in the technical or who were unsuited to the grammar school culture might have had different outcomes had there been a technical option. Given that the curriculum was not prescribed, the narrowness of the curriculum in most accounts points towards a missed opportunity both in terms of engaging the pupils and preparing them for their futures beyond the school gates. Halsey recognised that working-class children were failing to succeed either by not passing the 11 plus or by being unable to capitalise on the opportunities that were on offer if they were given a place in a grammar school. [432]

For Bob, the curriculum at his school, Campion, perhaps reflected the days when the school buildings had been a grammar school. The curriculum at Campion continued to reflect the conventional grammar school diet with languages being studied. There was little guidance about what to take or how any of the subjects might relate to work but Bob recalled being pushed away from practical areas as he was seen as academic:

> *"I carved out my own little humanities world… only did the social sciences, hopeless at maths".* (Bob)

In contrast to other participants, the chaotic feel of the classroom was the abiding memory for Bob:

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[432] Halsley, 'Higher Education' in *Trends in British Society since 1900: A Guide to the Changing Social Structure of Britain*, pp. 268-296.

"I opted to do economics and thought there wouldn't be any divvies doing it and the first lesson we had the teacher came in and Wiggie just launched the desk at the teacher and then walked off – he was crazy."

"Music teacher got beaten up in class; English teacher got beaten up at the swimming baths…. he tried to break up a fight. At 15 or 16 years old some were physically as big as the teachers. Not happy memories." (Bob)

Within the narratives, recall of the curriculum was often tied in with memories of the teacher involved. While the relationship with the curriculum was affected by the positioning on the timeline, or the religious affiliation of the school, the relationship with teachers reveals differences in the experience which cannot be attributed to either geographical location or the timeline. The next section looks at the role of teachers played in the experience and expectations of the participants.

Teachers

Edward identified concerns about the perceived attitude of the teaching staff towards him and others from the area who had passed the 11 plus. He found the teachers appeared to have preconceived expectations of children from working-class communities. Edward believed that at his grammar school, the children travelling in from Everton were disadvantaged. [433]

"*.. some good lads but there was a lot of snobbery from the teachers."* (Edward)

Edward felt that the way in which the teaching staff responded to the working-class children differed: "*Teachers were aware of who people were…. that we were from another part of the city"* (Edward)

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[433] The Catholic grammar schools, once represented in Everton (SFX) had moved into the suburbs of South Liverpool and West Derby village by the time Edward was in school.

Fenwick points to resistance felt by some teachers at grammar school for having to manage those who did not fit with the culture of the school.[434] Certainly the experience of Edward would suggest that the grammar he attended did not make any effort to connect with his social background and that his tested intelligence was not enough on its own to persuade the school of his value. Leaving after only 18 months in the system showed awareness that the culture would have completely alienated him from the education system. Recognising that he would simply have dropped out he returned to Everton to complete his schooling.

> "*It was good to be back home. It was a good year at St Gregs – good positive behaviour….it was a much better school than Cardinal Newman.*"
> (Edward) [435]

The behaviour of both students and teachers at St Gregs was perceived by Edward as being positive and supportive. His experience ran counter to the narrative of behaviour and attitudes to learning in secondary modern schools. In contrast to James, at a grammar school, Edward highlighted the pastoral care and cultural appreciation from the teaching staff.

> "*Our class was treated as though we were responsible and if we wanted support, we could get it from the teachers*" (Edward)

Edward felt supported and also that the school was prepared to offer resources that might not have been available in the home. Indeed, one of the potential differences in experience may well have been the understanding that resources might not have been available in the home. He had a particular memory of the school being opened up on a Saturday and recalled:

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[434] Fenwick, *The Comprehensive School,* Kindle edition, p 1221.
[435] Bourke, *Working Class Cultures in Britain 1890-1968,* p 3 reflects the strength of a sense of belonging in working- class individuals.

> "*the teacher being there on a Saturday to help us get a Geography project done…. now, that would never have happened at Cardinal Newman.*"
>
> (Edward)

In reviewing education policy, Bates discussed the expectation from the policy makers that the grammar school system would encourage social mixing but the evidence from Edward is that, for him, the social groupings remained static. [436] The relationship with the teachers was also seen as somewhat distant by some participants with little by way of a relationships being built. Ann reflected on how different the teachers seemed:

> "*Teachers were not from here…. not part of us…. from the Wirral or somewhere else in the area…. they were a different breed.*" [437] (Ann)

This was echoed by Jane who recalled:

> "*You never knew anything about the teachers and you never knew where they lived but they all came off the bus…. all on the bus no one had cars.*"
>
> (Jane)

There was respect but also in here a lack of trust, and for some participants, no confidence that these teachers would be on their side. Additionally, there was a lack of role modelling, little sense that teachers could have been part of and so understood a similar local community. James was the first of the participants to raise the issue of discipline in the classroom:

> "*We had all passed the 11 plus but it didn't mean that we were academically minded or that our behaviour was good*". (James)

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[436] Bates, *Education Policy, Practice and the Professional*, pp 137-149.

[437] The Wirral Peninsula on the opposite side of the River Mersey from Liverpool and perceived as more affluent and middle class.

There appears to be some gender differences in the recall of teacher control in the classroom, Jane, for example, felt that school was a place of learning and a place where teachers were respected :

"We worked hard you couldn't mess around in the class. You stood up when the teacher walked in – different classrooms for different lessons, although I don't remember being encouraged particularly." (Jane)

Sarah had particularly positive recollections of the teachers encountered. For Sarah, the level of trust in teachers was recognised as a considerable part of the support system to the family recalling that the teachers were particularly kind to her mum and recognised the difficulties she faced following bereavement. The intervention of the school to support Sarah was remembered in detail in a particular incident. The culture of respectability was also one of personal pride and a sense that you could look after your own without assistance. Sarah remembered that her mother would not accept free school meals for fear of Sarah being branded as the child of a poorer family. One summer, the school had organised a day trip requiring payment and Sarah recalls:

"My mum wouldn't claim school dinners or anything – she paid. School used to go to Hoylake and we had to pay. Mum said I couldn't go because there was no money. The school offered to pay but Mum refused… then the teacher came round and said that she has to go because it's a learning lesson and school paid. Still remember that." (Sarah)

Sarah's story indicates how important an intervention could be in creating a positive mind-set towards teachers and school. Sarah finished this part of her story saying:

"So different from now school felt totally safe…. teachers were your family then weren't they?" (Sarah)

James, at school during the same time period as Sarah, did not remember being so well supported. James had a real desire to learn but

"…. t*here wasn't any support if you were struggling…. you just had to get on with it…. the curriculum was delivered and that was that. You either passed or you failed. All the effort was made with the kids who were expected to pass."* (James)

James also expressed concern about classroom discipline at the grammar school he attended:

"I remember getting cross with some of the class one day because I just couldn't hear what the teacher was saying." (James)

The recall of disruption in grammar school classes runs counter to the more established narrative.[438] Discipline in the classroom was not the only area of school to disappoint James. He felt that the school did not treat the lower streams equally:

"I wasn't in one of the top sets… and the school only concentrated on the brightest and the best."

The social background of the children was visible through journeys to school, school meals and the quality and availability of the range of school uniform items and accessories required by the grammar schools. From the statements of the adults, it can be seen that the children, as children, were very aware of their difference. Edward recalls:

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[438] Mays, *Education and the Urban Child,* pp 187-189. Mays considered that home influence, particularly from fathers, bred indiscipline in the school environment.

> *"We were run of the mill and tended to be pigeon-holed by our backgrounds….. at the school there were wealthier families with smart school uniform."* (Edward)

The very formal structure of the school was recalled by James as being outside his experience and intimidating.

> *"Assembly was big…. all the masters on the stage…with their gowns…I joined the choir for a while – couldn't sing for toffee but wanted to see what it was like on that school stage."* (James)

This was an interesting insight into the motivation to fit in from James who, although internalising that he was not one of the chosen who would be accepted fully into school life, still felt curiosity and possibly ambition to be part be part of it all. Within his narrative there was no sense of dismissing the school culture as irrelevant but rather an indication of desire to be part of it. James was aware that he was in the bottom part of the school academically. There were three bottom set classes of thirty in the school so each year, ninety children had a broadly similar experience to James. He did not feel he was different to his peer group.

Family values from the interviews had reflected an inherent respect for teachers and pride in those gaining their place in the grammar system. However, for Edward, there is a view that the children from less privileged backgrounds were identifiable but not in a supportive way:

> *"The teachers treated us differently…. we might have had the same mark in getting in but we were not the same."* (Edward)

Capable enough to pass the 11 plus with few resources, the capacity to learn and willingness to do so was not enough to enable some children to succeed in the grammar school environment. School culture and teacher expectations played a part in shaping the experience of the participants. The capacity of the individual teachers to hold the attention and respect of the class mattered to Bob: *"I felt safest with the teachers who were strict…. you knew that something wasn't going to kick off."* [439] (Bob)

In contrast, a relaxed approach to learning was reported by Frank who said that school was:

> *"…. a good laugh but we did learn…. fractions and that. You didn't know you were learning, just did it without knowing."* (Frank)

Traditional methods of rote learning also dominated early accounts of the period. Frank spent some time talking about the methods of teaching he experienced and the level of discipline in the classroom. His recall was that there was a good deal of rote learning and that it was effective.

> *"Started off with multiplication tables in years two and three. Learned parrot fashion and that was best. We learned or you had a blackboard duster thrown at you."* (Frank)

Bob also recalled that teaching methods began to change in his final years at school and that in 6th form, a replacement teacher, new to teaching and from Liverpool, started to teach using group discussions: *"We worked for him and he worked for us. Enjoyed school, stayed back, used to work"* (Bob)

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[439] Colloquial meaning unruly behaviour was likely to start.

Support from the schools or individual teachers was seen to be important and pupils did not thrive when it was lacking. Teacher expectation or the absence of it is reflected in the narratives which connects with views from Tomlinson who reports that teachers found it hard to divest themselves of low expectations. [440] Gaine also reflects that social class is a fertile ground for creating stereotypical expectations.[441] Gaine refers to cultural deprivation and inadequate parenting and believed these accounted for an apparent lack of knowledge about how to support a child through school. The burden of looking beyond the stereotypes appears to sit with the individual school or teacher. While Edward points to out of school support from teachers in his narrative, James found that this was lacking:

"When your homework was marked it was just marked right or wrong no explanation." (James)

Tom, and Bob, both males, both in the Catholic system, are the two narratives most concerned with the impact of a failure in discipline in schools. For Tom, the problem was the teaching staff and casual violence of the dinner hour, for Bob the issue lay with the pupils and the ability of the school structure and teaching staff to manage its pupils:

"Only good thing in terms of the fighting was that it passed you by – tall and soft got you beaten up – being small it passed you by. Some kids were quite brutal so they would go for you if you were tall." (Bob) [442]

"Had a science teacher so strict no one talked. He had a cane. Some of the teachers could tell a story, good history teacher but some barely got a foot in the door before they had people abusing them and things." (Bob)

[440] Tomlinson, *Education in a post-welfare society*, p 21.
[441] Gaine and George, *Gender, Race and Class in Schooling,* pp 23-27.
[442] McCulloch and Sobell discuss the work of Hargreaves based in a northern town where two subcultures are identified, one positively oriented towards school and teachers the other negatively so. McCulloch and Sobell, Towards a Social History of the Secondary Modern Schools, *History of Education*, pp 275-386.

The question of the qualification of the teaching staff was raised by only two participants; Tom and Bob who were at opposite ends of the timeline. Both referred to the appointment of teachers from the armed forces following the war. Tom recalled seeing a documentary about teachers being trained quickly in the immediate post war years.

> *"Anyway, I seen a documentary a couple of years ago on the television, and it said that after the War, a million recruited out of army to train as teachers but they only trained for 12 months. I think they only trained them to tell stories because that's all they did…. nothing about what was happening now the war was over."* (Tom)

The Director of Education for Liverpool Education services talked about the resilience of teaching staff during the 'severe and disastrous experiences of wartime'.[443]   He felt that the problems facing Liverpool were at the time more complex and difficult than in any other area outside London. Mays, reporting in 1965, considered that the status of schoolteachers was high within communities, but the report also describes communities in Liverpool as being indifferent or even hostile to education, particularly if it interfered with the running of the family and domestic duties.[444] Thinking about his teachers, Frank recalled:

> *"Teachers were respected. If I went home with stories about being disciplined it would always be assumed I was in the wrong"* (Frank)

Perceptions of teacher attitude to pastoral support and expectations regarding classroom discipline and behaviour differed and was variable across the timeline. The relationship between home and school and the level of respect for schooling is revealing as parental attitudes are remembered as being positive, if distant,

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[443] Bridge, *My Liverpool Schools*, p 119.
[444] Mays, J., *Education and the Urban Child*, pp 97-115.

from the education process. Memories of school for many participants centred around their starting and leaving whether first days in primary or secondary education or indeed leaving school to start work. These transition points invariably resulted in discussion about examinations or the lack of them and the next section focuses on how such memories have been recalled by the participants.

Assessment and Support

This section looks at the way in which children experienced assessment and support in their school lives. The most potent of the assessment tools during the time period was the 11 plus and this featured in many of the participant memories. The validity of the 11 plus had been questioned since before its introduction and studies increasingly showed that the grammar school system had failed in opening up opportunity for working-class children.[445] Jones references sociological research establishing class based patterns of unequal access to education post school and noted that educational reform had done little to change the class structure.[446] The school attended also impacted on the qualifications gained on leaving school. Tom could not recall anyone in his school being successful in examinations and commented on the organisation of the school, with all ages and abilities kept together in crowded classrooms :*"All the lads in my street went to the school with me…. all as thick as me"* (Tom)

Despite having a totally unsupportive school experience, Tom commented on the perceived lack of ability within his peer group and his own lack of progression without blame or resentment. For other participants, levels of interest and talent

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[445] Simon, *Education and the Social Order* pp 142-143 discusses evidence from Middlesbrough and Hertfordshire showing that the proportion of working class children attending grammar schools had changed only marginally by 1956.
[446] Jones, *Education in Britain*, pp 6-7.

were not realised in conventional certification. Capture of school achievements through qualification is an area where national aspirations did not seem to be experienced by the participants. Prior to the development of national CSE examinations, the school report or reference was the only evidence some pupils had of attainment in school.[447] The school reference was the standard record of education for pupils at Roscommon and held in esteem by pupils and families and sought after by prospective employers. Many decades later, Mary was still in possession of her school reference. For Mary there was no recall of any involvement in or interest in public examinations. She was a prefect, which gave additional testimony to her good character.

A decade on from Mary, Jane left school with a reference also. She reports:

> "*You got your school reference card…. attendance, work… We feel that Jane would be a dependable employee*" (Jane).

Jane was not involved in any school discussion relating to examinations. Although the school leaving age had then reached fifteen, national examinations were taken a sixteen so not considered an option for Jane. Although there was a sense of pride in the reports and Jane had kept her report, it was little to show for the years of education. Even where working -class children such as James, had passed the 11 plus and attended a grammar school, there were some who did not take any formal recognised qualification. Simon, writing about the impact of the examination structure on school attainment notes that the GCE was the only accredited way into higher or further education or the professions and that as such, these were transported into the comprehensive system. Simon refers to

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[447] Simon, B., *Education and the Social Order*, p 303.

the examination process as a potent weapon in social engineering noting the design of the GCE for the grammar school environment.[448]

While some participants remember little about formal preparation for exams or the 11 plus, Frank remembers testing as being a regular part of primary school life.

> *"We had exams Christmas and summer. Mr O' Keefe the head teacher would ask you to say words out of book to test reading."* (Frank)

Teacher perceptions about educational need meant that accessibility to equipment was no guarantee of quality of education or access to examination entrance, as Ann commented:

> "*We had a science classroom but no lessons…. teacher just chatted to us….no content and no exams ...suppose he didn't see the point – why should we bother…. where's it going? "We weren't entered for any exams"* (Ann)[449]

Ann would have started secondary schooling at the same time, 1964, as the Labour Government was setting out its agenda for increasing access to education generally but science in particular. She recalled that the school had a purpose built science laboratory:

> "*It was a well-equipped school but we didn't use it…. the only time we did a science experiment was when we had a student teacher for a while*"

The scale of the wastage of talent is hard to comprehend. The resources were available, students were willing, but the culture of the school and education policy

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[448] Simon, *Education and the Social Order,* p 303.

[449] Medway, P., Hardcastle, P., Brewis, G., and Crook, D., *English Teachers in a Post-war Democracy: Emerging Choice in London Schools, 1945-1964*, New York, Springer, 2014. The researchers for this project examined three different schools and in all, including a secondary modern school, found intellectual development to be a consistent aim of the schools. This runs counter to the experience of the participant who started secondary schooling in 1964.

accepted that children transitioned from school to work without qualification: *"We wanted to learn but we weren't given the learning – we wanted education."* (Ann)

The variation in local conditions made it hard to deliver the hope established by the 1944 Act that the nature of a child's education should be based on capacity and promise not by the circumstances of his parents.

Although the curriculum was broad enough to include Arts and Humanities the teaching was not directed to any public examinations. Even though Ann was in the A stream, her experience of examinations was minimal:

> *"Didn't get to take GCEs or any exams just left at 15 – left in the Easter so looking back it wasn't a good education"* [450] (Ann).

Structuring the leaving age so that it could be reached by pupils earlier than the end of the academic year inevitably posed issues for examination entrance. For some participants, however, there seemed to be little engagement with or information about possible qualification routes. Combined with the culture of leaving school as soon as possible to support family finance, there was little to encourage the participants in the 1950s and 1960s to engage with external examinations. Many children, Ann and James in our sample, on reaching statutory leaving age, failed to complete their fourth year of secondary schooling. The Easter leavers ended their school life in the term in which they reached fifteen, so were not entered into the examination structure which was not structured to be inclusive. In their recall, the participants did not see themselves as different from their peers, they believed that the experience they reported was shared by others in their classroom, school, and community. In common with Ann, James also felt unsupported by the school structure.

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[450] Leaving school tended to be related to birthday month rather than linked to the national examination timetable.

".. there was nothing if you were struggling" (James)

"I was in the A class. The majority started work at 15. The school was well disciplined but I was mixing with people rougher than me…discipline was quite hard…. still using the cane and we were terrified of that …. I never got the cane…. but there were some rough girls and boys." (Ann)

Frank, Edward and Bob were entered into public examinations but for the other participants there was no culture of public examinations, no annual expectation of exams taken and results given. Jones believed that the entire education system colluded with the assumption that there was little point in educating the urban secondary modern child.[451] It is interesting to note that the reported lack of encouragement and expectation for Ann was evidenced in the secondary and not the primary years. Other participants had more positive recollections of primary years:

"I had loved junior school in Penhryn Street …. loved English …. enjoyed writing stories…. at Juniors I always got A's and there was a lot of encouragement from the teachers". (Edward).

The move to secondary school was not a positive experience for a number of the participants. In both those attending secondary modern schools and grammar schools there was a feeling of dislocation. Even with infrastructure and funding changes, it was hard for working-class children to thrive if the cultural support was missing. Gaine recognised that the support and resources to support children in the family formed part of the network of interactions which resulted in positive outcomes. [452] Edward did feel he benefitted from the development of a curricula

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[451] Jones, *Education in Britain,* pp 85-86.
[452] Gaine, and George, Gender, *Race and Class in Schooling*, p 110.

and examination entrance at his secondary school being similar to that offered by the Grammar. By the late 1960s, the secondary and comprehensive schools were increasingly entering the more able pupils for public examinations. Brookes saw this as counter to the policy intention for public examinations but the comprehensives particularly saw success in national examinations as being a way to enhance their credibility with the local population. [453]

"Would have left without taking exams if had stayed at the grammar but sat 9 GCEs. The worst things (about schooling) were Cardinal Newman …. the strictness and the negative attitudes if you were not in the top class." (Edward)

While Edward discusses the importance of teacher support in achieving examination success, Bob was somewhat alienated from the learning process and fared badly in the public GCE examinations:

"My 'O' level results were shocking, appalling. On the day they came I went to the park, came home, opened door and my mum was upset and I didn't think they would be that bad – a car crash." (Bob).

Bob said he made his Mum a cup of tea and went to the school who said he could come back to do resits and A levels. He had achieved 4 Bs and failed everything else so was happy to have been taken back as he would not have been accepted on an FE college course nor been able to apply for job roles where 5 GCEs were taken as standard entry. Bob entered a small sixth form of 12-14 pupils and began to enjoy school taking English, History and Politics A level. Bob was the only participant to be involved in A level study.

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[453] Brooks, 'The role of external examinations in the making of secondary modern schools in England 1945-1965', pp 447-467.

> *"Really nice away from all the nutters…. about 12 stayed on and they were all people I got on with really well. Fabulous teacher in English…. did King Lear …. loved this, the language…. wow this is like really good."*

The learning environment in the small sixth form was a focus for Bob and he reflected: "*Lessons really calm – shows what could have achieved lower down".*

According to Brooks, the discussion at national level had encouraged secondary schools to engage with public examinations but not all educationalists believed this to be a positive interaction. [454] Lowe felt that in taking on the assessment regime of the grammars, the secondary schools might lose the opportunity to grow a specific and distinct curriculum. [455] As illustrated by some of the research of the day from schools such as Kidbrooke, some of the comprehensive schools were proving that they could innovate and be creative around curriculum development.[456] Edward remembered that although he was in a stream where national examinations were being prepared for, there were levels of creativity.

> *"St Gregs was a place that you loved…. there were things you could do outside the curriculum… like photography."* (Edward) [457]

Bates agreed that an individual teacher could influence pupils with initiatives such as the photography club and subsequently use positive impact to encourage across the range of school subjects.[458] While the example from Edward is striking, the lack of diversity in the curriculum is a more common theme from the

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[454] Brooks, 'The role of external examinations in the making of secondary modern schools in England 1945-1965', pp 447-467.

[455] Lowe, *The Changing Secondary School*, pp 6-7.

[456] Limond, D., Miss Joyce Lang, Kidbooke and 'The Great Comprehensives Debate.' *History of Education,* Oxford, Taylor and Francis, 36:3, p339-352, 2007, https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/00467600600837267?needAccess=true> [Accessed 30 May 2020] pp 339-352.

[457] Simon reports on the new breed of teachers in the 1960s who were very committed to the ideals of comprehensive education. Simon, *Education and the Social Order,* p 292.

[458] Bates, Lewis, and Pickard, *Education Policy, Practice and the Professional*, pp 37-55.

participants. The ability to build difference into the curricula and have control of content within the school is what Benn and others refer to as the "secret garden" of the school curriculum.[459]

The youngest participant in the thesis was also the only one who stayed on into sixth form and take A levels. Bob had the benefit of both smaller classes and teacher encouragement and the school was structured to have a sixth form with flexible entry requirements. The flexibility at the point of entry made a difference to this participant. Having had a difficult time in the lower school environment, Bob reports a change on reaching sixth form.

> *"There were only 12 or 14 people in the lower 6th with me…. just a couple from Everton and the rest bussed in from around the city. In the economics class were 3 – 4 mates who went into 6th form with me."* (Bob)

Nationally, the mid to late 1960s saw substantial increases in the numbers of university places available.[460] With a stagnant local economy and a means tested grant to cover fees and living expenses, higher education presented less risk to Bob and his sixth form friends and they responded to teacher encouragement to apply.[461]

School structure and policy in Liverpool did allow for some innovative and diverse practices as could be seen from the Free School experiment based in Scotland Road and the Open Air school project.[462] One of the participants, Bob, was partly educated through the open air school project due to ill-health in early life:

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[459] Benn, *School Wars*, pp 16-31.

[460] Even before the Robbins Committee reported in 1963, expansion across all aspects of Higher Education was increasing with student numbers increasing by nearly 50% between 1957 and 1962 – data reported in Simon, *Education and the Social Order*, pp 202-203.

[461] Bourdieu recognised the importance of localised economic conditions and that these were sometimes ignored when considering class and education. Bourdieu, *Distinction*, p 95.

[462] Jones comments that the 1960s gave rise to a number of projects which attempted to make sense of working-class culture and implications for learning but recognised that these were short-lived and that interest in understanding class based identities has diminished. Jones, K., *Education in Britain* p7.

"I was a really poorly child…. was sent to Underlea at 6 as I was in and out of hospital with bronchitis, pneumonia and the like and Underlea was an open air school."

Bob recalled that some of his fellow pupils were very sick. He had no recall of preparing for the 11 plus but his illness had given him a love of reading. The education authority policy moved pupils into areas where there were vacancies so Bob was bussed into Everton. Campion had previously been a grammar school but through reorganisation had changed its name from SFX to become Campion, a comprehensive school. Children were bussed into Campion from across the city. Bob recalled that the public perception was that it was a good, even posh school, with a blue blazer:

"If you talked to people on the bus they would say that it was a really good school but the reality was not the same. There was a really nice blue blazer – my brothers told me that it was an Everton academy and I could get picked up by Everton if I played well. That was to cheer me up for not going to Cardinal Allen but I really did like the nice blue uniform." (Bob)

He remembers the culture shock of arriving at Campion very clearly.

"Campion was like a bomb site – it was horrendous a massive shock to the system. I was really small, tiny and it was really rough and tough." (Bob)

The differences between the national expectations and local reality seem stark at times when viewed through the lens of the participants. Participants displayed aspiration but this was accompanied by a lack of expectation that aspirations

Liverpool Free School https://www.Weidel.photoshelter.com/gallery/Liverpool-Free-School-1973 (Accessed 20/3/2020).
Please note that this is not seen as a secure link.

could be achieved. The notions of merit and capacity on a personal basis and a lack of understanding about circumnavigating barriers faced meant that support, particularly in secondary school years, was needed but often lacking. Ann concluded her story about school days saying:

"We wanted to learn but we weren't given the learning…. we wanted education. I do remember getting a bit of homework English and Maths in the last year. English lessons were good, I loved writing stories." (Ann)

Reflections on Local and National Policy

Within this theme, four subthemes have been explored led by the voice of the participants. Three themes were identified initially through the literature review and analysis of the transcripts but a fourth, assessment and support arose out of an additional reading viewed through the lens of the participant. Participant narratives spoke about the qualification framework, sometimes with a sense of exclusion from this so it felt important to capture this as a distinct area although it has synergy with the subthemes on curriculum and assessment.

The subthemes provide a framework through which to view the experiences of participants. Selection at eleven was a significant part of the recall for a number of participants regardless of the outcome of sitting the 11 plus. Despite concerns having been widely expressed about the reliability and the effectiveness of the 11 plus since its inception, selection through the 11 plus was still in place, in Liverpool, in the early 1970s. The testimonies of James and Edward reveal that even while passing the examination, working- class children might still find it difficult to achieve in a relatively alien grammar school culture. Initial elation at joining the grammar school was not capitalised on and in the early days, for James, simply being at grammar school was enough to fuel a feeling of success:

> *"I remember thinking that with French, Physics and Chemistry classes we had all really made it."* (James)

> *"The school song was sung in Latin. I can still remember some of it…. well we did sing it every single morning at Assembly."* (James)

Frank adjusted to the school culture of his grammar school but felt disconnected from earlier childhood as the school move and relocation housing policy removed from him from both his home and his classmates. The final participant, in the timeline, Bob, has a story of surviving within a difficult secondary system but achieving because that school had a sixth form which he could engage with. Benn and Chitty, noted that simply affording the opportunity for further study to children made a difference. [463] They considered that schools with sixth forms having an open entry policy often had higher staying on rates as well as more students with passes in A levels. Bob subsequently became a teacher so was particularly reflective about the school structure and policy at the time he was a pupil. Bob felt that his school lacked any clear direction about what it was doing with their diverse intake and this would appear to concur with the experience described by Ann. Despite hope, the secondary schools did not appear to have responded to the question of what education was for when presented with a disadvantaged working-class intake. The opportunity to be different was not evidenced by secondary modern schools or comprehensives. There is a suggestion that where imitation of grammar school rituals were in place, these contrasted with behavioural difficulties:

> *"Thought of itself as quite posh – have a prize-giving booklet and it's all Latin words and Latin hymns and looks really nice. So, what I think is that the school could present itself externally but reality was violent."* (Bob)

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[463] Benn, and Chitty, *Thirty Years On,* p 185.

However, without the support of the local secondary modern school, the grammar school system would have probably claimed another early leaver in Edward. Neither Edward nor James felt that their experiences were different in any way from their peers and the extent of the failure in progression of working -class children attending grammar schools and the potential longer term impact is an under -researched area. The theme has looked at the way local and national education policy was experienced by the participants but in recalling their school days, participants spoke about their families, friends and community. This next section looks at these relationships and how they influenced the participants during their school years.

Social Influencers

The inclusion of social influencers in this analysis owes much to the Mauthner and Doucet method of three phases of reading manuscripts as well as more conventional approach to developing themes.[464] While education policy and school structure did influence the experience of the participants, the influence and commonality of experience within the local community also played a role in the recall of school years. The pull and connection to family and home was incredibly strong as can be seen during the blitz. Despite the bombing raids, many Liverpool children, such as Mary and Tom returned home. In reflecting on home life in the narratives, a number of the participants appeared only to reflect one parental voice in their discussion of family. This section reflects on the home environment, and community so as to better understand the relationship between

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[464] See Methodology Chapter Three; Mauthner, and Doucet, 'Reflections on a voice centred relational method: Analysing Maternal and Domestic Voices' in *Feminist Dilemmas in Qualitative Research*, pp. 119-146.

social constructs such as family and responses to local and national education policy. This theme has subthemes also, in three parts: family, place and religion. The broad heading of place encompasses the geography but also the peer relationships shaped by the geography and the importance of 'mates'.

Family

Although there were indicators of deprivation a sense of this did not cloud happy childhood memories for Mary. There was also a sense of pride about a Welsh heritage:

> "*We didn't have anything but we were never cold or hungry. The fire would be lit for a bowl wash and there would be thick slices of bread on the toasting fork. There was always a roast on a Sunday…. Dad was a docker, killed on the docks in 1949. He was Welsh and spoke Welsh.*" (Mary) [465]

Contrary to views expressed about the fecklessness of working-class people and men as expressed by authors such as Mays, Mary's narrative reveals a genuine concern for the welfare of children and young people within the limitations of financial and social capital.[466] Mary became a carer for her younger siblings following her father's accident. Earning enough money to keep the family together was the greatest social influence driving the behaviours of this participant. Family responsibilities overrode personal ambitions, hopes and dreams; the survival of the family was paramount. Mary was just 16 when she became the guardian of her three younger sisters when her father was killed in an accident at the Docks and her mother died of cancer.

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[465] Bourke recognised that not all husbands and fathers were restricted by traditional domestic gender roles. Bourke, *Working Class Cultures in Britain 1890 – 1968*, p 76.
[466] Mays, *Education and the Urban Child*, pp 96-97.

Mary's remembered stories were remarkably positive given the very difficult times through which she lived. The community was linked through church and clubs associated with the church. Mary remembered that the Victoria Settlement had clubs for boys and girls. Mostly, however, she remembers life on the streets of Everton with: *"the Mums and Dads would turn the rope for skipping"* (Mary)

Tom was self-effacing in describing his stammer and difficulties faced in the classroom but only later in the narrative did some of the background to this become apparent. With very long pauses, slowly and painfully, Tom confided the tragedy that had killed his brother while they were evacuees in Wales. The device had been left in a field and was a plaything for both boys. When it exploded, help took a long time to arrive and his brother died. Tom returned to Liverpool and his mother and younger siblings were housed in a temporary flat with water running down the walls. Tom was one of a Catholic family of nine, In the immediate post war years, Catholic families tended to be larger given the church ruling on contraception.

For the post war participants and those in the 1950s and 1960s, there as commonality in the poverty and poor housing conditions of the time. The common experience was expressed by the participants reflecting that they were no different to anyone else. Jane particularly remembers her school community of friends from the local area and within her narrative often refers to "we" rather than "I" reflecting the strength of that common bond.[467]

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[467] The use of the collective pronoun was clarified using the method of analysis developed by Mauthner and Doucet as in reading with the participant voice there was much greater clarity around this.; Mauthner and Doucet, 'Reflections on a voice centred relational method: Analysing Maternal and Domestic Voices', p 3.

> "*Got a school photo from Prince Edwin street when we were nine – I still see all them girls…. we all lived along Gt Homer Street.*" (Jane)

Jane recalled that the girls used to call on each other so that maybe 10 or so would be going together to school. Given this sense of closeness it is unsurprising that common attitude and perceptions were held. A school reunion twenty years previously was remembered and the housing relocation discussed more in the section on place referred to:

> "*they may have knocked the houses and school down but never our spirit …. we were the same…. no one forgot themselves.* (Jane)

While none of the participants could be considered as comfortable in financial terms there was recognition of the relative nature of poverty. Participants understood the difference any level of disposable income made and that while they may have had little, others had less.

> "*There was a girl, I have a photo, very poor from a family of about 12 – nobody every passed remarks about clothes.*" (Jane)

Family positioning was often referenced by participants, particularly by the youngest and oldest siblings in a family grouping. Tom was the oldest in his family and in addition to the real difficulties in finding a settled home, the number of siblings also created an environment where learning would be challenging:

> "*I liked being in school with mates…. knew I was there to learn but you couldn't…. couldn't do nothing back home because there were 6 or 7 of us so couldn't keep a piece of paper or anything.*" (Tom)

Linda was the youngest in her family and aware that her own experience was a more positive one than that of her siblings:

"I am the youngest. It was better when I went. We had pens, books, everything. My brother had nothing no learning, no pencils." (Linda).

Post war reconstruction and the provision of alternative better housing provision, although a priority, would take time to achieve so housing options for many families were very limited: *"Me ma had a stall on the market second hand clothes and me dad had a horse."* (Linda)

The availability of income from both parents would have cushioned Jane from some of the privations of the post war generation in Liverpool. Although the occupations were insecure, there were options for making money and keeping the family going and being the youngest, Linda would also have benefitted from the earnings of older siblings. Linda felt the privilege of her family positioning and opened her discussion on school with:

"compared to people before…. me older brothers…. I can understand what they went through. My family were lucky when they were evacuated my brothers and sisters had good people looking after them." (Linda)

Food regularly featured as memories both at home and school. Descriptions of the food were evocative and speak to the importance food held for the children, particularly those in the early part of the timeframe. Frank was able to recall parts of the weekly menu for school dinners.

"Walked down to Haig St for school dinners. Monday would be mash, steam beef dumpling. Friday cheese pie or fish. I loved the school meals." (Frank)

Rationing was still in place for the earlier participants and then, as now, poverty was in part measured through access to free school meals: *"You got free dinners if your Dad couldn't work."* (Frank)

Food was an important matter and Frank was aware that the ability to pay for dinner would have marked his family out as more financially stable than others in the class.

> *"I was milk monitor. Used to have loads of milk and drink the leftovers. I had paid dinners…. 12 pence and there were free dinners and no one took a blind bit of notice about who was on free dinners"* (Frank)

Sarah's narrative gives a sense of the practical arrangements parents in poverty made in order to provide for their children. From the narratives, it becomes clear that children noticed the hardship facing families.

> *"They were hard times really I don't know how Mum managed ….she had 3-4 jobs. We had meat on Sundays, no fridge, milk was kept in a cold bucket outside. We had tick in the corner shop. [468] Dad was in and out of work as he was really unwell…. He died of bronchitis at new year"* (Sarah)

Sarah's narrative also a clue in the management of family finances.

> *"Mum and Dad got married at Christmas so Mum didn't like Christmas (after Dad died) but there were still presents under the tree. Mum managed with catalogues and provident cheques – interest always high. Easter eggs, school uniforms, all done on cheques."* (Sarah).

Understanding the poverty of their family circumstances did not feed a feeling of resentment among the participants. Conversely, there was a real sense of community pride. Every effort was made to ensure that children were not left

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[468] Groceries bought but not paid for until money was available.

feeling disappointed. Sarah recalled not getting a Sindy doll one Christmas but that the next

> *"getting a Chatty Kathy which was envied. Mum tried hard to make sure we were not left out."* (Sarah).

Edward defends his local environment with pride. He is anxious not to conform to established views of Everton compared with the more affluent areas. The importance of the friendships were a crucial part of his decision to leave the grammar school system and to the positive memories from school days. Edward also spoke about his relationship with his father and how this interlinked with feelings of community.

> *"Dad offered a lot of guidance as a human being – helped out a lot in the local community but wouldn't question or get involved in what happened at school."* (Edward).

Mostly the participants reflected the separation of home and school, but Jane remembered that parental opinions could matter and was also very aware of the social order and the perceptions of the time about the position of her school:

> *"Roscommon was thought to be common by some. A few on the street said: 'Me Dad won't let me go, he wants me to go to Lambeth Road.' That was because Lambert Road was supposed to be posher but Roscommon was the better education."* (Jane)

The expectation that education was the business of the school appeared in a number of narratives, James was no rebel and wanted to succeed. To the best of his ability he did not disassociate himself with learning or the school regime: "*I do remember doing homework on the kitchen table but there was no one at home who could help you with it."* (James)

Local clubs associated with church groups such as the Shewsy were part of the community supported network discussed by the participants.[469] Parents were supportive of their children attending these clubs and there would in some cases, be generations of families who had been involved in their activities.

Shrewsbury House was funded in part by a public school, Shrewsbury. There were exchanges between the boy's school and the youth club. Mary recalled baking scones for boys who came to tea from the school after the war and Ann remembered going on an exchange:

> *"We went to see Shrewsbury School once…. we stayed in the teacher's home and I was part of the family for the weekend …. it was a social thing not linked to school, linked to Church and Christianity but it gave a real vision of something outside the area.*
>
> *It did teach us that there were other people and other things that were different to us. We saw the bigger world and maybe that helped us to question…. why can't we go to a school like this…. but we knew they were different…. knew there was a divide."* (Ann)

The importance of place, understanding that there were other lives, but also understanding that you were not a part of that world is expressed clearly by Ann in the paragraph above. There was no anger or even sadness but resignation in knowing that the world worked differently and that you were on a different path.

Play also reflected both the poverty and the grown up expectations for the future.

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[469] Dudgeon, *Our Liverpool,* pp 348-351 Origins and community views of the Shewsy. Two clubs associated with youth support and activities are mentioned by the participants. The Shewsy –ns Shrewsbury House financially supported by Shrewsbury House School as part of Christian Outreach and the Victoria Settlement. Archive work on both organisations has been currently halted by Covid restrictions but is supported by active local history groups. A third organisation in the area, Albion House, was known for supporting sporting activities but does not receive a mention from the participants interviewed. The role these organisations played in supporting individuals and families is tangential to this thesis but is worthy of additional research in a distinct piece of work.

"At home we weren't very rich – we didn't have nothing – played on the oller [470](bomb sites). We'd get tins out of the house and put them on pretend shelves to play shops and all that sort of business" (Linda).

The importance of community and the trust in each other could be seen through the play and the way even quite young children had 'caring' responsibilities for :*"I was always minding someone's baby. I was great for the babies."* (Linda) [471]

Despite the deprivation, a sense of belonging and pride in the family was evident from the narratives. Family circumstances differed with some participants recalling tragic events or times of extreme difficulty. The participants were almost anxious to mediate the impact of these, however, and certainly did not expect or look for sympathy in the way childhood had been for them. More frequently, participants referenced the streets, the community of their childhood in a positive way. Community forms the basis of the next sub theme, place.

Place

Everton as a village, a home, mattered to the participants. From early prosperous beginnings, Everton has been an area of social and economic deprivation for generations and yet a resilience and respect for the area resonates through the accounts of the participants.

The social environment mattered greatly and the streets were the place where attitudes were formed. These peer relationships established the accepted way

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[470] The oller – local term for uncleared bomb sites used by children as playgrounds.
[471] Spencer, *Gender, Work and Education in Britain in 1950s,* p 56 discusses the view in the reports on education (Norwood, Crowther and Newsom) that girls' interests were concerned with their roles as wives and mothers.

of life.[472] Participants talk about their relationship with mates from the streets they grew up on and the relationship between housing and education was highlighted in many of the accounts.

Frank and Edward both passed the 11 plus to go to grammar school but whereas Frank stayed in a school physically close to his primary, Edward needed to cross to a different part of the city and the recall of the 40 minute bus drive to an unfamiliar part of the city forms part of his discussion relating to the cultural differences he felt between home and school environment.

Ann was educated in the LEA controlled schools and did not pass to go to the grammar school attending the local secondary modern school. While Ann was aware of the 11 plus and a grammar school system her expectations were that the local secondary modern school would be attended.

The social rehousing policy at the time meant that the movement out of primary school was fragmented as the local community were being scattered in a number of locations out of the city centre. For a number of participants, the housing policy was a significant part of childhood and Ann felt the loss of the community greatly:

> *"The area had been changing…. I moved house in 1966.The old neighbourhoods were being pulled down and people were being moved out of the area to Kirkby and Skem."* [473](Ann)

This was echoed by Frank who said the movement of people out of the Everton area had resulted in:

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[472] Brown, *The Death of Christian Britain,* p 8, Brown argues that a complex set of socially accepted rules were being swept away by the 1960s but accepted mores and behaviours appear to have existed beyond this point from the evidence in the narratives.

[473] Skelmersdale new town built to house the overflow population from the inner city housing clearances. Skem was a shortened form of Skelmersdale which was formally designated a new town in 1961 and was designed to rehouse following clearance policies in Liverpool. Immortalised in 'Blood Brothers', a play by Liverpool author Willy Russell, it is 15 miles from Everton.

> *"Lost community for generations. Community was huge in Everton and huge in Walton."* (Frank)

The destruction of the old friendship groups are described poignantly by Ann in her account:

> '*In juniors we had all lived nearby but in seniors people came from all over the area – a lot of my junior friends had moved to Netherton, Norris Green, Skem or Kirkby and only knew about 4 people when I went to Roscommon – the junior school community had been scattered."* (Ann)

While the intention to move people into better housing avoiding the density of high rise blocks evidenced in other cities, the isolation following rehousing was felt keenly by participants recalling their childhood. The isolation was expressed by those who left but also by those who stayed in the area. Liverpool was not alone in experiencing negative consequences from a hopeful housing policy. Researching the mothers moved into tower blocks in Glasgow, Abrams et al express doubt as to whether the material benefits of the new homes outweighed the feelings of moving away from former communities.[474] For those who stayed in the area, the friendships of those times endured:

> *"I do remember the day I started at Roscommon I went with the girl next door who had just moved in. Jennifer was my best friend and still is my friend today…. Jennifer went to BAT."*[475] (Jane)

For Sarah, similar, to Linda, playing on the street was remembered fondly with Sarah recalling:

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[474] Abrams, L., Fleming, L., Hazley, B., Wright, V., and Kearns, A., Isolated and Dependent: Women and children in high -rise social housing in post war Glasgow, *Womens History Review,* Oxford, Taylor and Francis, 2018, Vol 28.5, pp 794-813.

[475] BAT British American Tobacco – one of the local factories recruiting actively from local schools. Jennifer – a pseudonym for friend named in the narrative.

"We'd be out in the street until 8 or 9 o'clock on a summer's night. New Years' Eve all the doors would be open and Bonfires night everyone would be out on the street." (Sarah)

For all that Everton lies fractionally to the north of the city centre, there was little sense of mixing or indeed of being a part of some of the great social changes happening in the city at the time:

"We mixed with other schools at Colomendy so got to know people outside the community – we (usually) stayed in the community mostly so that was good". (Ann).

Colomendy in North Wales had been opened by Liverpool Education Committee in 1940. Between Mold and Ruthin, the camp provided accommodation for teaching and recreation. Closed in the war years, it was reopened in 1947. Bridge described it as an attempt to create a non-fee paying public school experience but on a temporary basis. A residential population could not be maintained, as Liverpool parents were not, by tradition, committed to the idea of their children being away from home. Friendships formed through the camp could last a lifetime:

"I really got to know my friend Jennifer at Colomendy – she wasn't in my stream but the Head saw we were friendly and she moved her up and asked me to keep an eye on her as she was starting to mix with some rougher girls".[476] (Ann)

There was a sense of ensuring that the area and community, as well as direct family members were seen in a positive light. This relates well to the narrative around respectability which appeared in a number of the case narratives.

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[476] Jennifer – a pseudonym for a friend named in the narrative.

Frank enjoyed his school days but, despite having attended a prestigious grammar said that neither he nor his mates gave any thought to what they would do afterwards. The expectation was that they would go to work and do what everyone else did. [477] His account reflects the views of previous participants that everyone was the same but also an acknowledgement that to have the basics was to be privileged. Where children did not have the right uniform or footwear, it was just accepted:

> *"No latest trainers, all had pumps from TJ Hughes. Grey shorts, grey socks. The area was poor."* (Frank)

Frank's view of this world was supported by memories from Sarah:

> *"As kids we were all dressed the same, not like now. Clothes would be ordered out of a catalogue so we all had the same. We had a catalogue or bought off a van that would pull up. Van came at Christmas or when the schools were going back"* (Sarah)

To both Frank and Sarah, it seemed to be Important that everyone was part of a community with shared levels of relative deprivation. The physical conditions for children like Frank and Sarah were very difficult but for Sarah they were also times fondly remembered:

> *"I remember that we were so happy…. wish I was that happy now. We had a 2 bed house with an outside toilet and an oil lamp so the pipes didn't freeze and a tin bath in the front room. It was all we knew. We moved to Thomas White gardens and it was real luxury with hot and cold water."* (Sarah)

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[477] It is significant that despite pride in the achievement of passing the 11 plus the future expectation for Frank and his friends was not altered by the grammar school experience.

Sarah again reflected the shared community experience when she spoke about the rehousing programme. Some stayed and some left, but she felt that: *"Nobody tried to be better than anyone else."* [478]

Church supported clubs provided a place to go. Jane recalls having social connections outside of school and in particular the time spent at the Victoria Settlement:

> *"I used to go to the Victoria Settlement of a night…. they did all kinds…. games, art, we'd queue up and you got a drink and a biscuit for a penny."* (Jane)

Ann also recalled:

> *"Me and Jennifer [479] used to go to the Shewsy [480] after school…. records, craft stuff … just nice things to do and somewhere to go…if we could get the gym off the boys we would play netball."* (Ann)

> *"Life was simpler, we went to the park in a big group, stayed out all day…. for the 6 week holiday we amused ourselves or clubs like the Shewsy ran days out"* (Ann)

The words and phrases used by the participants reflect the concepts developed by Bourdieu who recognised that close communities would have similar characteristics, a view not shared by other sociologists such as King.[481] For many

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[478] This is a key statement as it reflects a viewpoint not recognised in the competitive accumulation model favoured by Bourdieu; Bourdieu, P., *Distinction*, p 285 considers that even the working class try to accumulate capital by making a virtue out of necessity.

[479] Jennifer – pseudonym for friend named in the narrative.

[480] Shrewsbury House Youth club – known to all as The Shewsy : Dudgeon reports an interview with John Hutchinson from the management board, Dudgeon, *My Liverpool*, pp 351-352. The Shewsy and The Vicky (Victoria Settlement) were active in community providing inexpensive sports, arts and skills access through after school and holiday clubs.

[481] King, A., Thinking with Bourdieu against Bourdieu: A 'practical' Critique of Habitus, *Sociological Theory*, Vol 18 No3 , London, Sage, 2000, pp 417-433.

of the participants, the phrasing was always collective and did not refer just to the family but to the community:

"We were brought up to behave ourselves" (Ann)

"We were respectable" (Mary)

The words and phrases around poverty, respectability and communal support thread through all the narratives.

"Dad liked to help out…. he was politically ethical and handy…. gave a hand with repairing and helping out…. a really honest man" (Edward).

The importance of place and culture has been expressed in writing suggesting Liverpool exceptionalism.[482] While perceived as a city of radicals, Liverpool education provision in this community appeared more conservative and slower to adapt to change. Mays points out that single age schools continued to exist in Liverpool into the 1950s as extensive bomb damage in the city left a severe shortage of suitable accommodation.[483] Murray reflects on the words of Liverpool poet Edward Lucie- Smith when thinking about dereliction in the city recalled that to the outsider, in 1967, there were still many stretches of featureless rubble with buildings in bad repair. [484] So despite Liverpool being a trend setter in arts and popular culture in the 1960s, the education response in Everton appeared to be lacking in resources and encouragement. For the participants, school day memories recalled street and community memories outside of the classroom. Participants recalled the street culture of the time; this was often associated with

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[482] Belcham, J., *Popular Politics, Riots and Labour*, Liverpool, Liverpool University Press, 1992, p 18.
[483] Mays, *Education and the Urban Child*, pp 24-25.
[484] Edward Lucie-Smith, poet, author of *The Liverpool Scene*. Quoted in Murray, N.,
So Spirited a Town, p 170.

sport or games or at times sectarian violence but mostly participants remembered happier times. Some thoughts from Mary were typical:

> *"No cars, we played rounders in the street. Always something to do, we were never bored".* (Mary)

The positives of being part of a community of children were expressed in joyful terms but narratives, and male narratives in particular drew attention to the religious divide existing in Everton. This will be discussed more in the next section but the extent to which communities were bound by affiliation to religious groups had been noted by the participants and was linked to school attendance but also home location. Central to discussion on the impact of distribution of religious affiliation by streets was the change to the housing policy. Traditional areas belonged to either Catholic or Protestant communities. The housing clearance programme which resulted in the dislocation expressed by the participants also advanced the decline of sectarian power in Everton. The destruction of communities also reduced the ties to sectarian behaviours as the move to new locations fractured the previously tight links between church, social activities and communities and previous identities were lost.[485] The housing policy of relocation also moved children away from primary school friendships. An example of how the housing policy affected the area can be seen in the case of Frank who, having passed the 11 plus, went to SFX a Catholic grammar school in Everton. [486] However, as part of the housing clearance policy his house was knocked down when he was thirteen and he moved out of the Everton area although he stayed

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[485] The impact of religion in schools and street culture is discussed in more detail in the next section of this chapter.
[486] SFX – St Francis Xavier. Built in C19 by Jesuits (Catholic) and consisted of both church and school.

at school. Frank was moved to new housing estates being built in Croxteth about three miles further out from the city centre. The housing policy was dictated by need and the age of the dependent children. Where children were older, families were more likely to be placed in a flat rather than a house: *"Mum wanted to go to Clubmoor, but we were too old, had to go to a flat."* (Frank) [487]

Families accepted that they needed to go somewhere but tried to stay reasonably close to their former homes and often had strong views about the acceptability of some of the offers. Again, from Frank: *"Wouldn't go to Kirkby…. People thought Kirkby?? That's miles away."* (Frank). With the family settled in Croxteth, school life continued for Frank and he paints a picture of how the changes appeared to a child at the time:

> *"Just came down from Croxteth to SFX on the bus. We accepted it. There's your bus pass go and do it. Huge movement of children going round on the buses."* (Frank)

> "*Others went to a range of schools…. clearance was all round the area so families went to Halewood, to Speke – children were getting thrown all over the place. Just 2s and 3s in different places"* (Frank)

For Frank, in his words, it was a "*double dislocate."* In passing the 11 plus to go into the grammar school system, he separated from some of his primary school mates. The relocation separated him further from the friendships of his early childhood. The bus pass was valid from 3.30 to 6.00pm so all the relocated children had to be home by that time which impacted after school activities and sports:

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[487] Clubmoor – an area of the city closer to Everton and still within the wider district of Walton.

> *"The area had been changing…. The old neighbourhoods were being pulled down and people were being moved out of the area to Kirkby and Skem " (Frank)*

Almost one third of Liverpool's population were forced to leave the city with over 3000 people going out to Kirkby. [488] Dudgeon refers to this movement of people as 'ethnic cleansing' of the working- class Irish ghettoes of Vauxhall and Everton, the old waterfront communities.[489] He viewed this as the destruction of a tribal culture that had been a feature of Liverpool life for 200 years.

Both education and housing policy influenced the web of interacting social and economic considerations forming part of the support network for progression in education. Moving away from the geographical area and from a culture that felt comfortable and familiar risked feelings of alienation from both the home and the new environment. In Edward's case he was not prepared to tolerate the contradiction and returned to his locality and culture. In Bourdieu's terms the pull of habitus was too strong. [490]

In trying to define some of these difference between the school and home culture Edward recalled: "*I remember some houses just had a name not a number*" (Edward)

In local terms, housing was a priority issue locally with education secondary to this. Five thousand prefabs were built in Belle Vale and Everton families were relocated here.[491] One of the participants, Sarah, recalls:

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[488] Figures cited by Dudgeon, *Our Liverpool,* pp 308-310.
[489] Dudgeon, *Our Liverpool,* p 332.
[490] Bourdieu, P., *Distinction,* p 95, p120.
[491] Todd, *The People*, pp 175-178.

"We were in a 2 up 2 down off St Domingo road – neighbours used to call around. We all went to the same school from Infants but it was at that time that the slums…. the slums of Everton they used to call it…. were getting pulled down. People were getting shipped out to Cantrill Farm. Norris Green was the posh area." (Sarah)

The efforts of Liverpool City Council focused on managing the overcrowding which derived from a shortage of housing stock and had resulted in multigenerational families sharing a living space. Socially, although there were sectarian issues, childhood was seen as relatively happy by a number of the participants and while deprivation was evident, the shared experience seemed to reduce the burden of this. Ann, Linda and Frank all commented on the lack of comparison and competition between peers saying that nobody really had much more than anyone else so there was nothing to compete about.[492]

Following the death of his father, James remembered enduring many of the poverty indicators of the times; a lack of suitable clothing, free school meals and going to an afterschool club in order to get free hot dinners but in his own words he:

"…wasn't bothered by this …there were a lot like us and we were all in it together really". (James)

Elements of poverty threads through the narratives over three decades and suggests that while there may have been support for education it rarely became the focus of family priorities. Even with a high level of disadvantage there was still a sense of relatively good fortune amongst the participants. Physical deprivation was accepted as commonplace. Tom, for example, had shoes, even when

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[492] This supports the work of Goldthorpe and Lockwood and Bourdieu in their analysis of collective attitudes in working class communities; Goldthorpe, and Lockwood, 'Affluence and the British Class structure', *Sociological Review,* pp 133-163; Bourdieu, *Distinction,* p 71.

bombed out but recognised that others did not. Those without shoes started school early and finished late to minimise the likelihood of injury.

> *"Couple of kids in bare feet - had to come half an hour late and early so not stood on, always cutting feet"* (Tom)

The housing policy had reduced the population of Everton considerably so there were falling school rolls. Ann and Sarah both felt that in secondary school they were in class with children they didn't know. The changes in place and culture resulting from the housing policy had a considerable effect on the school experience for this generation of pupils.

Life outside of school could be remembered fondly. This recollection from Bob

> *"I wasn't an angel – didn't put time into homework apart from English or History. Home, tea and straight out to play football – would always say had done homework if my mum asked."* (Bob)

And additionally from Sarah:

> *"We lived off St Domingo road – used to tie ropes round the lamppost to play – on the street. We had trips from the street, a charabang to Blackpool. [493] Sixties was a lovely time to grow up in …. wouldn't change it. No one trying to be better than anyone else."* (Sarah)

Social life beyond school was on the streets, the ollers and charitable concerns such as the Victoria Settlement and Shrewsbury House Youth Club.[494] For one

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[493] Coach

[494] After school clubs and holiday clubs were mentioned by a number of participants. The organisations often, but not exclusively, had religious affiliations. They supplemented the school curriculum particularly in provision of space for arts, music and crafts. The impact of these organisations is under researched locally although archiving of records and photographs is being carried out through Everton local history society. Although there is a body of work on the settlements and mission work in cities this is outside the scope of this thesis and would be a worthwhile subject for further research.

of the respondents though, Ann, there were memories of Colomendy where generations of Liverpool school children spent time in Wales.

"People didn't have holidays – couldn't afford them. I used to love it (Colomendy) – there was a farm at the top we used to go and pick up eggs – we had nothing like that in the city."

Sarah explains how her experience of place influenced decisions as an adult:

"We all lived in the same little area so always stayed together and my Mum would have preferred to have stayed in the old house. I made friends because of school so I wanted my kids to go to school where they lived."

(Sarah)

It was important to Sarah to know her growing family would have a similar community and school experience:

"In Everton, everyone knows everyone, everyone is nodding to each other. I ended up in the Eldonian in Vauxhall, happy now…. but I've always missed Everton." (Sarah)

Within the discussion of place, we also glimpse elements of street culture and play and what is most keenly recalled as a child growing up in Everton. The segregated nature of schools and housing resulted in a discussion of religion as an influence and this is the focus of the next subtheme.

Religion

The influence of church groups and religion plays a significant part in many of the participant memories. On first reading it felt as though there was avoidance of the topic of religion from some participants as denominational differences were not referred to directly. With reflection, and using the multiple lens method of rereading transcripts, the relationship between religion and school experience

and the extent of the segregation, was apparent. In the use of the collective "we" to refer to street mates and school mates, these were more frequently composed of children from either a Catholic or a Protestant affiliated family. Only Sarah talked extensively of a mixed religious approach in her upbringing. In some accounts, the dominance of the Catholic parish and the parish priest is apparent.

Tom, Linda and Frank all reflected on the dominance of religious education in the curriculum at Catholic schools but the impact of religious affiliation extended beyond the classroom. Frank remembered that the threat of reporting misbehaviour to the priest was the worst thing possible and that as kids, they would regularly attend Mass as part of the normal school week:

> *"Every Wednesday, the whole school went to Mass in the church next door. Kid's Mass would be on even if there was a funeral."* (Frank)

Religion was integrated into the school day for children educated in the Catholic system. The decision of the Catholic hierarchy in England not to work within the compromise seriously restricted funding and resources into Catholic schools. The funding shortfall resulting from the Butler compromise, was made up by intensive money raising activities, which served to strengthen the ties between the Catholic Church and their communities.[495] The importance of the money collection, a necessity if Catholic schools and parishes were to be supported, were reported at length by Dudgeon who provides a number of narratives about the priests collecting money house to house as well as via the church services. [496] However, little compassion was shown by the Catholic Church to the children in families without financial means to contribute, but instead, children were penalised for

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[495] Jones, *Education in Britain*, p 18. The Catholic hierarchy in England did not accept the Butler compromise on the teaching of religion in the curriculum and consequently, Catholic schools received a lower level of state funding. Catholic communities were compelled to fund raise to reduce the gap in funding provision.
[496] Dudgeon, J., *Our Liverpool* pp 192-195.

their lack of contributions. Tom remembered the talk on the street was about whether the penny for the collection could be found or not. Tom didn't feel left out because nobody on his row in school had a penny to bring:

> *"They used to collect on Holy Days and the rows that got the most money got to do the sports or the swimming baths that week. The reason we didn't get was didn't have the money…. our row must've all been skint. Anyone with pennies to bring to the church got to go".* (Tom)

The link between the church and school was indivisible and the importance of church attendance was felt by even the primary age children:

> *"Special collections for schools were held at all the Masses. 8.00am and every hour 'til 11.00. All the masses were packed …. it was like the football match letting out at church in them days."* (Tom) [497]

Catholic schools were populated primarily by Catholic teachers. Attendance at Mass on Sunday was part of the ritual religious experience and questions were asked of children on the Monday morning.

> *"And the teachers would all be at the 9, and woe betide if they didn't see you there. Kids would stay off on Monday rather than admit they'd not been there."* (Tom)

Investigating the relationship between church, school and community, the sectarian nature of Liverpool is recognised by Roberts and this is reflected in the memory from Tom featured below about sectarian gang violence in the 1940s: [498]

> *"Went over from St Francis to the Bullring for lunch…. run up there, get our dinner and run back. Started to get a bit nasty, they were waiting for*

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[497] Brown, C., The Death of Christian Britain, p 150 noting Irish Catholics as being the exception to working class attendance at church.
[498] Roberts, *Liverpool Sectarianism* pp 100-103.

*us, attacking us like, so had to go different ways to the dinner house, you
know different ways like coming from behind to go to the dinner house. At
the time they were all around gangs with sticks with razor blades, big long
sticks – it was in the Echo."* (Tom)

The Bullring was a Catholic area but in order to reach it from St Francis school
for dinner, children would be crossing Protestant areas. Linda and Frank were
also part of the Catholic system and while they recalled the emphasis and the
amount of time taken up by religious education neither seemed to be quite so
affected by it. There is a growing trend towards integration and secularisation as
the time period moves forward and the impact of religion lessens.

Sarah's narrative is touched by personal tragedy as her Dad died when she was
sixteen months old but her story straddles the religious divide and suggests a
less sectarian future:

*"Mum was actually a Catholic but I was Protestant by accident. My Dad
was ill and my mum's friend got me christened in Longbottoms…. a high
order orange lodge on Breck Road. My mum just left me like that… my
friend made her communion and I didn't and that was that." [499]* (Sarah)

The Orange Lodge was represented in the community groups and churches in
Everton during the period. The confrontation between the Lodges and the
Catholic community has been well documented although the violence associated
with pre-war altercations had lessened considerably by this point.[500] Roberts
quotes Dudgeon and Day in reflecting that the only good thing to come out of the

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[499] The making of a Holy Communion at the age of 7 was part of the Catholic rites of passage and visible
to all in the community.
[500] Roberts, *Liverpool Sectarianism*, pp 22-23; pp 132-133.

1960s "slum' clearance in Everton was the breaking up of the old sectarian ghettos. [501]

As she had been christened as a Protestant, Sarah attended a Protestant Sunday School and it is interesting that she recalls that there were lots of other Catholic children in attendance also.[502] Sarah remembered that nobody was very concerned about where children went but noted that:

> *"…. some kids came over from Our Lady Immaculate after theirs (Mass) but we didn't go to Our Lady's cos we thought their service was hard compared to ours."* (Sarah)

Frank also was aware of the religious divide forming part of his schooling. Geographically, there was a very short distance between the Catholic SFX and the Protestant Collegiate. However, the schools did not mix even on the sports fields.

> *"Over the road was the Collegiate and they was the enemy. All the mates from school were mates from the area. It kept you away from the Protestants"* (Frank) [503]

Frank laughed when he said that and went on to say that in sports the teams played against the nearest Catholic school which was St Gregorys. He reflected that he might have had some mates who were Protestant but sounded doubtful as most of them were from school or near home. It becomes very difficult to untangle friendships, culture and community from religious affiliation. While both Catholic and Protestant communities faced economic frailty, there was a perception of lower poverty thresholds in the Protestant households and Roberts felt that sectarianism was in part driven by economic protectionism and desire to

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[501] Ibid, p 132; Roberts refers to work by: Dudgeon, J.P., Our Liverpool p 277.

[502] Brown recounts increased involvement in Sunday Schools in the years 1945-1958 but then suggests a falling away of membership during the 1960s. The experience of the participant would seem to suggest that Everton was behind the national trend in this respect.

[503] The denominational school system was well established and the public funding of Catholic schools had been a controversial issue in Liverpool from the 19th Century. Roberts, *Liverpool Sectarianism*, p 40.

protect and keep the jobs available within families and communities. [504] Tom certainly felt that religion had impacted on his education, talking about the all age classrooms he experienced, he recalled:

> *"The only ones who had sets were the ones who went to the Protestant school…. what was that called…. Salisbury Street school"*

Tom reflected on why there might have been such a difference in schooling and facilities and after a pause decided it must have been due to the minority religious status of the Catholics: *"Salisbury Street – must be that it ….it was a protestant school in a protestant country."*

In terms of supporting academic development, religious affiliation was part of the layers of complexity influencing the achievements of working-class children in Everton.

Sarah's view of sectarian behaviours was just that they did not exist. Unlike Tom in the 1940s and 1950s and Frank in the early sixties, Sarah reports a collective and open relationship between the different religious affiliations: *"We used to go to the mission on St Domingo for Sunday school. It was a happy childhood …. no separation of Catholic and Protestant."* (Sarah).

The impact of religion as an influencer on education appears to vary with the timeframe and so accords with the decline in religious observation from the 1960s onwards. For many participants their school and social world was dominated by a social network connected to their religious affiliation. The social capital conferred or denied by such networks were also linked to economic capacity and

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[504] Ibid, p169. In interview with Peter Kilfoyle (Labour MP for Walton 1991-2010) Roberts reports Kifoyle concluding that religion was a useful tool in Liverpool for dividing the working class.

the final subtheme reviews aspiration and the leaving of education for the participant group.

Leaving School, Aspiration

The final theme considers the relationship between school and readiness for future life and the labour market. This theme was derived from the decisions participants made to include memories of leaving school and starting work in their interviews. Some started at this point and worked backwards into their school days whereas for others it was a finishing point. For all but Bob, the youngest participant, accessing the labour market to support the family mattered more than policy, school structure or personal aspiration.

Mary's narrative reflects an acceptance of both expectations and the existing social order. During the time Mary was at school 90% of children left school at 14, and only 10% achieved passes in public examinations. [505] Mary and her classmates were part of the 90% not being entered for public examinations. There was no recall of exams or tests post 11 or of external examinations, additionally, there was no expectation of anything different:

> "*We had some very clever girls in our class but none of them stayed at school or went to college or anything like that".* (Mary)

There was no expectation from the families, community, schools, or the young people themselves that schooling or education would continue after the age of

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[505] Benn, *School Wars,* 2001 p 39.

fourteen. Recognising that intelligence wasn't the barrier, Mary thought about why there was no thought to developing in education:

> "*It would have been too hard on the parents. We needed to work. I left school at 14.... I needed to work to support my family*" (Mary)

The policy makers at the time might have aspired to social justice through education but economic reality was uppermost in the minds of the young working-class community. McCarthy considers the gendered position relating to post war women expressed in the work of Jephcott and recognises that young people of this generation were under pressure to start contributing economically to households as soon as they left home. [506] Kynaston emphasised the economic necessity of work to families and quoting from a Slater and Woodside survey between 1944 and 1946 'Patterns of Marriage,' he emphasises their finding that the spectre of unemployment was never far away from working class communities. [507]

There was awareness that the war had opened up roles and access to wages for women:

> "*I was lucky, I got a job at BAT (British American Tobacco – a local factory)*"
> (Mary)

Despite the deprivation, there was a sense that the post-war period represented a time of social change. Mary reports:

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[506] McCarthy, H., 'Pearl Jephcott And The Politics Of Gender, Class And Voice In Post-War Britain', *Women's History Review* Vol 28:5, p779-793 (2019)
https://doi.org/10.1080/09612025.2018.1472896 (Accessed 3rd August 2020).

[507] Kynaston ,*Austerity Britain*, discussing patterns of marriage research from Slater and Woodside, pp 56-58.

> "*the war had given women independence - they could work and earn money so if the man didn't work the family could still be fed."* (Mary)

Although policy intentions were to use education to fuel a growing economy, for some, there seemed to be little connectivity between school and work. James felt that there was no preparation for the working world: "*You would leave school on the Friday and start in the job on the Monday".* (James) [508]

Until the 1970s, none of the participants felt that moving into work would be difficult. There was, however, an impression that the range of possible options for the participants was limited and generally of the low skill variety. Although limited in reach the participants did have access to a Careers' discussion. At the age of fourteen, pupils at Roscommon were invited to a meeting with the Careers Officer for the area. At this meeting, the availability of jobs and personal suitability were discussed. Mary remembers:

> "*When I was due to leave at 14 the careers officer said they knew I was good at sewing and could offer a place making clothes at Bon Marche…. but the training wages were poor and I knew I could make more money at the factory."* (Mary) [509]

The primary consideration for Mary was the financial security of her family and this came ahead of any personal aspiration or talents. Tom recognised the absence of the basic building blocks of literacy and numeracy during his early working years. In his recollections and he talks about the impact when he left school to find work, recalling that he was unable to write up the names of the

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[508] Bourke, *Working Class Cultures in Britain 1890-1968*, p 96 discussed school leavers and identifying that in the mid 1950s 40% of children from professional or managerial homes remained at school compared with 3% of children from semi -skilled manual backgrounds.
[509] Liverpool based clothing manufacturers and retailers.

customers who left garments for repairs at a tailors and that he had to leave the job quickly when his inability to spell and write was discovered. The economic position with the post war reconstruction in Liverpool afforded opportunity to those leaving school. Tom recalled that guidance about job prospects or training was not given. Although Tom was neither literate nor numerate he had not seen this as a problem at the time:

"Came out of school in 1950 plenty of jobs then, we all just went into work.

Got a job as a shop boy, but then had to write the names of the orders for suits on labels but I couldn't spell the names, put the names down as they sounded but when the fellas came to collect the suits they couldn't be found. The fellas who worked there elderly ones wanted to know who wrote these down…. I just left…. out the door, didn't come back. Got another job straight off …. better pay" (Tom)

Tom's narrative reflects the collective use of "we", suggesting that what happened to him was commonplace amongst his peers. In common with Mary, the economic health of the family was uppermost in Tom's mind in the immediate time after leaving school. His work in a local bakery, not requiring literacy and paying well with lots of overtime gave Tom confidence and comfort that he was able to help to support the family. Tom spent some time thinking about fellow school mates and their transition to work and then remembered someone who had gone on to college after school but that was someone who had gone to a fee paying school: *"Freddie went to college, he got out. That was because his mum paid"* (Tom)

Jane remembered that her year group all left school together:

"Can't remember ever being encouraged by the school to stay on or go to college. Not many went on to school after the leaving age." (Jane)

Jane also talked about life after school at the age of fourteen and the differences between aspiration and reality for her and also her peer groups:

"Getting to 14 we had to start thinking about we wanted to do – I wanted to be a nurse because that was a big thing then but hardly anyone went on to do it." (Jane)

As with Mary, the interview with a careers officer was an established part of the final year at school:

"You got a letter from the Education and you had to write a letter. It was a formal letter we were taught how to do it…. I would be obliged if you could tell me if there are any vacancies…" (Jane)

In other parts of the chapter, it has been noted that participants would sometimes use the collective 'we' rather than 'I'. Jane has a particular story linked to her job prospects which provides an example of this collective thinking:

"I was 15 and we went to work in Barker and Dobsons, the sweet factory ….and all the girls we went to school with were there too….. We just carried on." (Jane)

Jane, Linda and Ann were all recommended as suitable employees for factory work.[510] Linda remembers that there was no conversation at school about qualifications or school exams although the school leaving age had then reached fifteen:

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[510] During the timeline of the thesis, the numbers of women in employment had risen substantially from 43% in 1951 to 47% in 1961 to over 50% by 1971. Bourke notes the trend for this employment to be away from manual into clerical and retail jobs. Bourke, *Working Class Cultures in Britain,* 1890-1968, p 81.

> *"We'd get the reference…. a reference from the school when you were 15. They'd send you to Sir Thomas Street to find out about the jobs."* [511] (Linda)

Work was plentiful and as with Tom previously, Linda found it relatively easy to move between jobs. For working class girls, early marriage and children was anticipated, accepted and welcomed:

> *"I got a job at Ogden's the factory near to home. I was only there four or five months"* (Linda) [512]

> "*Then I went to work in a bakery where I met my husband at 15. Married at 18 and baby at 20. I haven't been so bad."* (Linda) [513]

There is little expectation of anything different, an expectation that the work available and signposted in the careers interviews, was normal within their communities. [514]

On leaving school, Frank had this to say:

> "Heading towards the door, you are 16. It is your turn to go out in the world." (Frank)

Ann had an awareness that education was changing. Ann understood that opportunities were beginning to open up in schools even if these had not been open to her. Ann spoke, not just of herself, but of others in her school year:

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[511] The address of the Careers Service in central Liverpool.

[512] Ogdens was a Tobacco Factory sited just off Everton Road and a short distance from Ann's home.

[513] Spencer, S., *Gender, Work and Education in Britain in the 1950s,* p 54 indicates that most girls of the period went into paid work until marriage.

[514] Spencer, *Gender, Work and Education in Britain in the 1950s,* p 58. In her review of preparation for work the view is expressed that there is an expectation on the employment officers to "find" work for both boys and girls.

"I know in the few years after I left there was a secretarial school where you could get qualifications and I know one girl who was pushed by her parents to do this but not us, not our year." (Ann) [515]

For Ann, education through work, through trade union education or worker education was not a considered option. None of the networks educational, social or quasi-religious communicated development opportunities which meant that for many, like Ann, leaving school meant that formal education was at an end.

For Frank, he believed that school set you on your path but that the view at home, with peers and family, for himself and his mates was: *"Get a trade behind you son you won't go wrong."* (Frank)

This view of trade as the optimal choice dominated even though Frank enjoyed school and had been through the grammar school environment. Unlike earlier participants, Frank had been able to participate in national qualifications and he had particularly enjoyed the sciences and geography. However, as the GCEs were taken, the focus was on leaving:

"You are 16 and you go out into the world. You could have gone on… but the way you were brought up it was what was expected of you." (Frank)

Unlike Jane, Frank does not show regret at lost opportunity but he does sense that had parents understood the value of continuing education then more children from his background might have had a different perspective. Economically more stable than some of the participants, there might just have been an opportunity

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[515] Bourke felt that it was the fear of unemployment compelling working to adopt defensive economic strategies but the economic context of this narrative suggests work is available and that there is a respect for education but no systemic route through. Bourke, *Working Class Cultures in Britain 1890 – 1968*, p 109.

for Frank to continue his education but neither school nor careers presented any alternative case to parents and families.

> *"Education was good in those days but it stayed in the school. Parents never thought what education meant, if they had known…. you would have been staying on, doing it."* (Frank)

As with Mary, a decade earlier, Ann did have a meeting with a careers officer at school but unlike Mary's experience there was no personalised knowledge of Ann's skills or preferences. The school Ann attended did not extend the possibilities beyond the job vacancies list and children were poorly prepared for any alternatives.[516] It is hard to reconcile these experiences with the case studies developed from London schools in the same period and evaluated by Medway et al in their research into the teaching of English 1945-1965.[517] In concluding about the national picture, the researchers felt that all three schools examined had the intellectual development of their pupils as a consistent aim. This contrasts sharply with the lived experience of Ann.[518]

> "*Teachers all knew there were no outcomes for us we were the secondary modern kids and we were just going to the factories."* (Ann)
>
> *"After we left they started a nursery nurse course but going to school was something we had to do until we went to work"* (Ann) [519]

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[516] Ann was in the A stream of her school so there is little to suggest that the experience of other pupils at the time would have differed substantially.

[517] Medway, P., Hardcastle J., Brewis, G. and Crook, D., *English Teachers in a Post-war Democracy 1945-1965,* p 157

[518] An introduction to Ann as a participant can be found in chapter three of the thesis.

[519] Ann does not seem to have benefited from changes in the economy, Bourke discusses the increase in participation of women in the workplace – rising from 43% to 51% between 1951 and 1971 and noting that there was a movement away from manual work in factories towards clerical and retain working. Bourke, *Working Class Cultures in Britain 1890-1968*, p 81.

In terms of the educational experience there had been deterioration in the pastoral care and support given to a school leaver if you compare Ann or Jane to Mary. The extent to which Ann is judged by her school and locality makes grim reading in relation to the political rhetoric around meritocracy:

> "*The careers officer came in with a list of factory jobs available…. we were asked to choose…. which one did we want? I said I didn't want to do factory work…. I wanted to learn office skills. The officer said I don't know if you can…said he would talk to the shipping office but they might not want to see you because of where you come from…*" [520]

Many decades later the injustice of this response was still raw in the mind of this participant. Classified not just by social class but by geographic area, not just by city but by a collection of streets. The careers officer did get Ann an interview with a Shipping Office but told her that the office were a bit reluctant to employ her because of where she lived. Ann was successful in achieving her modest aim:

> "*Got an interview and the woman said that she would give me a chance. When I started work in the shipping office, I got £5 a week and 2 Luncheon Vouchers worth 30p*" (Ann)

Ann remembers how difficult it had been to push of the boundaries of authority and expectation even by such a small margin. Ann had support from home to achieve her office job and enough confidence to express a wish to do something that had been considered out of the ordinary for someone at her school.

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[520] Spencer, *Gender, Work and Education in Britain in the 1950s,* p 56. Spencer believed that in the 1950s a pupil with a secondary modern education could get an office or clerical job. A decade later, in the mid 1960s, Ann was struggling to find acceptance that an office job might be a suitable aspiration.

The overwhelming driver for school leavers at the school was job security. Ann comments:

> "*The careers people recruited directly to the factories, BAT (British American Tobacco Factory) had lots of jobs available. Parents were pleased to see us employed"* (Ann)

In terms of the positioning of the individual aspirations of the young person there appeared to have been little progress at home or school in the experience of participants between the 1940s and 1960s. Ann felt the lack of support from the school and careers deeply:

> *"There were just no expectations…. so with the office work…. you were felt to be difficult if you didn't just melt in with it. We respected adults; teachers, older people…. wouldn't have answered back."* (Ann)

Additionally, the pastoral concern shown in the 1940s to Mary to try to find a skills match to employment was more reluctantly given. Todd discusses the increase in work opportunities for women in the clerical field noting that between 1918 and 1951 getting an office job became realizable for working-class girls.[521] Ann's experience of expressing her interest in such work suggests that this did not apply to her or her peer group. Of the women participants, all went into factory work regardless of the school they attended. Even if they aspired to better you were identified by your geographic area. There was no preparation for the working world. The collective allegiance to the welfare of the family unit was very much in evidence through the narratives and Frank summarised this: "*you were part of the family income…. it was the way it was"* (Frank)

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[521] Todd, *Young women, work and family in England 1918-1951*, p 43.

Ann, Frank and James felt that their experience was normal for the area. Her best friend Jennifer and Jennifer's husband were all educated at Roscommon. A generation on, Jennifer's son was educated in Everton at Breckfield Secondary Modern and had a similar experience. In Ann's words:

> *"Jennifer's son went to Breckfield. You know the situation. He did ok but did it through night school…. still the same…. we had to do it for ourselves."* (Ann)

Ann's particular sadness was that a whole school community had been left without support and that this had moved into a future generation. Ann had not passed the 11 plus and attended a secondary modern school but the experience of James at a grammar school mirrors a similar lack of pastoral care for some working- class children. James had enjoyed and been curious about aspects of his grammar school education. However, the educational outcomes from his school days were as limiting as those for the secondary modern school students.

> "*I left at 15 without any qualifications. There was no guidance or advice…. No- one wanted to know what I was doing or where I was going…. It was just ' I'm leaving tomorrow' and ' Ok then'."* (James)

The education link to employment was weaker for James than it had been for Mary in the 1940s when at least there was some knowledge that she had needle working skills. No attempt was made with James to investigate skills or job options or to direct into further training. Possibly a grammar school had different expectations of its leavers so little inclination or capability in providing non-academic careers advice. However, it was clear from James that his experience was not unusual for the lower streams of the grammar school year cohort and that the school system did not moderate in any way for those not directed into sixth form or professional job roles.

The pace of change towards reorganising schools in Liverpool was slow and not all secondary modern schools displayed the imagination to engage working-class pupils in a broader range of educational options. Ann was very clear in her opening statements that she felt let down by her education and that it had offered nothing by way of opportunity.

Sarah's view of post school preparation was very similar. A different school but a similar experience:

"I don't remember anything about jobs but there were lots of jobs, well factory jobs. It was our turn…. our turn to go out to work now. I've no regrets. You were in school then you left and that was that." (Sarah)

Sarah went on to reflect about experiences in her wider family:

"We'd never dream of Uni. My brother got passed to go to the Collegiate but he never went. We were too proud – Mum wouldn't have any help for him to go to school, she was bringing him up and that was that. He finished school and got an apprenticeship at Georgeson's and he was the breadwinner then." (Sarah) [522]

Edward left school with qualifications and initially had a much envied post at The Giro but it was other, wider elements of education he viewed as having been the most valuable. [523] Edward quickly felt that an office environment was not for him and began to set up business opportunities for himself:

"The schooling I had gave me the grounding for everything I've needed in life…. I've made my own employment and been self-employed since I was

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[522] Local car dealer and garage in the neighbouring ward of Anfield.
[523] Girobank - Based in Bootle, north Liverpool and regarded as a particularly safe place of employment.

> *19. Skills…. communication skills, maths…. May not have been so developed if I hadn't been to St Gregs."* (Edward)

The final participant in the timeline, Bob, was the only one to progress from school directly into post school education. Out of the Economics class in sixth form, three out of a friendship group of six went to Sheffield University. Bob knew how fortunate he felt and how unusual this was with peers and his own family:

> *"Brothers and sisters all left at 16…. all went to Grammar schools….but I was the only one who went into the 6th form. Went into 6th form to resit GCEs… Not cos I wanted to go to University… didn't even know what university was…. just thought 2 more years doing stuff"* (Bob)

Bob said that when he got his A level results he had intended to just go and get a job. However, the recession had hit Liverpool hard and work was scarce so benefiting from means tested full university grants, Bob was able, with school support, to get a place at Sheffield University.

The responsibility of being in work, of being part of the earning community for the family was very keenly felt by Sarah:

> *"I never stayed on… Mum was on her own… I went to work in Ogdens …. the tobacco factory. I went out and earned money. I went back and forth from Ogdens to bar work in Spain. I was ready to go to work, there were some girls who stayed on and went to college but college wasn't pushed then as it is now. We didn't have the opportunities they have now …. we had to go to work, had to."* (Sarah)

Post school expectations were influenced by school, home and peer groups but perhaps primarily the economy. Success in transitioning to a grammar school environment at 11 did not necessarily mean that outcomes would differ from the community norm. The lack of formal qualifications to equip school leavers with

better job market prospects is particularly striking from the evidence in this section of the narratives.

Although national examinations had become well established during the time period of the research, the practice of using school reports and references in place of these appeared to be entrenched in both the secondary modern and grammar school systems. Spencer considering the similarities in working- class experiences in grammar and secondary modern school notes that by 1961, 73% of children left school without having taken a public examination.[524] Only three of the participants took part in national examinations. The careers discussion appeared to be part of the leaving school culture but the advice appeared to reflect local labour market needs and stereotypical assessments about suitability and work options. The most frequent outcome was a move into factory work. The aspirations and school leaving memories are the final part of the theme reflecting the social influencers involved in shaping childhood and education for the participants. Multifaceted and complex, the relationship between place and aspiration, the expectations of family and church, the consolidation of expectation in the peer groups all play a part in understanding the responses of children to the educational changes of the time.

Conclusion

This chapter has considered the voices of the participants through a thematic analysis structured into two primary sections; firstly, the relationship of experience to the local and national policy at the time and secondly, the relationship to broadly defined social influencers. The meritocracy hoped for by the architects of

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[524] Spencer, *Gender, Work and Education in the 1950s*, p 51.

the 1944 Act was never realised by way of outcome although there remains a mythical attachment to the benefits of working- class children placed within the grammar system. The binary system may well have helped to hold the social hierarchy in place and this is perhaps most clearly evidenced in the subtheme on aspiration and leaving school where expectations for the individuals are expressed as being commonplace, not unusual, but part of the ordinary cycle of growing up in the community. Working- class culture was infused with the philosophy of the communal good of the family. This was central to decision making and decisions were made for the family collective rather than in the interests of any one individual. Spencer considers that the relationship between parents and the secondary modern school could reflect a lack of parental interest in education but the participant interviews suggest a prioritisation rather than lack of interest and an acceptance about the access to GCE qualifications. [525]

The culture of family and a recognition of the challenges faced economically did not appear to be adapted in any way to an increasingly diverse new intake as more working- class primary children achieved a pass in the 11 plus. There is evidence of a lack of coherence even at the local level with success of secondary modern education appearing to depend on the individual school. The experiences of Ann and Edward particularly indicated very different attitudes towards support and curriculum. These two participants attended schools which were within two miles of each other geographically. Their position on the timeline may be more significant and as their experiences were a decade apart, so the influence of educational interventions between the 1960s and 1970s may account for the improvement in achievement in secondary modern schools. This is of interest as

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[525] Spencer, *Gender, Work and Education in Britain in the 1950s*, p 52.

it signals that over time, the interventions in the appropriate environment may make a difference to outcomes.

The opening dialogue with Edward emphasised the importance of retaining a close tie with the local community:

> "*My primary school …. was close to home, a small school and 45 years later I am still mates with some of the lads I went with in that first week.*"
> (Edward)

The participants in the research were articulate about their communities but also reflective and sometimes critical about the outcomes of the education process recognising the limitations placed on their progress. Dislocation either physically, or, through the separation from childhood networks was referenced by most of the participants and suggests there may be importance in establishing greater understanding of informal community links when developing policy in education. For the participants, they appear to have regretted the loss of their childhood streets and friendships.

The relocation and community disruption felt recalled by children in relation to the housing policies established itself as a contributory factor in the educational experience. This was allied to the position of children in relation to religious affiliation. The established history of the area focuses on how the sectarian differences were reduced by the housing policy. Day, talked about the concentrations of residents of a particular social class or religion having important

local impact and suggested that the planners intended to take great care in securing a "balanced population" in the new developments. [526]

The inter-relationship of the themes and the consistency in articulation of some barriers relating to the connection between education experience and socio-economic and cultural factors has been highlighted through the voice of participants. The inclusion of this voice suggests that there are systemic as well as social barriers to working-class engagement over the period 1944-1979. Having used the narratives to create a framework of themes and subthemes, the next chapter will discuss how the participant testimonies can be analysed to suggest wider impact on our understanding of working- class education.

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[526] Day, P., *Pride before a Fall? Orangeism in Liverpool since 1945;* in Busteed, M, Neal F and Tong, J (eds) *Irish Protestant Identities*, Manchester University Press, Manchester, 2008.

CHAPTER SIX
DISCUSSION OF IMPACT

Relationship between education policy and the working-class narratives

Portelli refers to the ability of oral history to cut across disciplinary boundaries. [527] The participant narratives in Chapters 4 and 5 reveal this interconnectivity between history, politics, economics, sociology and geography. Though focused on memories from school, the narratives are entwined with a broader range of contributing factors. Chapters 4 and 5 have considered what has been shared by the participants. The narratives have been viewed in a historical context. Chapter 6 chapter will move into an interpretative sphere and consider why certain memories might have been viewed by the participant to have particular significance. [528] The broad themes identified in Chapter 5 are rarely ring-fenced by a hard border. The border between the themes is often blurred revealing the extent of interconnectivity and the way in which the outcome from one theme may have been influenced by several others. The walls of the themes can be considered to be permeable and this perspective is useful in navigating discussions on impact of oral histories in understanding education in the time period covered by the thesis.

While individual experiences, relating to a personal memory, would be recognisable as significant in some narratives, there is also evidence of

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[527] Abrams, *Oral History Theory,* p 1, references Portelli.

[528] Thompson suggests that there are two options facing historians when considering interpretation. One is the choice to present the narratives with minimalist intervention and the second is to seek for an interpretation through a wider social analysis. This thesis follows the second of these options drawing on wider social dimensions to interpret the narrative. Thompson, *The Voice of the Past*, pp 268-269.

community impact. The use of the collective pronoun "we" instead of the singular "I" in the narratives suggests that participants believed that theirs was not a singular, an isolated experience. In reading the transcripts from the perspective of childhood memory this becomes significant as participants regularly referred to themselves as acting collectively with others. This view, that their memories were collective rather than singular might have been overlooked in a more conventional theme based approach to data but became evident using the multiple lens approach considered by Mauthner and Doucet.[529] Thus, in considering the relationships between children and the education framework it is significant that in most narratives the participants did not believe their experience to be any different to that of their peers.

The extent to which the intentions of the policy makers and politicians were modified at local level supports the assertion made by Jones that schools are complex places. Jones believed that pupils and their parents can be seen to respond to initiatives in ways differing from the intention of the designers.[530] This would tend to suggest that the application of national policy may be subverted in its delivery at local level. In interpretation as well as delivery, policy enactment may be more responsive to a local voice and conditions than intended by its architects. However expressed, the meritocratic intentions of the 1940s do not appear to have been realised in these narratives up to thirty years later. Despite reform and reorganisation, an increase in school leaving age from 14 to 16 over the period and changes to the examination structure, some working-class children may not have been able to benefit to the extent anticipated. Some of the

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[529] See Methodology Chapter Three, Mauthner, and Doucet 'Reflections on a voice centred relational method: Analysing Maternal and Domestic Voices' , p 3.
[530] Jones, *Education in Britain* pp 84-85.

narratives suggest that pupils could leave schools thought to be exemplary without qualifications or advice or take examinations. In considering the construction of policy in education there is limited evidence that working-class parent or pupil needs were recognised or their voice even considered.

Mass Observation had long recorded the lives of ordinary people and in 1914, Rose, reports that the Historical Association was being asked to write more about everyday lives. Although there was interest in collecting the working class voice, there is little evidence that this informed policy or practice in education. Creating policy and practice remained the preserve of a relatively privileged elite. Kynaston interviews many working class people in his historical trilogy but there is little evidence that these or other social accounts informed political direction or priorities.[531] Coates and Silburn are direct about the impact of social factors on education.[532] Their work concludes that by the ages of 6 or 7, children are immersed in the attitudes and values of their subculture. Coates and Silburn conclude that children raised in poverty may not be psychologically prepared to take advantage of increased opportunities which occur in their lifetime. Published in 1971, their work suggests the need for research which showed how the different elements of impoverished living meshed together so as to better understand the reality of the human experience which did not fall neatly into categories of researcher interests in housing, wages, education and family structure.[533]

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[531] Kynaston, D., *The Age of Austerity, The Age of Family, The Age of Modernity*.
[532] Coates, K., and Silburn, R., *Poverty and the Forgotten Englishman* 2nd edn, Leeds, Spokesman Books, 1983, p 151 discussing the culture of poverty among the poor in Mexico and quoting anthropologist Oscar Lewis.
[533] Ibid, p 50: Coates and Silburn particularly reference the need to put the Plowden Report into a wider socio-economic framework.

Poverty and deprivation are referenced throughout the narratives, rarely with any sense of self-pity or resentment but often with a display of acceptance that this was how their world worked. There was little indication of knowledge about how those outcomes might have been changed. Uncertain though it was, the Docks provided employment for many families in the Everton area. This meant that the demise of the labour intensive dock working practices and containerisation affected areas such as Everton badly, increasing levels of unemployment. Despite the rhetoric of the 1960s regarding education and technology, the ability of the local workforce to transfer to other forms of employment was not easily available as traditional jobs diminished. Although globalisation through containerisation and the reduction in manufacturing options was to impact greatly on areas such as Everton, there was little recognition of the need to build skills and be part of the emerging economies in the accounts of the participants. For the Everton community, containerisation and mechanisation led to rising numbers of redundancies and a further reduction in security of employment. Later participants lived in a time of economic change which, particularly during the Wilson years, looked forward to the transference of skills into new technologies. Despite considerable rhetoric on skills and policy developments from both Labour and Conservative parties, the participant experience did not match with the political aspiration of the time. The earlier narratives are dominated by the effects and aftermath of the war which might be expected. However, the housing deprivation endured by participants over a twenty year period post war does suggest a need to reflect on the time taken for social policies such as housing and education to have an impact at street level. Although change to the system of selection at 11 for secondary school was discussed from the 1950s onwards, the reality for children was that the selective 11 plus examination formed a

significant part of the education experience for Everton children for several decades. While, despite poverty indicators, participants often had happy memories of primary education, secondary schools appeared to introduce these children to a world of limitation rather than expansive education. In seeking to understand these limitations, the enduring culture of the grammar school ethos and the comparatively neglected culture of secondary schools will be explored. A project currently ongoing based in Cambridge under the direction of historian Mandler, looks to redress the balance with regard to secondary school research and references work by Todd which is a significant source for this thesis.[534] Liverpool is referenced in this work with a focus on an amalgamated school process in Knowsley and the North West.[535] The Everton based research provided through this thesis may well be of interest to this project and the interest in the emergence of comprehensive schools from the secondary school system confirms the importance of understanding secondary school education.

The culture and characteristics of the schools attended post selection is of interest to the final educational outcomes for participants. The grammar school curriculum and organisation appeared resilient to changes in the building of an alternative secondary school ethos. Even with the rise of the comprehensive school, the lack of focus on a secondary school experience for the whole spectrum of ability appears to be lacking. Secondary modern and comprehensive schools continued with the practice of streaming and there is limited evidence of a curated curriculum to appeal to those outside the top academic streams. Even where children had passed the 11 plus and been placed within the grammar

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[534] SESC – Secondary education and Social Change in the United Kingdom. www.sesc.hist.cam.ac.uk (Accessed 24/08/2021).
[535] Knowsley is a Merseyside Metropolitan Borough adjacent to Liverpool and Kirkby, one of the new towns referenced in the housing relocation discussion is part of Knowsley Borough.

school system, the question of disparity between top and lower sets raises questions about the ability of the grammar system to cope with its working class intake.

The experiences of James and Edward in the grammar school system raises uncertainty about whether the community subculture as defined above or the school culture that made the difference in their schooling outcomes. Both refer to the rigidity and the adherence to a school structure that would have been alien to working- class child. The physical embodiment of the academic structure through the use of Latin in motto and song and the wearing of academic gowns by teachers helped to create a culture of difference. This was not simply about academic superiority and there would be uncertainty in the mind of an Everton child and their family about how they would be received by the school, its teachers and fellow pupils and parents. The adjustment to difference was expected only from the working- class entrants with no recognition of home circumstances being evident from the narratives. On the contrary, the need to provide a wider range of expensive equipment and uniform items was in itself a signal to such children that these places of learning might not be for them. The curiosity and enthusiasm James displayed for entering his grammar school faded as he found little support or understanding for his circumstances. James highlights an inability to work effectively in a home environment not conducive to study and the lack of feedback and guidance for children struggling with the academic curriculum. Succeeding in the 11 plus should have placed James in a position to benefit from the grammar education but in the end, he, and those with him in the lower streams, left school without qualifications. James recalled that there were 3 lower streams for each year intake and that each class would have approximately 30 children. Despite external appearances and the feeling of having made it by getting a grammar

school place, the reality for a significant proportion of children attending the Collegiate was that they would go into the world without even the comforting reference supplied to their secondary school counterparts.

Ultimately the grammar system failed both James and Edward but Edward recognised the need to return to an environment which understood him. Edward's narrative reflected the wider debate taking part in the UK on the attributes of a grammar school as opposed to a comprehensive school. The opposing views can be seen clearly in the dispute between Kidbrooke Comprehensive School, the first purpose build comprehensive school and the neighbouring Eltham Hill Grammar school.[536] While the politicians and policy makers argued about the relative merits of each school structure, the secondary modern schools were left untended and effectively became a third choice as local authorities and Liverpool, in particular, continued to retain the grammar schools while new school buildings were classified as comprehensive schools.

Crosland, in 1965, referred to selection at 11 as a brake on economic and social progress and the Department of Education and Science published 'The Organisation of Secondary Education' which stated an intention to eliminate separatism in secondary education.[537] While there may have been intention to have comprehensive education in some political and educational circles since the 1944 Act, the LEAs had not previously been compelled to do so. Without the compulsion, plans were drawn up for reorganisation but not necessarily implemented. This hesitancy, which Gillard refers to as prevarication, continued

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[536] Limond, 'Miss Joyce Lang, Kidbooke and The Great Comprehensives Debate.' *History of Education,* pp 339-352.
[537] Department of Education and Science, Circular 10/65 1965 The Organisation of Secondary Education in which LEAs were asked to submit plans for reorganising their schools on comprehensive lines.

to dominate policy making in education throughout the 1960s. [538] The approach taken at national level was inconsistent so that, inevitably, the acceptance of comprehensive education was inconsistent and partial.[539] The local authorities made the decisions about the funding and building programmes so that the response to concerns about selection at 11 was fragmented and partial.

The lack of clarity at the policy level is illustrated through the lived experience of Edward who attended both a grammar school and a secondary modern school and Ann who attended an upgraded and resourced secondary modern school but gained little benefit from this. It is, however, in the absence of a sustainable, focused policy for secondary modern schools that differences pertaining to culture and pastoral support can be most clearly evidenced.

The experience of Bridge writing about his experiences in Florence Melly School for boys in Clubmoor, an adjacent ward to Everton, provides some archival insight from the teachers' perspective. On starting work there in the 1950s, he believed that the secondary modern school serviced the local area and that the school was the natural next stage school for children reaching 11. There was a time, he felt, when the secondary modern school was able to recruit a fair range of ability to the school. His belief is that a lack of focus on the 11 plus in the primary schools and culturally within the locality meant that some secondary schools had been able to benefit from a genuinely mixed ability range. Over time, Bridge felt that the higher ability children were siphoned into grammar schools as working- class children were proving to be increasingly successful in passing the 11 plus. [540]

[538] Gillard, D., Chapters 11 and 12, 1951-1970 www.educationengland.org.uk (Accessed 23/01/2019)
[539] Simon, *Education and the Social Order,* p 301.
[540] Bridge, *My Liverpool Schools*, pp 110-145.

The fragmented nature of secondary school capacity to support working- class communities can be explored through the narrative from Ann which revealed a secondary modern school unable or unwilling to extend a broader experience of education to their children. There appears to be uncertainty about what the nature of education should be for secondary modern school children and how this would relate to their place in the world after school. Brookes examines the adoption of a grammar school curriculum, ways of working and examination entrance being adopted nationally by the secondary modern schools. [541] Given the testimony from Ann it does indicate a failure to develop a bespoke secondary modern curriculum which could have better informed an emergent comprehensive system with evidence of successful learning interventions. Two intelligent and capable young people, James who passed the 11 plus, and Ann, who was in the top set, both left their respective schools without any qualifications to attest to their schooling. Ann left her school in 1967 with a reference only. The school leaving age did not increase to 16 years until 1972 and as examinations were held at 16 and school leaving norms were at age 15 there was systemic disadvantage for pupils for whom 'staying on' was economically unviable. A top set pupil, she should naturally have been entered for examinations which would have supported her in her post school employment and also provided some social capital marking her out as successful in her school career. With the rise in the school leaving age, secondary modern schools and the emerging comprehensives, began to use the development of GCE curriculum areas and examination entrance almost in defiance of government policy. Brooks saw this focus on school leaving qualifications as a move away from a second class victim perspective for secondary modern schools and comprehensives into a place

[541] Brooks, *'The role of external examinations in the making of secondary modern schools in England 1945-1965'*, pp 447b -467.

where GCE outcomes raised both pupil and teacher morale. The 11 plus had increased the proportion of working- class children in grammar schools and subsequently the national examination system provided some external calibration to show education outcome success in secondary modern and comprehensive schools. However, the move into national examinations affected the inclusive potential of both secondary moderns and comprehensive schools. The schools recognised that they could not offer all pupils the GCE option so created streams often with lower class sizes and increased teacher allowances.[542]

Neither the pupils nor their families in the sample questioned the schools about their approach to the children or examinations. The Plowden Report in setting up EPAs acknowledged a lack of support or stimulus for learning in the home environment.[543] The community culture was for families to stay remote from the process of education. Given the potential for an intolerable cultural gap in the grammar school environment and the neglected educational strategy for secondary modern schooling, the delay in moving into a comprehensive school structure may well have been damaging for children in Liverpool during the 1960s and 1970s.

By the early 1970s it should have been possible for Edward to have attended a mixed ability comprehensive in his own geographic area and not faced the social exclusion he so vividly describes in the eighteen months spent in the grammar school environment. The Plowden report aspiration to build both houses and schools to serve every social class is difficult to evidence from the memories of

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[542] Brooks, *'The role of external examinations in the making of secondary modern schools in England 1945-1965'*, pp 447b -467, footnote 114.
[543] The Plowden Committee Report: *Children and Their Primary Schools*: A report of the Central Advisory Council for Education, H.M.S.O. The report set up EPAs – Education Priority Areas.

the participants. These are structural, systemic failures but, as Simon argues, the growing group of skilled workers would bring with them educational aspirations for their children and expectations of success in public examinations.[544]

Public Examinations and the importance of recognition

For some of the post war and 1960s participants, the end of school was not marked by public examinations but by a school reference which mostly indicated good character and employment potential. As the school leaving date was normally determined by birthday, some children left school without any formal acknowledgment of their years of schooling. The School Certificate was replaced with GCE O level examinations in 1951 which meant that a level of certification was theoretically open to all of the participants. However, as testimony from James and Ann would indicate that openness did not really exist when the school leaving age was a year earlier than the school year in which examinations were set. For James, in a grammar environment, the school would have provided for such examinations even if it would be rare for the lower stream children to participate. In the secondary modern schools, there were few resources to support an additional year of schooling. The so called 'Easter leavers' were potentially disadvantaged by having a birthday in the earlier part of the school year. Participants James, Sarah and Ann all talk about just leaving the school without certification and their experience would concur with Brooks who noted that the funding decision impacting fifteen year old leavers had profound implications for the education system and pupils within it. [545] Given the chaos of wartime schooling, it is unsurprising that Mary and Tom did not have any

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[544] Simon, *Education and the Social Order*, p 218.
[545] Brooks, *'The role of external examinations in the making of secondary modern schools in England 1945-1965'*, pp 447b -467, footnote 39.

certification and for Jane and Linda the infrastructure issues and survival day to day were still the primary concern. However, for the other participants in the sample it would seem reasonable to assume that the additional years of schooling and the changes to examinations and organisation would have provided them with a more substantial record of their school days. Ultimately, only Frank, Edward and Bob left school having taken and succeeded in national examinations. While the oral narratives stand as testimony to individual experiences, the regularity with which participants saw themselves as typical of their peer group, not in any way exceptional, allows for consideration that if one child left without qualifications, it was unlikely that they would have been the only child in that position. The impact of the funding for qualifications policy on school leavers may be an area for additional research and discussion.

The CSE exam was introduced in 1962 with the intention of bringing secondary modern schools into the public examination sphere while retaining GCE examinations for grammar schools and increasingly the top streams in comprehensive schools. Tomlinson noted evidence that the level of examination taken correlated with social class. [546] Middle-class children were more likely to take GCE examinations whereas working-class pupils were more frequently entered for CSEs.[547] Simon reports that the GCE was specifically designed as a grammar school examination.[548] The decision about entering children for public examinations was taken at the level of the school with budgetary constraints played a significant part in the outcomes. The decisions made by school

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[546] Tomlinson, (2005) *Education in a post-welfare society* pp 21-25.
[547] The Beloe Report , *Secondary School Examinations other than the GCE,* 1960 assumed that if 20% of school students took GCEs then the next 20% in the ability range would take CSEs. The examination outcomes were intended to inform employers, technical and further education colleges. Gillard, D https://www.educationengland.org.uk/documents/beloe/ (Accessed 14/3/2020).
[548] Simon, *Education and the Social Order,* p 303.

governance with respect to examination entrance inevitably dictated the curriculum and teaching requirements. Ann noted in her testimony that well equipped science classes were left unused or not used for the purpose for which they had been designed. The failure to include children as candidates for national examinations would also have lowered the priority of bringing science more actively into the curriculum for pupils at her school.

In the planning stages, secondary modern schools were expected to record student achievement via internally conducted examinations, which could then be held as a record of achievement. Brooks concludes that there is little evidence that schools did formally design internal examinations. This meant that students in the 1960s were placed in the same position as their counterparts in the 40s and 50s with a subjective reference providing the only evidence of their capability and acquired knowledge. It should have been expected that education improvements would improve pupil outcomes. However, the transition into a less chaotic educational environment in the decades after the war continued to fail some of its working- class pupils. Inevitably, when considering level of disadvantage on entering the labour market, a degree of what Brooks terms 'structural exclusion' was built into the processes designed for students leaving the education system.[549] Without examination results to evidence, jobs requiring such qualifications were automatically unavailable to these students.[550]

Everton – Livelihoods and Expectations

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[549] Brooks, *'The role of external examinations in the making of secondary modern schools in England 1945-1965'*, p 447 -467,
[550] Ibid, See Footnote 39*.*

From wartime to present day, deprivation indices have placed Everton at or near the top of the list of most deprived wards in a city that is also noted for socio-economic deprivation. The poverty experienced by many of the participants was deeply entrenched. Liverpool is a maritime city and the expectations of the participants have been shaped by the understanding that livelihoods, and indeed life, were precarious. For a city with a reputation for being radical, education policy in Liverpool as experienced by the participants was conservative and staid with decisions reinforcing the status quo and pacifying the vested interests which were predominantly religious in nature. Class identity tended to be located in the locality of self, home and the area immediately around home and so a collective response to the inequitable provision in education and subsequent work opportunity was difficult to articulate. [551] The participants, Ann in particular, suggest that secondary modern schools struggled to understand their role as educators and the direction of school leavers directly into factory or unskilled work reflected the experience of all but three participants.[552] The positioning of post school employment prospects is indelibly linked to the qualification level on leaving school. The systemic failure of schools to equip their pupils with the qualifications they needed to achieve higher status work meant little choice for the participants but to move into the factories and other areas of unskilled wok.

The importance of schools in providing workers for the factories and by implication maintain the social order, can be seen directly through the evidence from Jane. Jane viewed her arrival to work in the factory as an extension to school in that her classmates and those living around her were there to join her. Having

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[551] Bourke, *Working Class Cultures in Britain, 1890-1968*, p 173.

[552] Tomlinson, *Education in a post welfare society*, pp 195 – 196 notes that girls had always outperformed boys in public examinations and that political expectations of what it was appropriate for girls to study continued into the 1980s.

aspired to a grammar school education and a career as a nurse, Jane describes the transition from school to work as one, which was seamless, bringing with it the friends from the streets and the classroom. There was resignation about this outcome and again the use of the collective 'we': "*We went out to work, it was what we did.*" This recollection was echoed by Sarah, Linda and James.

Frank, alternatively, knew that his examination passes had set him up for a decent wage and trade. There was no consideration for Frank of any further study but he had the qualifications to move into a skilled area of work. For Jane, Ann, James and Sarah, detachment from the examination system led to lower status work.

Numbers staying on in education beyond the minimum leaving age rose throughout the 1950s and 1960s but throughout the 1950s, the pass rate for GCE examinations remained low, around 20% of entrants passing in all subjects in 1956.[553] Although there were increases in participation numbers in GCE examinations, the accessibility of entrance into national examinations and therefore future placement in the job market continued to be a source of disadvantage for many children. In 1960, only 16% of sixteen year olds achieved five O-level passes and by 1972, 43% of school leavers joined the workforce without qualifications.[554] The ability to evidence education through formal qualification allowed student access to a job market defined by GCE requirements and access to higher level courses at Further Education colleges

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[553] SESC History briefing on examinations.
http://www. sesc.hist.cam.ac.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/09/Briefing-Paper-Exams.pdf
quoting from the Crowther Report: Ministry of Education, *15-18, p 80* (Accessed 18/3/2020)
[554] Wrigley, T., The Rise and Fall of the GCSE: A Class History, http://www.historyworkshop.org.uk/the-rise-and-fall-of-the-gcse-a-class-history/ (Accessed 18/3/2020).

and sixth forms. [555] Frank, when recalling his GCE results day was relieved to have been accepted to do resits and A levels at his school which although undersubscribed had retained a sixth form. He was aware that his results would not have been helpful for him in finding work and that he had insufficient passes to take a course in an FE college. Secondary modern schools increasingly entered their pupils for GCE examinations, counter to the intentions of the national policy makers to introduce CSE examinations for secondary school from 1965 onwards. Given the financial penalties associated with this it was a real act of positive intervention on behalf of some schools and Edward's account of the support he received at his secondary modern school supports this.

Returning to the memories from Ann, in context, during her time at school the number of children being entered for examinations increased and simultaneously the number of examining bodies proliferated. Most conspicuously, Pitman specialising in administrative and secretarial skills and the General Nursing Council had suites of qualifications, which were being adopted by schools to support the more traditional examination offerings. [556] However, GCE was the main vehicle and the secondary schools began to employ it as a way of increasing the value of education for their pupils.[557] What emerges is a fragmented picture of provision. School leaders made decisions about entrance and therefore influenced future work opportunities. The narratives from Everton suggest that there were areas of systemic failure when reviewing the performance of schools

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[555] Typically 5 GCEs including English and Maths.

[556] Although RSA qualifications were available during the timescale they were not referenced by any of the participants and in his review of qualifications, Simon does not make reference to their contribution. While further evidence is needed and perhaps an examination of schools which might more frequently have seen students' progress to Art School or similar, the RSA did not feature in the diet of examinations offered by the participants or of which they or their families might have been aware.

[557] Simon notes that the successful performance in GCE examinations formed part of the popularity of the comprehensive schools among parents, Simon, *Education and the Social Order*, p 292.

in providing a sound qualification basis for its leavers and this is supported by Bourke who suggests that while qualifications were the basis of upward mobility the increase in qualifications was dominated by those with families in the non-manual sector.[558]

It is significant, and evidenced through Edward's narrative, that individual schools and teachers responded to national policy in a localised way. Brooks focuses on the action taken by schools and teachers who faced with a national policy discouraging wider use, entered secondary pupils for external national examinations in ever increasing numbers. [559] The reasons for the response are varied and future research should look to the possibilities of integrating the voice of the teacher which is not explored well in the literature.

Examination outcomes became a quality marker for secondary modern schools. Where students achieved well, the schools were perceived to be of better value and admissions were likely to increase. Knowledge of school performance and an understanding of access requirements might not be in the gift of families less familiar with the school system. Teachers could influence either positively or negatively but the impact of geographical location and selection at 11 retained their impact. Initially, particularly referencing the experience of Tom, schools were overcrowded due to bomb damage and infrastructure frailties. Later, however, due to the housing relocation policy and falling inner city population, schools in the Everton area were left underpopulated. Writers such as Brooks and Simon acknowledge the role public examination entrance played in raising the status of

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[558] Bourke, *Working Class Cultures in Britain 1890-1968*, p 91, pp 96-97.

[559] Brooks, *'The role of external examinations in the making of secondary modern schools in England 1945-1965'*, p 447 -467

a school but this improvement only emerged in participant narratives towards the latter end of the time period.[560]

Policy architects had imagined that there might be freedom in allowing secondary schools to move away from the restrictions of the external examinations and that the secondary schools might have a more creative and innovative approach to the curriculum. The narratives suggest that this was not an opportunity realised. Within the wider city, there is limited evidence for creative endeavour but it was short lived. Bob's experience of the Open Air Primary school and the Liverpool Free school experiment are examples of innovation but mostly these interventions run contrary to the experience of the sample participants. Liverpool Free School was open for four years, 1971-1974 and based on Scotland Road on the southern edge of Everton. The school was run by children, parents and teachers without hierarchy and described itself as totally involved with the environment, and at the vanguard of social change.[561] In a 2014 News Magazine article, de Castella reflects on the ethos of the time and conducts interviews with the use of documentary footage from the time. Children recalled being treated as equals and being taken outside of the classroom to experience lives that were outside their experience.[562] The creators of the school, Murphy and Ord felt the need to allow children to express their individuality. The school felt that the children already knew they were different coming from Liverpool and that to be

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[560] Brooks, *'The role of external examinations in the making of secondary modern schools in England 1945-1965'*, p 447 -467

[561] https://www.educationphotos.co.uk/search?I_DSC=liverpool+free+school&I_DSC_AND=t&_ACT=search (Accessed 2//2/2019).

[562] de Castella, T., *The Anarchic experimental schools of the 1970s*, BBC News Magazine posted 21st October 2014, (Accessed 16/03/2021) https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/magazine-29518319 .

able to express that difference positively would be a positive influence on their lives.

However, for children like Ann the reality was of a science classroom rarely used and bold experimentation was, in reality, limited. The narratives raise questions about the extent to which the secondary system had the resources and skills to put into place the support needed to moderate the limiting effects of persistent deprivation. Edward's account of a wider curriculum including photography suggests that given more support further development in these areas might have been possible but there was little guidance or direction through education policy.

Liverpool faced the difficult decision about how far to go in adopting a comprehensive model of education as much of the grammar provision was linked to religious affiliation. Comprehensive schools were seen as neighbourhood schools which was a positive but the Catholic and Church of England schools continued to manage admissions through a process linked to religious affiliation.

Simon acknowledges the rise in expenditure on education between 1960 and 1970 by nearly 50% as a proportion of GDP.[563] Liverpool attracted additional national funding through being an Educational Priority Area (EPA) during the late 1960s but there is little evidence from the participants that this had a reach into the classroom. EPAs were intended to use positive discrimination in areas of multiple deprivation and one primary school, Salisbury was based in Everton. Through the EPAs, work was undertaken through home visits at the pre-school level to reduce the level of disadvantage on arrival in the classroom and this

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[563] Simon, *Education and the Social Order*, pp 222-223.

focused on building fine motor skills and levels of concentration. Certainly the responsibility for failure appeared to track back to family and community with the philosophical emphasis focusing on changing the child rather than considering the environment and context for the child. In considering outcomes the comparison between grammar school and secondary modern school income was discussed by Bourke in terms of relative inequality with grammar schools receiving a larger share of the national pot despite having fewer pupils.[564]

Opponents to the development of comprehensive reorganisation in Liverpool believed that in taking a child out of their local environment, attendance at a selective school would enhance educational opportunities. This runs counter to the narratives of James and Edward. Bob, talking about progressing to sixth form in the 1970s concedes that had the school not had a sixth form provision he probably would have left. The flexibility on entrance requirements for sixth form study and the capacity of a neighbourhood school to offer the option helped to support the first of the participants into Higher Education. Everton continues to have one of the poorest records for 16+ education in England. [565]

Community: The streets of Everton

Immediately post war and for much of the time period covered by this thesis, the hills of Everton were covered in high density housing and bomb damaged property lay unrestored into the 1970s. Everton as a place reflects Benbough Jackson's view of the whole of Merseyside in that while it may have lacked clear boundaries, the sense of being from Everton is understood deeply at local

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[564] Bourke, *Working Class Cultures in Britain 1890-1968*, p 98.
[565] UK Census 2011.

level.[566] Everton's positioning to the north of the city centre, overlooking the city and the river placed it outside some of the building initiatives intended to revitalise the city infrastructure and economy. The time period from 1940s to 1970s was also a period of social and tangible change in the Everton area. Rogers described the old Everton as being interlinked by its thousands of streets.[567] The clearance programme created a sense of dislocation described by Rogers, and this was referenced by Ann and Frank in particular. The physical environment of closely connected family dwellings with substandard facilities was described by the participants and while the experience of Tom during and shortly after the War might be expected, the conditions described by Sarah in the 1960s suggest a serious deficiency in the redevelopment of the infrastructure post war.

The housing clearance programme displaced almost a third of Liverpool's population and this resulted in a changed cultural ecology which included the fragmentation of the religious sectors within the area. The segregation noted through the narratives, of Tom and Frank in particular, appears also to have existed in the streets. The narratives suggest that the children in the same street usually attended the same school. As the schools were often decided on the basis of religious affiliation there was little scope for mixing prior to the housing reallocations. Ann talks about the opportunities at Colomendy to mix with pupils from other schools but otherwise there is only Sarah who suggests that the religious and cultural divides were starting to recede. Liverpool City Council viewed the housing reorganisation as being motivated by socio-economic factors

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[566] Benbough-Jackson, *Merseyside*, p 2.

[567] Rogers, K., *Lost Tribes of Everton and Scottie Road*, Liverpool, Trinity Mirror Media, 2010, p 28. Jones also refer to the tendency for nostalgia in accounts of the past and considers that this represented a sentimental re-imagining of the past; Jones, *The Working Class In Mid-Twentieth-Century England*, pp 123-124.The refrain of accounts in Rogers' work reflects a poor but happy interpretation of life at the time.

rather than a deliberate policy to break up the religious demarcations. Although controversial, with some claims that there had been a deliberate move towards secularisation and breaking up the sectarian communities, it seems more likely that the moves were driven by the sheer necessity of trying to manage a housing stock decimated by both war and longstanding poverty and neglect. Historians such as Rogers concur with Frank's view that the planners had got it wrong by splitting up communities and not providing local amenities. [568] The efforts of LCC focused on managing the overcrowding with multigenerational families sharing a living space. As the city lost its population it also lost education, housing and community funding based on population. However, the changes did help to lessen religious tension. The relevance of the post war clearance to religious and political allegiance is considered by Roberts who references an interview with Peter Kilfoyle, previously an MP for the Walton constituency in which Everton currently resides.[569]

In discussing the clearance, Kilfoyle notes the political imperative in the movement of people away from sectarianism to a political base reflecting class or economics. Kilfoyle believed that the Labour party could see the damage sectarianism did to their political ambitions in Liverpool and the destruction of the traditional sectarian areas would have supported improved integration. Roberts also suggests that there was evidence of community integration and a move away from segregation before the relocation began. [570] The differing perspectives of the participants in relation to religious affiliation suggest there may have been some integrative movement over the time period. The admissions process,

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[568] Rogers, *Lost Tribes of Everton and Scottie Road,* pp 28-40.
[569] Roberts, Liverpool Sectarianism pp 130-132.
[570] Roberts, K., Liverpool Sectarianism p132.

however, was still inextricably linked to religious affiliation in the city. When reviewing school options, the youngest of the participants, Bob's family was only considering schools within the Catholic system during the 1970s.

For some, the break-up of the neighbourhood communities such as Everton, might have offered an opportunity to move into a more secular and tolerant environment. For others, the breakup of friendships and community resulted in a sense of dislocation. Benbough-Jackson reflects on the importance of geographical areas and the local rivalries and internal tensions related to these areas and while these may appear fractured to those outside, for the inhabitants the tensions are a part of local culture and cohesion.[571] Bourke suggests that it is this local cohesion, the interest in self, family and home that sustains the rhetoric of working- class culture and working- class areas.[572]

This shared understanding of the frailty of the local economy and labour market is evident from the narratives. Even as children, the precarious nature of employment and the limitations this imposed was understood and articulated in stories about toys and Christmas as well as school equipment and uniforms. The factories were the focus of Careers' advice to a number of the participants who were directed into such work due to their presumed suitability for it. The rhythm of life reflected in the narratives leave little time for a focus on education. Credit at the corner shop until payday, free meals at schools and in community centres, pawning suits each week until Sunday, the lives of the participants reflect a concern with the day to day matters of survival. The narratives punctuate daily

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[571] Benbough Jackson, M., *Merseyside*, p2.

[572] Bourke, *Working Class cultures in Britain 1890-1968*, p 171. Bourke also contends that only the upper middle classes had international or general political concerns and this would appear to require investigation if placed in the context of Everton or Liverpool.

endurance of poverty with recollections of happier communal events. However, a plan for the future with a roadmap of how such a future might be obtained was largely missing although there were expressions of regret for what might have been. No absence of aspiration, then but a largely unsupported framework to convert aspiration to reality. The emotional tie to the streets, derelict though they might have been, is documented by the participant narratives. The narratives reveal a stoic approach to the demanding challenges of life with little security or money. Independence and a sense of families looking after their own is a thread from Mary and Jane through to Sarah and Edward. Todd suggests a need to re-examine the social surveys of the time which portrayed almost a romantic notion of the supportive working-class community.[573] Reciprocal childcare, loans, emotional support were part of the everyday in communities such as Everton. While there is certainly a positive element to such a culture, these attributes were also responses to poverty in the absence of a more supportive infrastructure. The elements of this culture, referenced by the participants, also suggests a degree of uniformity of experience. Participants used phrasing which indicated a belief that the conditions were broadly similar for all in the neighbourhood. While the elements of play, companionship and emotional support imply social and school experiences which were positive and affirming, these did not signal economic security even with the self -help ethos of the community. Rather, these attributes reflected economic frailty which is supported by the consistent appearance of Everton in indices relating to deprivation from the time of the research to present day.

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[573] Todd, *The People,* p 7; pp 399-404.

A better understanding about how poverty impacts on education might allow for the development of educational initiatives which would reduce the detriment faced by working-class communities such as Everton. Community was expressed by the participants as tightly defined areas, often consisting of only a few streets. Social contact and youth clubs were associated with the immediate locality and where participants travelled across the city, it was primarily for school. The city council recognised that children were travelling around the city discussed by Frank in his narrative. Transport itself, limited to school buses and times, could be an isolating factor, both Frank and Edward testify to the extent of the dislocation and alienation caused by moving away from the neighbourhoods and neighbourhood support.

Some schools in the Everton area, for example, Roscommon, which was the school attended by Ann, offered a lower educational experience for its pupils than those attending selective schools. In October 1964, the Education committee of City of Liverpool Council considered a report on the proposed reorganisation of secondary education in the city.[574]. Within this debate it was noted that there was an uneven spread of ability between the admissions areas of the proposed new schools. The link being made within the debate strongly suggests that ability was being used as a proxy for class. Even locally, policy makers were still equating geographical location with ability. These decisions reflected the stereotypical assumptions about ability and aspiration in working-class districts referenced eloquently through the story told by Ann. Isolation and sadness was expressed by participants in remembering the fragmentation of their neighbourhoods and

[574] City of Liverpool Proceedings of the Council 1964 – 65 Education Committee. Volume 2 H325COU. Education committee – Report to the Director of the Education committee – 14/10/64. (Liverpool City Library Archive).

how this impacted on school friendships. Subsequent authors would question the value of the housing policy of resettlement in outer city areas. Murray called the policy a failed experiment in social engineering feeling that refurbishment of the inner city housing stock may have built on existing and latent strengths within the community and led to happier outcomes.[575] These happier outcomes may well have included educational outcomes.

An attempt to achieve social balance and to cope with the falling demographic in Everton due to rehousing might be seen with the evidence from Bob's narrative. He was part of a group of pupils being bussed into the area as falling school numbers made schools unviable. Ultimately, the council concluded that a neighbourhood comprehensive school could not contain an ability and social mix in many areas. This inability to uncouple perceptions of academic ability with locality damaged the prospects of working-class students and perpetuated social exclusion. In debate, the council considered that the imposition of an overall comprehensive system in Liverpool in 1965 would be premature.[576] As a result a mix of grammar schools, secondary modern schools and comprehensive schools persisted. The local position in Everton reflects the political incoherence at national level. Local determination and delivery of national educational policy meant that the on the ground experience as discussed in the narratives did not necessarily reflect the ambitions of the policy makers. The environmental considerations and the impact of these lowered the potency of education policy in driving change.

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[575] Murray, *So Spirited a Town*, pp 66-77.

[576] City of Liverpool Proceedings of the Council 1964 – 65 Education Committee. Volume 2 H325COU. Education committee – Report to the Director of the Education committee – 14/10/64. (Liverpool City Library Archive).

The vacuum in policy delivery detail from central government left decision making in the hands of the LEAs and Liverpool city council considered two options in trying to moderate the educational inequality in inner city areas such as Everton. The first was to disperse more able children to outer suburbs with fresh social groupings and new environment. For Edward, however, the concept of fresh social groupings was theoretical rather than rooted in reality. Alternatively, the council could recognise the strong attachment to neighbourhood and give these schools priority in general provision of staff and other resources. The partial implementation of comprehensive schooling and the influence of the religious lobby resulted in a mixed and ultimately incoherent provision. Demographics were also to play a part in the shaping of the educational experience. The capacity of the Council to deliver on its neighbourhood school responsibilities was hampered by the decline in population which led to a subsequent decline in school funding. In the 1970s, the later years of the timeline, the schools in the Everton area were operating to below capacity and by 1978 in excess of 7,000 places were available within the secondary school system.[577] In 1978, the council reported that reorganisation of schools in Liverpool faced difficulty due to a small but identifiable number of distinct geographical areas where children were very loath to cross boundaries. Everton was one of those areas.[578]

Alongside these expressions relating to entrenched poverty there is also a sense of pride in the values of being respectable and well brought up. There is a sense through the narratives of acceptance and tolerance towards each other and a disengagement from the sources of power apart from that of the parish. School

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[577] Reports to Education committee, Liverpool City Council, May 78 to March 79 (Liverpool Central Library Archive)
[578] Reports to Education committee, Liverpool City Council, May 78 to March 79 (Liverpool Central Library Archive)

authority was unquestioned and minor challenges, such as Ann wanting to be considered for office not factory work, were rare. The impact of the neighbourhood norms on school attainment has been recognised by Gordon and Monastiriotis but the belief that taking the child out of the neighbourhood to provide alternative models and peers from higher socio-economic groupings is less easy to evidence.[579] In the case of Edward, it is a return to the socioeconomic grouping and familiar habitus that results in academic success. For Edward, the integration into the grammar school system was of lesser importance than being part of his neighbourhood. Habitus is reflected in the consistently expressed view that things were as they were and would not be changed.[580] Family and community expectations were reinforced by education policy designed to limit the numbers of pupils moving into the grammar school system. For those succeeding to gain admission, there was little evidence of a will to create a culture in which a working-class child with multiple material disadvantages could succeed.

Many cities in England suffered housing and unemployment issues but, as Towers comments, Liverpool was consistently the worst when poverty conditions were surveyed and the impact, was felt most keenly by children.[581] While the narratives reference the poverty of the neighbourhood, the importance of culture, the way in which people viewed themselves in the world has a resilience, a pride as well as resignation and an acceptance which is not easily defined beyond the boundaries.

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[579] Gordon and Monastiriotis, Urban Size, Spatial Segregation and Inequality of Educational Outcomes, pp 1203-1228.
[580] The virtue of conformity; Bourdieu, *Distinction*, p 381.
[581] Towers, *Waterfront Blues,* p 246.

Support – Hope and a Helping Hand

The intentions of the 1944 Act were supportive to the aims of greater inclusion and a meritocratic approach to education which should have provided a framework for working-class children to succeed. The political culture of the post war years was certainly reforming in nature and Jones reports a decline in the natural acceptance of social hierarchy and cultural and moral authority.[582] The post war optimism and the emphasis on reconstruction and health led to increased optimism about education and its role in improving the lives of ordinary people. In 1949, Mass Observation interviewed over 2000 people about their income and spending patterns and found widespread satisfaction, particularly among manual workers.[583] Peace and the availability of work created an environment of hope for the future. Aspirations were clear but the systems, infrastructure and political leadership did not deliver the coherence needed for the effects to be felt at the level of the individual school and individual child.

The continuation of private fee - paying education and the public schools throughout the period can be seen as relevant as it confirmed perceptions that education was not truly meritocratic. One of the participants, Ann, recalled visiting Shrewsbury School and noted that it was a very different world but also that it was not a world in which there might be a place for her. Indirectly, many of the civil servants involved in designing policy and governance in education belonged to the alumni of fee paying schools. It is worth noting though that the architects of school policy, elected and appointed, belonged to an elite with limited knowledge of the lives of the children in Everton.

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[582] Jones, *Education in Britain,* p 13.
[583] Todd, *The People*, p 155.

Although there may have been a political message about egalitarian provision of education, the experience for the participants reflected a different perception in terms of both access and provision. While there were central government messages about including all children irrespective of background, the autonomy, discussed by Bates and others in the literature chapter, given to LEAs and to the schools themselves inevitably meant diversity of practice and this is demonstrated within the narratives.[584] Consistency of curriculum or experience was not part of the policy framework. This independence of action of the curriculum reflected the individual characteristics of schools based on the individual preferences of teachers and headteachers. This diversity of policy and delivery meant that experiences could be variable even within small geographical area. The participant stories from the latter part of the timeline showed an improvement in both pastoral care and academic support although this was found mostly at the level of the individual teacher rather than at the level of the school. In recognising the gap between aspiration and delivery, the LEA provided funding for a teachers' centre in Liverpool which tasked itself with developing the next generation of teachers and leaders. Through supporting the development of teachers, the LEA may have been able to change the exposure of teachers to quality developmental provision and accordingly improve the educational prospects of pupils in the city. Bob and Edward both benefitted from the actions and support of teachers in their environment leading to improved educational outcomes for both. Although this work is focused on the voice of the child, the contribution of teachers collectively and individually has been recognised by a number of participants. Teachers were part of the differentiation between the

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[584] Bates, Lewis, and Pickard, *Education Policy, Practice and the Professional,* p 128

higher ranked grammar and secondary modern schools as qualification level and pay levels differed. The impact of entrance into public examinations for the pupils has been discussed but this served also to support secondary modern school teachers in bidding to have parity with their grammar school counterparts in status, pay and conditions.[585] Teacher awareness or confidence in what should be provided to their pupils is an area worthy of further research. While the grammar schools relied on teaching a classic curriculum without adaptation to the newer intake of working- class children, the secondary modern schools appeared uncertain about the nature of education in their institutions and government policy did not move into areas of curriculum consistency and teacher training until the mid-1960s.

Gaine comments on teacher expectation believing it to be a powerful force which would be hard to ignore. CSE examinations had been established since 1962, five years before Ann finished her schooling. [586] Even if the school had believed that GCE entrance was inappropriate for their intake it is hard to understand why a school or a governing body or a local authority would allow so many children out into the labour market without any certification with which to mark their school days.

Political Incoherence

While there may have been a broad consensus about education and social policy in successive Conservative and Labour governments over the time period, the steps needed to reduce the inequality imposed by selection at 11 were rarely integrated with a requirement to comply at local level. Although Wilkinson and the

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[585] Jones, *Education in Britain,* p 56-57.
[586] Gaine, and George, Gender, Race and Class in Schooling, p 96.

post-war coalition government led by Atlee were determined to restructure the decaying remnants of the pre-war system, the education policy changes failed to understand the social conditions and cultural requirements of working-class communities. By 1951, Todd reports that the collective spirit of the wartime years was becoming a fading memory. [587] Labour politicians recognised differences growing between the manual worker and the educated salaried worker. The provision of education for working-class children can be seen to have improved across the timeline. Harold Dent is reported as concluding that it was for him an incontestable fact that by 1957 children were receiving a higher quality secondary experience at school than their elder siblings.[588] However, there is a question about whether these improvements could have had greater impact if the governance around education provision had been clearer in terms of direction and provision of resources.

Before the 1944 Act even came into being evidence had been provided that outcomes of intelligence testing were impacted by social factors and poverty. Despite this, the selective structure drove policy and practice impacting the lives of two generations of pupils. Unfortunately, the assessment of abilities and aptitudes appear to have been constrained by social class and determined by the school attended. While the school might have been able to identify and encourage a direction to use abilities the socio-economic climate and the culture of the community and the risk associated with unemployment proved too strong. For some, there was evidence of schools using its resources to foster confidence and self- belief. For others, school ended and pupils had little by way of economic

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[587] Todd, *The People,* pp 200 – 209.
[588] Reported in Kynaston, *Modernity Britain,* pp 231-232. Harold Dent wrote the report *Secondary Modern Schools: An interim repor*t. Dent was previously an editor of the TES (Times Education Supplement).

or social capital to show for their time in the education system. The local political infrastructure delivering education policy was fractured. Everton's political boundaries were blurred by restructuring but as a north Liverpool neighbourhood it was closely aligned to the constituency of Walton. Although Walton represented a left-wing voice in the city, as a ward, it was marginalised by a conservative Catholic strand and a moderate Protestant strand primarily based in the south of the city. The reconciliation of the religious and political factions made coherent policy making on education complex and fragmented.

During the 1970s, Benn and Chitty suggest popular support favoured the comprehensive school and the grammar school running side by side. [589] For the comprehensive schools this would have meant trying to perform within a comprehensive structure while systematically being denied the most able pupils. The extent to which the grammar schools continued to pick up the most socially and intellectually able was primarily dependant on the LEA. When comprehensive schools did not have their intake impacted by grammar school admissions the result was more balanced intakes and bigger sixth forms.

The administrative power of the LEAs and the failure of government to compel reorganisation at local level created a disjointed approach on the ground which further disadvantaged pupils already underprivileged. Behaviour at national level in the 1960s was fragmented with mixed messages concerning the implementation of comprehensive education. Decisions not to impose implementation left local influencers, stakeholders and politicians with the power to interpret national policy. The confusion in the framing of the 1944 Act led to

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[589] Benn, and Chitty, *Thirty Years On*, p 40.

subsequent tussles between the central and local authorities. The outcome from this led to differing ideologies and interest groups having what might be seen as a disproportionate influence. The political positioning of the two main parties and the avoidance of direct intervention and instruction to comply did not help LEAs to interpret national policy at local level. In addition to the ambiguous messages from central government, the more positive feedback relating to the performance of secondary modern schools in working-class education does not seem to have been influential in determining policy. By leaving the grammar schools in place and bringing comprehensive education in very slowly, Liverpool potentially left its secondary modern schools unsure about their mission and position in the education system.

The internal conflict in the Labour Party during this period reflects the contradiction evident in both Labour and Conservative parties between a belief in comprehensive education and the personal experience of the grammar school. A child of professional parents with a grammar school background, Wilson, would have had little understanding of the lived experience of the Everton participants.[590] While the motivation behind moving into comprehensive education may have differed, both political parties were broadly in favour of re-organisation but neither was comfortable with the replacing of prestigious grammar schools at local level. The Conservative governments of the 1950s were cautious about the development of comprehensives regarding them as experimental rather than mainstream. Jones believed that the Department of Education and Science at the time was controlled by civil servants who 'believed no more in 1964 than in the 1940s about the possibility of high level mass

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[590] Pimlott, B., *Harold Wilson*, London, Harper Collins, 1993, p 22-24.

education especially in urban schools.' [591] Within Liverpool at the time of the narratives, the move to comprehensive education had not taken place. The decision not to compel local authorities ensured that the pace of change was 'slow and convoluted'.[592]

Education became a political minefield but, parental opposition to secondary schools drove the political agenda and resulted in a withdrawal from the policy of selection. [593] Middle-class dismay over children failing to gain entrance to the grammar school system certainly became a feature of lobbying and concern and as Education Minister, Margaret Thatcher recognised that the 11 plus played a part in the voting intentions of parents. Selection was defeated not because of inequality and need for inclusion but by a fear of middle-class children being subjected to secondary schools. Benn reports that 'infuriated' parents who regarded grammar schools as belonging to them and did not want their children sent to secondary modern schools were a factor in the Conservatives losing the 1964 election.[594] Conservative policy involved moving selection out of the political arena by increasing substantially the number of comprehensive schools but not compelling locally prestigious grammar schools to close.

The Labour manifesto in 1964 promised school reorganisation on comprehensive lines, but it also indicated that there would be an extension of grammar school provision.[595] Wilson, himself a beneficiary of grammar school selection, supported the retention of grammar schools in the 1964 election. Throughout the 1960s, the voice of a concerned and rising middle class was making itself heard

[591] Jones, Conservatism Triumph and Failure, Chapter in *Education in Britain* pp 112-115.
[592] Benn, *School Wars*, The long years of attrition pp 44-52.
[593] Ibid, pp 49-50.
[594] Ibid.
[595] Gillard, D., Chapter Thirteen, 1970-1974 www.educationengland.org.uk (Accessed 20/3/2019)

in political circles. Conservatives were more pragmatic about the concerns of a risk averse rising suburban and professional and semi-professional class who tended to view comprehensive schools as a less threatening alternative to grammar school selection. The movement in favour of comprehensive education was based more on pragmatic concerns relating to a changed electoral base and financial expediency rather than a philosophical position about the need to provide the best possible education to children in all social classes. Given this focus, the needs and voice of working-class communities appear to have had less consideration and therefore less impact on education outcomes. Todd also noted the political influence of a concerned middle class over the possibility of children from 'good homes' not passing the 11 plus. [596] Concern over the 11 plus appeared to be a primarily middle- class occupation however, with Mays in 1964 reporting of working-class families as being under no undue pressure from impending examination dates.[597] The National Foundation for Education research suggested that teachers and middle- class parents would do almost anything to avoid their children being sent to a secondary modern school.[598] In conjunction with streaming, reorganised comprehensive schools developed admissions policies which favoured geographic boundaries, religious affiliation or competence in music or other skill which re-established middle- class advantage in desirable schools. Political ambiguity and a lack of coherence in planning how to structure reorganisation at local level resulted in a fragmentation of delivery which was unhelpful to those trying to navigate the education system without support.

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[596] Todd, *The People,* pp 225-235.
[597] Mays, *Education and the Urban Child*, pp 121-123.
[598] Kynaston, *Family Britain,* p 116 Kynaston quotes D. S. Morris – National Foundation for Education Research.

Transition points and the need for a roadmap

The participant led approach to the research meant different stages of the education process are articulated as being of significance in memories of school days. The most commonly highlighted references from participants are the transition at 11 between primary and secondary school and the transition from secondary school into the labour market. In considering the weighting of these references, there is advice from Tosh on the frailty of memory but Thompson refers to the social aspects of memory whereby participants use language and cultural references to articulate their stories.[599] Painful school transitions at 11, as discussed by Jane and Edward were recalled with detail and clarity whereas for Ann, the leaving of school was the more significant event but again recalled lucidly. Given that the participants had choice about the memories they imparted, the relative importance of these transition points is signalled by inclusion or omission. The level of detail contained in the memory suggests that the recall was vivid and significant to each of the individuals.

The first transition point to be considered is the transfer between primary and secondary school where location can be seen as important. The great majority of children were unable to attend any other than the secondary modern school serving the area in which they lived and there was awareness at local level that in neighbourhoods such as Everton, children were reluctant to cross boundaries. The siting of schools in localities was a significant factor in school admissions. If the only available school in the area was a secondary modern one then this was much more likely to be the choice of peers and families. Parental indifference may have been an issue but a lack of knowledge or capacity to support were

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[599] Thompson, Anzac Memories, Chapter 27 in Perks and Thompson, *An Oral History Reader*, p 229.

more likely to influence school choice for children and these decisions were heavily influenced by religious leaders and the views of teachers. Participant evidence from Frank suggested that primary schools and 11 plus outcomes directed the choice of secondary school. There is little evidence of parental involvement in this choice.

The literature acknowledged that the third option of the tripartite system – technical schools were very poorly developed due to resource limitations and there was very little evidence from the participants that the technical side of education existed as an option. From the 1940s to the 1970s, a binary choice or no choice at all presented itself to participants at the end of primary years of schooling. For pupils such as James, who found himself drawn to the technical, the wider availability of this third option might have opened up a much improved set of educational outcomes. Spencer argues that working-class children at grammar school could be marginalised and as early leavers have similar employment experiences to those children attending secondary modern schools. [600] Although the provision of private education may seem to have little resonance with Everton, Labour's protection of the privileges of private education preserved the idea of difference and distinction. The disadvantages of family circumstances in terms of barriers beyond the selection exam have been very well documented in the narratives. Nationally, the validity of the 11 plus was questioned with studies increasingly showing that social factors played a powerful role in determining success or failure. Doubts were increasingly cast about the intelligence theories supporting the tripartite system and Gillard in particular,

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[600] Spencer, *Gender, Work and Education in Britain in the 1950s*, p 50.

noted a gender bias with far more boys' places being available. [601] Until 1959 children were entered for the 11 plus only if parents expressed a desire for them to do so.[602] This would have excluded children from homes where the business of education was seen as the property of the school and where the business of economic survival was the family priority. Fenwick claims the tests showed nothing more than an ability to answer IQ test questions which could be culturally discriminating and one of the participant stories relates to the use of vocabulary in the test which might not reasonable have been taught at school. [603]

There are questions to be asked about why secondary schooling appears to fail those with a level of intelligence high enough to overcome the social disadvantages and pass the 11 plus gaining admittance to grammar school. Children reporting themselves to be confident and happy at the end of the primary years left secondary education resigned to a more limited set of options and understanding how this came about will direct our thinking about the effectiveness of school policy in supporting socially and economically disadvantaged groups.

Moving from the transition into secondary education to the transition from school to work requires an appreciation of the mind set when work is precarious and economic status fragile over a prolonged period of time. The long history of casualisation with irregular and uncertain income determined attitudes to work and fear of unemployment was in built into the psyche of working class

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[601] Gillard, Chapter 9 *Education in England*, www.educationengland.org.uk (Accessed 19/3/2020) noted that the outcomes from the 11 plus gave rise to gender equality concerns.
[602] Mays, *Education and the Urban Child*, pp 127-132
[603] Fenwick,., *The Comprehensive School*, p 33; P.E., Vernon, from the 1950s recognised that even if less influential than hereditary factors, the environmental impact of intelligence could not be dismissed. Ref: Narrative from Frank discussing his recall of the 11 plus examination – I'd never heard of a bungalow. Vernon, P.E., The psychology of intelligence and g*, *Bulletin of the British Psychological Society*, Issue 26, pp 1-14.

communities. [604] The docks were a primary source of employment for men in the Everton area. The precarious nature of employment through the casual working systems influenced perceptions of the costs of additional schooling at the expense of an earned income. Working-class children perceived the risk to earned income by focusing on education to be higher than their middle-class peers. Employment practices at the docks may well have ingrained a lack of certainty and security to those who were dependant on it for labour and who would prefer the security of a trade to the uncertainty of education.

While the statistics of the time provide factual knowledge, for example, about the labour destinations of school leavers, the extent to which provision of labour for the factories was set as the primary option offered to school leavers at the time can be understood better through the voice of a participants. Their memories tell of this limited expectation, based not on personal ambition or capability but perceptions of Everton as a place. In terms of deprivation, Everton continues to be classed as one of the most deprived areas by UK and European standards and this continues to be reflected in poor educational outcomes. Financial, geographical and social constraints create tangible and intangible barriers to entry. Pye is scathing about the lack of thought that architects and planners had apparently given to the human dimension of the new tower blocks housing estates. Built without schools, shopping or community centres or at times, walkways, Pye believed that the housing policies affected quality and life but also the self-esteem of people living in the new estates and tower blocks.[605] Where the communities had been, in his words, unwillingly transplanted, Pye believed that the residents felt undervalued and that this had led to a stunting of career

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[604] Lane, *City of the Sea,* Introduction pp xiii – xix.
[605] Pye, *Liverpool,* pp 160-171.

and social aspirations. This self-limiting appraisal of life chances is apparent through the participant narratives as they talk about the movement out of school into the labour market with expectations largely consistent with the rest of their peer group.[606] The progress made in schooling has been attributed to the increased importance of education in the economic and political life of the country rather than the impact of the Act itself. [607] Memories reflect progress in facilities and attainment across the timeline but the transition points remained difficult to navigate and were referenced by the participants.

Factors relating to the ability to remember may include the level of emotion attached to the event at the time and the extent to which the story may have been revisited or retold because of the significance of the event to the individual. [608] The transition points relating to school transfer at 11 and leaving school are significant in the accounts of the participants. As we move through the timeline it can be seen that participants became increasingly aware of the 11 plus selection process, even if they were unprepared for it. There is dual detriment for some participants, both in the entry to and the leaving of their secondary school.

Although education policy over nearly forty years from 1944 to 1980 focused on structure and selection Gaine and George suggest that without a climate in which education could survive there was still a huge disadvantage for working- class children. [609] The alienation expressed by two of the participants involved in the grammar school system resonated with the belief that alienation results from

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[606] Pye, *Liverpool* p 170.
[607] Fenwick, *The Comprehensive School,* Kindle edition p 3219.
[608] Peniston-Bird in Barber, S., and Peniston-Bird, C., (eds) *History Beyond the Text*, Oxford, Routledge, 2008, p 108.
[609] Gaine and George, *Gender Race and Class in Schooling,* p 111.008, Kindle edition.

trying to exist in a culture different to the one experienced at home. [610] The culture of poverty was defined as a distinctive culture and contemporary studies suggested that the experience, attitudes and values associated with this culture impact not just on an individual but are passed on from one generation to the next in a never – ending cycle. [611] Self- image and self-esteem, as recognised in the work of Bourdieu, can be seen to be relevant as working class individuals who moved outside their normal habitus to engage with an unfamiliar school environment. Bourdieu refers to this disconnect between two cultures as the duality of self and this takes on relevance as the working-class individual is caught between two irreconcilable worlds.[612] The world of work may well have offered some school leavers the opportunity to remain in a social space that was both comfortable, familiar and at times, populated by their peers.

Conclusions on Impact

The research questions the capacity of the education system, viewed over time, to create a culture in which the poorest, most economically vulnerable can thrive. Elements of class related assumption and stereotypical thinking about working-class children and education appear to be resistant to change hence challenges and barriers for those children remained. The acceptance of the currency of education and the value of that currency remained uncertain throughout the period. Bourdieu felt that the working class viewed education as a predominantly conservative force which led to a sense of collective disillusionment.[613] The mood of the narratives did not so much reflect disillusionment as acceptance. There

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[610] Bourdieu, *Distinction*, p 140 discusses the dislocation caused when young people feel undermined by the education system leading to a mixture of revolt and resentment.
[611] Coates, and Silburn, *Poverty -the Forgotten Englishmen,* pp 228-233.
[612] Bourdieu, *Distinction,* discusses the disconnect in social space, pp 97-107.
[613] Ibid., p 139.

was certainly a consensus among all but the last participant that work was the inevitable outcome at the end of school years and that there was peer security in this transition. Bourdieu considers there to have been a generational journey with older generations (pre 1960s) accepting their destiny almost unquestionably. However, he believed that in the 1960s young people were undermined by an education which he felt meant they were 'fobbed' off with worthless paper. [614] The narratives from the participants suggest that for some 1960s young people in Everton even 'worthless' papers were not made available to support their next stage in the journey.

Of the three participants who progressed into the grammar school structure, one left without any qualifications, one left after a short period of time to take up a place in a secondary school and one stayed to GCE 'O' Level stage. Travel beyond the boundaries of Everton and new peer social groupings did not necessarily benefit the young people concerned. Indeed, Benn and Chitty felt that the social mixing may well have reinforced class differences. This discomfort is exemplified by the greater security Edward felt for the secondary modern school as opposed to the grammar school.[615] Social mixing was not guaranteed by the development of comprehensive schools. The streaming of children in comprehensive schools may have revealed social as well as capability distinctions. The lack of a risk of social mixing in the 'top' steams of comprehensive schools may partly explain the conservative and middle-class enthusiasm for them. Comprehensive education by-passed the risk of selection at eleven. In considering the impact of streaming on children, Ball discusses the

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[614] Bourdieu, *Distinction,* p 140.
[615] Benn and Chitty, *Thirty Years On,* p 185.

way in which children create their own differentiation and that those perceptions may be socially constructed. [616] When the participants say it is what 'we' did, 'we' were all the same, not for the likes of 'us', they have internally accepted the message that certain schools or qualifications or post school ambition was not theirs. Even where they were aware of the alternatives, belief in the inevitable and the economic opportunity cost of failing to earn would be greater influences than the availability of secondary education. Narratives from Jane, Frank and Ann add colour and voice to doubts concerning the longer term impact of the Education Act 1944. These participants believed that selection at 11 created a system which preserved rather than challenged the existing social order. Ann felt that there was a lack of confidence in engaging with a system that felt outside the norm for the community:

> *"Parents were not confident enough to send them there (grammar schools). Families just couldn't deal with it. It was about affordability but also fear."* (Ann)

Given the deprivation levels and social and economic barriers, the support from the school and teachers, the helping hand would have been crucial. Jane felt this was important and commented that it was one of the changes she had seen have a positive impact in her own family: *"For the next generation, the school and the teachers encouraged …. He's capable …. send him on (to Grammar School)."* (Jane).

The importance of supportive teaching is also referenced by Edward and Bob who credit teachers with understanding them enough to get them through national examinations. The individual contributions of head teachers and teachers had the

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[616] Ball, *Education Policy and Social Class,* p 271.

capacity to make a real difference in outcome for the working- class participants. This element of the framework could be understood and developed recognising contribution as well as conventional metrics but there is more work needed in this area of research.

The long held memories of history and humanities raise the question of lifetime interest in learning and how this could be fostered. For a city renowned for artistic endeavour, there is little evidence of school support for the arts in the participant narratives, and yet, it is humanities and arts that draw positive memories. The labour market of the late 1960s and early 1970s created a teenage group with greater disposable income and choice in terms of staying at school or joining a labour market where they were in demand. The youth culture of the 1960s was thought by some to be classless with music, theatre and film adopting and imitating working-class culture and accent. [617] Swathes of young people moved seamlessly from school to factory work. Murray recognised that the popular version of Liverpool in the 1960s was that the city was at the epicentre of a revolution in popular culture exemplified by music, arts and football. A generation of city dwellers in Liverpool found, as Murray notes, forms of expression which were outside some of the more conventional routes and without much by way of advice or encouragement. [618] A further element of future research may well be to consider learning in a less conventional space and understand more about how learning transfers between formal and informal communities.

Although these unconventional spaces existed, none were referenced by the participants. The Unity Theatre was formed as a left leaning dramatic space in

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[617] Perkin, *The Rise of the Professional in Society*, p 431.
[618] Murray, *So Spirited a Town,* pp 124-134.

1944 and throughout the timeline continued to support theatre at affordable prices and support to local creatives.[619] Before the 1960s, the Beatles and Merseybeat, Liverpool saw itself as a global city in music terms. This was linked to the port, the seafarers and the accessibility of new sounds from United States. The working-class seamen of Liverpool brought back records and clothes and reel to reel tape recorders. [620] Two of the participants, Ann and Edward, were in school with musicians who achieved a considerable measure of success, however, the school system did little to foster their talent.

Although the publicity around The Beatles suggested ordinary boys from Liverpool, Lennon at least, not withstanding his family circumstances, would have been perceived as posh by his contemporaries in Everton. The Beatles made Liverpool fashionable and by 1964, the Prime Minister was the MP for Huyton. Brown, in discussing the culture change relating to religion in the 1960s, dedicated a section of his book to discussing this change through the lyrics of The Beatles indicating their impact on the author as reflectors of change in wider society, if not leaders of that change.[621]   Brown is not alone in suggesting Liverpool as a radical city challenging of the status quo, yet this was a city that did not elect a Labour councillor until 1955 and rejected a reorganisation into comprehensive education in 1965. [622] In Everton, despite the cultural phenomena of Merseybeat and the arts scene, the social order was relatively unchallenged.

Both local and national government failed to recognise the change levers needed to make education more accessible given a multivariate set of barriers. All but

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[619] Dudgeon, *Our Liverpool,* p 247.
[620] Belcham, *Merseypride*, pp 60-61.
[621] Brown, *The Death of Christian Britain,* p 178.
[622]Biggs and Sheldon, *Art in a City Revisited,* Footnote 2 p 11.

two of the participants avoided the trauma of war but none escaped the poverty and dislocation. Futures in the 1950s and 1960s were framed by familial and social attitudes to education differing little from the war-time and post-war participants to those educated in the 1960s. The relationship with and understanding of the education system appeared to be better developed over time but the economic necessity meant that the outcomes during the time changed little for the working- class participants of the study.

CHAPTER SEVEN

CONCLUSIONS

This thesis has taken ten narratives relating to personal experience of education and embedded these in the social and political context of the time. In considering these narratives along a timeline, changes in perspective or the absence of such change, can be viewed to provide a longer term evaluation. While the narratives tell an individual story the personalisation of the experience in context informs the wider historical narrative. Each case has relevance in understanding the impact of education policy and how this was experienced through individual lives. Through the participant voices we can understand the theoretical position taken by Thompson who believes that oral narratives bring history into and out of the community. [623] The community and individual narratives are enhanced by their placement in the broader span of education history and equally the intelligence held on outcomes of education policy has been enhanced by the voice, and richer understanding, provided by the working-class narratives. The enhancement in this thesis has changed the existing narrative around working class attitudes towards a desire for education and signposts the systemic barriers. The enthusiasm with which participants engaged with the research supports Thompson's view that oral history provides a platform to support those less privileged to express their views. This thesis has given this platform to an underprivileged community and so contributes to the body of work on the history of post war secondary education. Portelli agrees that individual life stories are important and, while the narratives might be idiosyncratic, they breathe life into

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[623] Thompson, *The Voice of the Past,* p 23.

the historical records. [624] The narratives provide this sense of life so valued by Portelli and these stories had not been told other than in family circles. There is a poignancy in recognising that two of the participants are no longer alive and that their reason in taking part in the research was that their voice and story be heard. This illustrates the importance of capturing these memories so that an alternate lens can be used in viewing the evaluation of education policy in the post war period.

The research questions have been responded to and areas for further research suggested. The primary aim of the research was the illumination of the working class voice. The impact of the housing relocation and geographical dislocation in understanding education outcomes has been illustrated in this thesis. This reveals a complex narrative which recognises that simply increasing opportunity does not equate with individual success or ability to benefit from the opportunity. None of the participants had taken part in research projects previously and so the insights gained from their participation and identify the complexity of the relationship between communities and education. The complexity and the previously unheard testimony adds to the existing body of knowledge. While there are examples of authentic voice, the contribution without context does not allow the reader to fully understand the environment influencing the voice. By focusing on a relatively small number of participants we hear their voice in relation to broader themes around housing, economic frailty, community as well as education. The time span of forty years demonstrates how the complex structures

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[624] Portelli, A., in Abrams, L., *Oral History Theory,* pp 40-53; Portelli, A., 'What makes Oral History different?' in A. Portelli, *The death of Luigi Trastulli and other stories: Form and Meaning in Oral History* (New York: SUNY Press, 1991)

involved in the provision of education would not respond instantaneously to change and provide an opportunity to understand the pace at which political policy extends its reach to impact on individuals. The benefits of a longer term assessment of the barriers facing working-class children in education outweighed this apprehension. As the focus of the thesis relates to the impact of education policy on individuals it is important to have a view spanning generations. The timeline then allows for an evaluation not only of what has changed but what has not. Development over time, notes Tosh, is relevant to the study of all social phenomena, and this would include education and responses to education.[625]

A further research question related to the development of education policy and practice. Drawing from local and national political literature and applying the preserved records to the participant narratives there appears to be a vacuum in political leadership and philosophy with respect particularly to secondary modern education. Mandler noted the ambivalent attitude of both Labour and Conservative parties in respect of the grammar schools and believed that the framing of the 1944 Act was purposefully vague.[626] The awareness of the flawed nature of the 11 plus did not prevent a cross party consensus introducing and sustaining it. Testing provided administrative convenience and was attractive to policy makers who were themselves part of an educated elite with little understanding of the social circumstances of young people from Everton or their family situation. The post-war system of education raises questions about the justice of selection and the value of such a system in supporting a changing

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[625] Tosh, J., http://www.historyandpolicy.org/policy-papers/papers/in-defence-of-applied-history-the-history-and-policy-website .

[626] Mandler, P., Educating the Nation 1 – Schools., *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society,* Vol 24 p 5-28. Mandler is currently leading a research project into Secondary Education and Social Change. The project moves away from expert voices to consider the experiences and identities of individuals and communities. SESC – Secondary education and Social Change in the United Kingdom. www.sesc.hist.cam.ac.uk (Accessed 24/08/2021).

economy. The ideological position of the policy makers and the political parties led to a confusion around delivery. Locally, there are questions around school admissions, culture and organisation. The voices of the participants invite questions about the nature of school admissions, preparation and entrance for national examinations and the nature of post school careers' preparation. Nationally, the funding and organisation of school provision and the nature of assessment combined to create systemic disadvantage for the participants. Given the extent to which commonality of experience is evidenced, both at the transition into secondary schooling and into work, the interviews reflect the disadvantage experienced by participants and their peer group.

Given the level of municipal need post-war and claims on resources, the pedagogy of education was based on initially based on expediency rather than a quest for quality and inclusion. Unfortunately, the competing demands of housing and infrastructure continued, for two decades after the war, to influence educational decisions and ultimately the reorganisation into a comprehensive system also appeared to be related more to convenience, pragmatism and electoral acceptability than social justice or commitment to education. The absence of a working- class voice in the development of policy and practice and the organisation of education in working class communities asks the question about what might have been different. The interviews also reveal the limited capacity for control over the education process and consequently future employment prospects.

The interpretation of the narratives and, in particular, the application of different lenses through which to view the testimonies provided evidence that the prevailing priorities for many families were those of immediate need and survival.

For a city bursting with creative energy in the 1960s, the case narratives do not reveal much evidence relating to creative diversity in school curriculum or delivery. Only one of the participants, Sarah, references the nature of schooling as being reflective of the local cultural environment in Liverpool. Many of the participants referenced the importance of the arts, humanities and sport in their memories of their school days. Aspects of this area of education seemed to form part of an informal curriculum and the recall of the content and the life-long interest in areas such as history, art or music showed a cultural development beyond the classroom but not necessarily nurtured by it. There may be an element of the importance of 'place' in understanding the significance of these informal spheres of learning. Liverpool, culturally, was a place where music had a natural home in working-class districts and this would be supported by a heritage of Irish and Welsh ancestry in the city.

Geographical placement and displacement play their role in understanding responses to education within the narratives. The attachment families and individuals felt for the Everton area has been documented through the narratives and supported by local authors. The housing policy in particular has regularly surfaced as contributing to and impacting on the experience of education. The structural and family dislocations had left the social fabric of the city damaged so that children were left feeling disoriented and less able to participate fully in developing their learning.

The rhetoric of the time was that with hard work social mobility was achievable but it is hard to see how that distance could be covered given the multiple and complex set of disadvantages evidenced by the majority of the participants. A number of participants endured family tragedy but given the level of morbidity and

casualties in the blitz, from the war and from the very dangerous piece work regime on the docks, the incidence of tragedy in that generation would have been relatively high. Dudgeon writing about life on the docks recognised that in such a precarious environment safety was not a priority and that anyone refusing to overload slings or take short cuts would most likely find themselves without work the next day. [627] The impact of having limited financial resources due to the death of a parent or family supporter made it even more difficult for children to overcome the barriers placed inherently in the system.

What evidence do we have from the participants about those barriers? Stereotyping and alienation are all demonstrated through the transcript analysis as is a level of expectation and acceptance about the inevitability of outcome. Intellect, motivation or an incapacity to learn or progress was only mentioned by two of the participants. Although the timescale tracks thirty years of post-war change, the impression from the research is that little of the education policy changes filtered down to the individual level until the 1970s. While politicians may have recognised that the skills of the people needed to match the demands of an emerging global economy, the evidence from the participants is that the education system poorly prepared them for this. While the aspiration for change may have had central government recognition from both Conservative and Labour parties, it was not reflected in the careers' advice or availability of additional training to the participants leaving school in those post-war and subsequent years. Although Coates and Silburn highlighted the positive action of the EPAs and the intention to provide a compensatory environment in deprived areas, the evidence from these participants suggests neither the conditions nor

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[627] Dudgeon, *Our Liverpool,* pp 91-98.

resources available at local level for much of the period covered by the timeline. [628] Additionally, the precarious nature of employment continued to reinforce the economic reality of family survival as a priority. The case histories reinforce the view of van De Werfhorst that working class families and communities will seek to minimise risk with the family as a collective and each needing to contribute in their own way. Without the social capital of parental networks, van de Werfhost concluded that the education system could be viewed by working-class children as wasteful of their time and family resources. [629]

While some working-class students benefited from being afforded the opportunity to compete in the 11 plus, others did not. In their narratives, participants described the lack of expectations for themselves and their class-mates. Until the timeline reaches the 1970s, there was little recognition from teachers, home, or careers advisers that there might have been other options for education and subsequent transition into the labour market. The unbroken link between school admission and location helped to create interpretations relating to a lack of aspiration rather than a failure of opportunity. Rogers believed that the contrasts in the quality of education provision were more pronounced during this period, in complete contrast with the hopes of the architects of the 1944 Act. [630] A stronger degree of clarity and leadership nationally might have supported local provision in bringing together the discrete agencies which might have worked together to reduce the level of disadvantage.

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[628] Coates, and Silburn, *Poverty and the Forgotten Englishmen*, pp 139-141.
[629] van de Werfhorst, H., 'A Detailed Examination of the Role of Education in Intergenerational Social Class Mobility', *Social Science Information,* pp 17-29.
[630] Rogers quoted in Gillard, D., *Education in England,* Chapter 11, 1951-1974, www.educationengland.org.uk (Accessed 20/03/2020).

An admissions process dominated by selection at 11 remained in place through to the 1970s in Liverpool. Admission by selection was direct but the interviews reveal covert admissions practice. School admission influenced by religious affiliation remained relatively undiminished during the time period. Ultimately, the creation of newer schools and additional years schooling did little to change the existing social order.[631] The national policies increasing the school leaving age were ineffective in an environment where the currency of education by way of qualifications gained remained in short supply. Perceptions and assumptions about the educational limitations of working-class children are apparent in the way the participants remembered the curriculum, which reflected expectations about requirements in life. The extent of religious content in the narratives of the Catholic educated participants, at the expense of a wider perspective and attention to core skills, is particularly revealing about the attitudes of some religious leaders in relation to their young. For Tom, Linda and Frank, brought up in the Catholic tradition, following the rules, respecting the system and expecting little were culturally ingrained.

Attitudes towards religion and the role of the church were divergent in the case histories. Mary, Ann and Sarah had a positive experience of religion with church and its associated clubs bringing an extra dimension to their lives. For Sarah, in the 1960s, religious affiliation was much less relevant than the experience of earlier participants.[632] Religion and place are bound together in descriptions of life on the streets and within the community. The importance of geography, and the recall of common experience raises some questions around the difference

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[631] Halsey, 'Higher Education' in *Trends in British Society since 1900: A Guide to the Changing Social Structure of Britain* ed. by Halsey, pp 268-296.

[632] Brown, *The Death of Christian Britain,* p 7 Notied that religion mattered to British society overall in the 1950s but that this had reduced considerably in the 1960s.

between physical boundaries and a more unconscious level of separation. Participants in school in Penrhyn Street spoke of being friends for life, moving from one school, to church, youth clubs and ultimately into work as a collective whole. But none of those children attended the Catholic school system. There was a silence about the divide that Great Homer Street represented between the two communities. Given the separate lives, the geography places Penrhyn Street in the shadow of St Anthony's Catholic Church, Scotland Road, suggests segregated communities living in geographical proximity but with a distinct and different set of cultural and educational experiences. There is further work to do in mapping the cultural landscape for children and their families against the urban geographical boundaries of streets, estates and arterial roads.

Community patterns changed due to the rehousing policy and with change in culture came change in influence noted through changes in voting patterns and a reduction in the power base of religious organisations. Slowly, a more conventional class solidarity influenced voting patterns more than the parish. These changes would not be so apparent without the longer term perspective and this thesis highlights this and how children were affected by and possibly accelerated a loosening of the ties of religious affiliation. Roberts considered that the housing clearance programme was a significant factor in the demise of denominational supremacy in geographical concentration. [633] Electorally, this reduced the likelihood of candidates being elected on religious labels and led to increasing secularisation in decision making at a local level. However, the

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[633] Roberts, *Liverpool Sectarianism*, pp 120-141

emotional tie of religious school affiliation was strong and the reorganisation of schools remained contentious rather than coherent.

There is no clear evidence that the interests of working-class children were a primary driver in the development of school infrastructure and decisions appear to have been resource driven or located in the mollification of special interest groups. Impact of housing clearance on families and the fracturing of the communities has been examined from a folklore perspective but the impact of education policy has not been so well established in terms of economic positioning and social mobility although this is now the subject of a research project, Secondary Education and Social Change at Cambridge University.[634] The narrative references to the clearances start to address the concern expressed by Jones that the impact of such actions has not, as yet, been sufficiently explored by historians.[635] In analysing the narratives from the perspective of the individual, a voice can be heard which is less well established in the education or political literature. The working-class voice which recalls a respect, a hunger for learning, which was ultimately beyond reach, signals the need to consider multivariate systemic issues rather than aspiration or motivation.[636] The question of why talent and intelligence at primary age should subsequently be dissipated during and following secondary schooling is signalled through the narratives. This thesis highlights the need to consider the range of

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[634] SESC – Secondary education and Social Change in the United Kingdom. www.sesc.hist.cam.ac.uk (Accessed 24/08/2021).

[635] Jones, pp 355-374. The uses of nostalgia: autobiography, community publishing and working-class neighbourhoods in post-war England.

[636] McCulloch recognises that research on secondary modern schools has had limited focus on social and political factors and relationships with family members. McCulloch, and Sobell, Towards a social history of the secondary modern schools, *History of Education*, p 275.

resources and long term structural changes needed to reduce inequalities in communities such as Everton.

The evidence we find from the Everton narratives would upholds the view taken by Brooks that education policy in the period was dominated by the philosophy of maintenance of a social elite even though this took place through a loud and continued rhetoric of meritocracy.[637] The thesis moves the assertion from Brooks forward through application to a focused study in a distinct geographic area. The lack of progress in supporting mass improvements in access to and outcomes from education can be exemplified through an examination of the national examination structure. Brooks calls the development of and access to national examinations a failure in terms of education policy failing to meet the realities of the needs of the population. [638] The lack of entry into the qualification framework for participants confirms systemic failure in the operation of the assessment framework and highlights the multiple contributory factors. The literature and the participant evidence also suggest that the philosophical view of protecting the status quo and the privilege of education produced a set of policies and structures designed to be a carefully managed piece of social engineering. The double disadvantage relating to a skewed and flawed admissions process at 11 combined with difficulties evidencing education and potential limited the outcomes and progression opportunities. [639]

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[637] Brooks, *'The role of external examinations in the making of secondary modern schools in England 1945-1965'*, pp 447 -467. Brooks views education policy as being fractured due to conflicting ideologies between those who want to maintain the social elite and those who want to break their power.

[638] Brooks, *'The role of external examinations in the making of secondary modern schools in England 1945-1965'*, pp 447 -467.

[639] Contextual note re systemic disadvantage in assessment: in response to COVID restrictions in 2020/21 A level examinations were cancelled but BTEC examinations, whose demographic would tend to reflect less privileged entrants, were not.

This thesis has demonstrated a localised institutional failure to understand the real barriers, the social exclusion and the extent of the alienation created an environment where educationalists failed some of their most vulnerable constituents. Poor inner city children from areas such as Everton appear not to have been disadvantaged by a lack of ability, intellect or ambition but by a systemic failure of the education system to understand the circumstances in which a poor working-class child could thrive. In seeking a broader definition of learning and the capture of experience and talent, educationalists could reframe their thinking to value alternatives and to place learning in context. The requirements of such a move would be considerable and involve multi agency long term change in the environmental conditions and deeply entrenched poverty. These interviews demonstrate how moving to a space beyond conventional learning with different, more flexible structures, cultures and value systems might release energy and talent to inform inner city development and enterprise.

Policies in education, even where the social and cultural pressures, were acknowledged did not account for the extent of alienation poverty could bring and the very real lack of economic security which dominated every other need. van de Werfhost would recognise the work and education decisions being made by the participants as security against a risky world. [640] Working -class communities, he claimed, were risk averse and observed that money coming in and stability would be valued over and above either continuing education or any sense of personal progression. The delight at being able to work lots of overtime in the bakery for Tom and the recognition that less creative work in the factory was the better option for Mary, Jane and Linda reveals personal preferences being

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[640] van de Werfhorst, H., 'A Detailed Examination of the Role of Education in Intergenerational Social Class Mobility', *Social Science Information,* pp 17-29

subjugated to the greater good of the family. The focus on family and neighbourhood and the importance of these in the lives of individuals clearly provided solidarity and comfort but also placed individuals in a space of communal expectation from which it was difficult to break free. Even in the breaking free, the pull of the familiar made it hard for children to make their way in an education system which failed to recognise their worth.

The absence of self -pity in most accounts reflects a belief that individuals were in a system which was ubiquitous. The view that the conditions and limitations were the same for everyone is reflected in many of the narratives and folklore plays a part in preserving the image of close knit poor but happy inner city communities. None of the participants felt themselves to be in any way unusual, on the contrary, many were direct about the fact that there was acceptance that that was how things were for themselves and their peers. The narratives do not appear to represent exceptional experience and so there is reason to question the reality of the opportunity afforded by the grammar system and its rhetorical egalitarianism and the failure of the secondary modern schools to provide a viable alternative. There is a need, expressed by Spencer to explore the secondary modern school and the impact of the rejection of such schools in favour of the comprehensive model. Further exploration of the transfer from secondary modern schools to comprehensive schools forms part of the SESC project currently ongoing.[641] The narratives suggest some of the attitudinal and structural reasons

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[641] SESC – Secondary education and Social Change in the United Kingdom. www.sesc.hist.cam.ac.uk (Accessed 24/08/2021).

why secondary modern schools may have failed their children and the historical records would benefit from this additional research.[642]

Practice in grammar schools had not been modified to make environmental adaptations and connections with people from the working-class communities. The expectation for adaptation was placed with the child and family. Communication of expectation was very much a one way process not a dialogue with pressure on the child and family to conform. To survive the grammar school process a pupil and their family had to be able to afford the uniform and equipment. Additionally, they and understand and conform to school rituals for which there was little experience or guidance. Transitioning to a grammar school environment meant coping with the structures, systems, homework; being bright was not enough. The thesis does raise the question of burden by way of conformity and adaptation. For the participants, the burden lay with the children and their families. The formal education system appeared intransigent, without the flexibility to meet the needs of those without the cultural and physical resources to engage and achieve in education.

The impact of school affects transition into the labour market. Education struggled to provide the skills needed to rebuild the economy, to drive forward the technological revolution. The thesis signals evidence from the participants that local education policy makers, simply resigned themselves to providing the lowest common denominator related to the local labour market. The vocational element of the tripartite vision in 1944 which may have offered some alternatives to the participants had been largely disregarded. By the 1970s, the identification

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[642] Spencer, *Gender, Work and Education in Britain in the 1950s*, pp 55-56.

of vocational learning as a core element of the curriculum had again become a major concern for the policy makers.[643] One of the primary concerns of the 1944 Act, to acknowledge and prepare a vocationally literate school student to take an active part in the economy, remained unresolved by the mid -1970s. If we are to learn the lessons of history and look at the direction of travel then our schools currently would be developing core skills involved in adaptability and creativity.

The thesis reveals the interconnectedness of the various strand of social policy and coherence between local and national political and policy interventions. The web of interacting processes advocated by Gaine shows the complexity not only of the social and family environment and community ideas around habitus but also structural issues of curriculum, teacher expectations, teacher training. [644] An under researched area relates to teachers, their training and attitudes to working-class culture. Brooks argues that individual teachers could act as change agents in creating alternative futures for their pupils.[645] This view is supported by the evidence from Edward and Bob showing how individual teachers could play a key role in overcoming barriers to acceptance secondary modern schools faced. Brooks was relating this to the barriers faced by the school but this thinking could also be applied to pupils looking to be accepted in an education world that mostly failed to understand them. The interviews also demonstrate how individual teachers could actively confirm the barriers or even build them. The literature references parental pressure groups on school reorganisation but none of the participants seemed aware of any parental influence, school was seen to be the business of the school. The absence of the parent voice from the debate on

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[643] Simon, *Education and the Social Order*, pp 448-449.

[644] Gaine, and George, *Gender, Race and Class in Schooling*, p 110.

[645] Brooks, *'The role of external examinations in the making of secondary modern schools in England 1945-1965'*, p 447 -467.

reorganisation from parents coping with multiple areas of disadvantage, questions levels of consultation and representation and whose voice is heard.

A holistic review of how to influence educational outcomes might also consider how to counterbalance home centred concerns regarding space, time availability of resources, and the opportunity cost of spending time on education. Gaine and George recognise that the prevailing subcultures and cultural identity play a role in determining responsiveness to education. [646] Their research also recognises that the educational level of the parent will influence the relationship of the family with the school and expectations of both education and subsequent entry into the labour market.

Education policy and practice relating to selection at 11 had its successes, many of which were high profile and represented in the political hierarchy of both Conservative and Labour party, but there is another narrative, another truth about the children for whom the education system simply did not deliver. Jones, recognises that the working class did not benefit in the way anticipated by the policy makers and that poverty and inequality continued to be an issue in the 1950s and 1960s. The intentions of political reform were slow to impact on the lives of the participants and an understanding of how this failure manifested itself in the lives of working-class children is evidenced through this thesis.[647] Benn and Chitty discuss the political limitations in a failure to address the complexity of social policy interventions. [648] A broader perspective might have supported real change in the education system. Additionally, they felt that structural reform,

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[646] Gaine, and George, *Gender, Race and Class in Schooling,* pp 124-129.
[647] Jones, B., *The working class in mid twentieth century England*, p 198.
[648]Benn and Chitty, Chapter: Debates about Comprehensive Education, *Thirty Years On.*

without curriculum and qualification change reduced the impact. The lack of expectation in qualification achievement experienced by some participants indicates that the internal education system as well as the external social policy environment did not offer enough change to make a difference in education choices. Structural issues in school governance and organisation dominate the key texts in education history. Issues around alienation, endemic poverty, cultural distinctiveness, collective behaviours and expectations associated with class are signposted but tend not placed at the heart of the analysis. The thesis recognises that this fragmentation of analysis reflects the way in which education policy is developed but suggests that without addressing the multiplicity of factors, the success of any policy initiatives in education may well be limited.

This research points towards questions about the motivation of those responsible for education policy. While there may have been intent to broaden educational experience and there was increased spending in the provision, were the changes in education from the 1940s to 1970s primarily an act of administrative convenience? The extent and depth of alienation from an education system leads us to question whether much change has evolved for those facing the greatest levels of structural disadvantage. Geographical location, parental involvement and school ethos may all be causes of educational disengagement, but it is the interaction of the variables that supports understanding of the complexities illustrated by the case narratives. The move to a more comprehensive system of education alone could not change inequalities as differentially distributed resources in society, including knowledge of the school system, parents' own educational qualifications, stereotyping and the effects of streaming all influenced educational outcomes. Comprehensive education did not mean mixed ability teaching and there is a question of whether the desire to produce good outcomes

for pupils from articulate and well informed families has been allowed to impede the progress of pupils whose families were less knowledgeable.

Internal segregation through streaming and setting may benefit only the attainment of pupils who occupy the upper levels of the structure. The bottom streams of the grammar schools described so effectively by James suggested that pupils in these streams gained little from their prestigious school address or success at the age of 11. Allocations to classes and sets internally, even in the comprehensive schools, were not always explained by reference to ability and may have reflected teacher preconceptions. The teacher voice is missing from this work as the focus was the voice of the child through memory but there are questions to be answered about the variable experiences of children and their relationship with teachers when the schools were in very close physical proximity to each other.

Accessibility to education in a format that could be managed given the financial and environment constraints facing working-class children remained largely hidden. Social mobility was not generated through educational reform suggesting that legislative, formalised educational structures do not in themselves alone lead to positive outcomes and engagement in areas of socio-economic deprivation. Accessibility to education in a format that could be managed given the financial and environment constraints facing working-class children remained largely hidden, The Plowden Report recognised a need for positive discrimination for children in deprived areas but there are questions about whether educational interventions reached the communities through the layers of policy and

bureaucracy. [649] Against the intention of the early educationalists, participant narratives suggest that education policies in the mid to late 20th century may well have sustained class division.[650]

Social mobility was not generated through educational reform suggesting that legislative, formalised educational structures do not, in themselves alone, lead to positive outcomes and engagement in areas of socio-economic deprivation. There are no easy answers and the interdependence of factors suggest a holistic approach may be more likely to succeed. As education policy tends to be fragmented and limited in range, this constrains it can hope to achieve. However, there is abiding hope in the narratives which point to a resilience, a determination and the commitment to supporting families and communities.

The research also raises the question of what we mean by education and how success in education might be measured. Our structures equate good education with examination success but Becker questions whether a different lens would produce a different set of definitions and evaluation. [651] The conventional definitions look at time in the system and qualification output but in broadening that view other options might present themselves. In seeking to be organised and disciplined in developing educational policy the suppression of alternatives may be limiting accessibility. This thinking potentially results in working-class children being seen as a problem to be resolved. Generated solutions may therefore reflect feasibility and funding convenience but the burden of responsibility lay with

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[649] Plowden Report (HMSO 1967) *Children and their Primary Schools* <http://www.educationengland.org.uk/documents/plowden/plowden1967-1.html> [Accessed 29 May 2020].

[650] Todd, *The People*, p 214.

[651] Becker, *Tricks of the Trade,* pp 61-68.

the child and their family to make whatever adjustments required to fit in with the policy and process.

The literature and the research in relation to the social model of disability suggests that there may be merit in re-engineering this approach.[652] A model of education framed in a broader philosophical base which evidenced where learning occurs and understanding how this learning presents itself might offer alternatives. Goering suggests that technological and social advancements can reduce feelings of exclusion and promote a positive culture towards those with disadvantage but also recognises the role that insistence on the standard models and standard rules creates barriers for those who may in some way be different. [653] The political will to recognise that the systems, policies, practice and culture are the disablers would need to be present to drive through legislative and funding change. Our current lens views children, parents and communities as the problem. Without a change in thinking and a sustained allocation of resources, the enablement of working-class success in education is likely to be difficult to achieve.

The question remains about what would motivate the resource allocation, philosophical change and the political drive to make the change? Too often, Education policy and practice appears to suffer from slavish adherence to resource led expediency. Without a clear relationship between education and economy with mutuality at its core, and a more holistic view of the benefits of education to wider society it is hard to see that a holistic approach will be adopted.

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[652] See Chapter 2 for definitions of the social model.
[653] Although Goering's work relates to disability the way in which it highlights that the structures and environment rather than the individuals might be the barrier to inclusion gives it relevance to the discussion on alienation when considering t education. Goering, Rethinking disability: the social model of disability and chronic disease, p 134-138.

In capturing the voice of people through their narratives it is possible to imagine the possibilities, the opportunities that might have been had a broader view of the resources needed been funded and supported.

In considering the contemporary relevance of the research, too much remains the same; not enough has changed. The interconnected problems associated with poverty, housing, unemployment, crime, ill health, education and opportunity remain entrenched in working-class communities such as Everton. Brooks considered that while a minority of academically able working-class children did receive a grammar education, the 11 plus did more to reinforce entrenched social divisions than it did eliminate them. [654] From 1944 onwards, the radical reforming nature of the creation of the NHS and the Welfare State seems less evident in education. Education appears to have been approached with a less certain, less ambitious agenda. Murray suggests that cities such as Liverpool preserve something vital in an increasingly homogenised, centralised culture that appears to put less value on difference. [655] He refers to a natural instinct insisting that in Liverpool things should be done differently and suggests that Liverpool has always gone its own way.   In Liverpool, the image of the radical creative city is hard to detect in the narratives considered in this thesis but there is instead a resignation, an acceptance of the limiting factors of education. These emotions need to be understood if we are to appreciate the nature of working-class engagement with education.

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[654] Brooks, *'The role of external examinations in the making of secondary modern schools in England 1945-1965'*, p 444- 454.
[655] Murray, *So Spirited a Town,* p 172-175.

Tosh considers that social theory in history does not just explain how change takes place but also the direction in which change is moving.[656] When considering the relevance to Everton today we see that deeply entrenched poverty remains a constant over a sixty year time period. In the 2019 review of indices of multiple deprivation by council ward, Everton was the 4th most deprived ward in the city of Liverpool. It was, however, ranked most deprived in terms of both education and employment. The last full census data from 2011 provide more insight into education outcomes in Everton. In 2011, 47% of the population were reported to be without qualification, compared to a Liverpool city average of 28% and a national average of 22%. The 2017 ward statistics compiled by Liverpool City Council show that at GCSE, Everton had 39% of children with 5 or more passes compared with city averages of 55% and a national average of 61%. Taking free school meals as a proxy for social and economic deprivation the table shown in Appendix 3 shows the extent of the material disadvantage. The below average performance in education outcomes suggest that the systemic disadvantage has not been overcome by any of the education interventions currently in place. This thesis may help with an understanding of why this might be the case.

The need to understand how education can be a moderator in the impact of poverty or how education can be shaped for engagement can be informed by the voices from the participants. In this way it may be possible to build a bridge from the past to the present. In seeking to understand why the direction of travel has not been reversed for Everton and why the policies and tools of education have failed working-class children, the testimony of the participants speaks to the social and economic factors disrupting the educational intentions of the providers

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[656] Tosh, *The Pursuit of History* p322-327.

and the undermining of education as a family priority. It also speaks of systemic failure to understand the nature of the working-class relationship with education. Bourdieu felt that the exclusion of working-class children started at the point of secondary education and steadily but intangibly continued throughout those secondary years. While primary school felt inclusive, Bourdieu believed that the exposure to second class courses and what he refers to as devalued certificates increased the gap between aspiration and opportunity as students moved through their secondary school years. [657] Through the words of the participants we are able to understand the impact of education or the lack of it, on individual experience. Thompson considers that, in the recognition of those who may previously have been ignored, the scope of historical writing is enriched. [658] In addition to adding to the historical narrative, using methodology which accepts working-class motivation without patronising or sentimentality allows a greater understanding of the limitations of education policy and practice to be reached. The narratives signpost educators towards the need to address housing, economic frailty and social health and welfare in order to provide the pillars of support in which learning can thrive. Jones believed that the role played by housing in communities had been poorly explored by historians.[659] The relationship with transport links and social cohesion have been referenced by participants recalling school journeys but the impact as with housing, has not been integrated into studies on education outcomes.

In 2020 the COVID virus lockdown presented immediate challenges to less affluent communities by way of digital poverty and disadvantage. Space to work

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[657] Bourdieu, P., *Distinction*, pp 150-151.
[658] Thompson, P. *The Voice of the Past* p6.
[659] Jones, *The working class in mid twentieth century England: Community, Identity, Social Memory* p77. There is work on the East End of London, Brighton and Manchester but little focus on Merseyside.

and access to digital resources re-established concern and awareness about the extent to which the environment could disable learning. A land of foodbanks and precarious housing is unlikely to support educational achievement. In the recovery, acknowledgement of the need for sustained and integrated support informed by a community voice may help to avoid the fractured and less effective education responses seen previously. The learning from the participant narratives may support an understanding of how holistic approaches need to be curated.

The aim of the thesis was to reveal the working-class voice, previously unheard, from the community of Everton and to recognise the significance of this voice in understanding post war education provision in Liverpool. The richness of the participant narratives exceeded expectations in this respect. There was a rawness about the memories of selection or transition out of school and a recollection so detailed that these memories can be seen to have had personal impact throughout the lives of the participants. The primary sources add to the body of knowledge in terms of inner city, working-class experience and give cause for reflection on the systemic issues relating to fractured responses to education from central and local government. The analysis and interpretation achieved the aim of preserving the authentic voice and keeping the memories told without a tight artificial framework imposed by the researcher. The broader spheres of influence impacting on education have been considered, looking beyond the policy to understand how governance affected ordinary people and their responses. For different participants, different aspects of education were recalled as memorable and while this led to a more complex task in coding and classifying the data, the transition points, particularly on leaving school were

identified through the participant narratives in a way that had not presented itself previously.

There is a need to ask about the price to be paid for education and failures in education for both individuals and wider society. For individuals, the difficulty of escaping the familiar and the extent to which interventions in policy and practice might make a difference requires a deeper understanding of the socioeconomic and perceptual pressures relating to engagement with formal education. Fragmented approaches to poverty, housing, access to work and barriers within the education system made the navigation of education more difficult than it needed to be for the working-class participants. For policy makers and politicians, a holistic approach, viewing education through multiple, diverse lenses might make interventions more impactful. Too often the decisions are made on the basis of administrative convenience, compromise or available budget. Education should be recognised as having societal as well as individual value. The direction of travel suggests not enough has changed.

Postscript

Completing this work during the pandemic led to restriction in the richness of resources in a way that the author had not previously contemplated. Libraries, interlibrary loans and archive documents inaccessible, mapping software locked into machines in closed buildings, the prohibitive cost of buying rare source materials on line, all contributed to a more fragile resource environment than could have been anticipated. Associated with this was the isolating absence of informal contact and conversation. More than once, it occurred to me that this

experience gave me a taste of how privileged I had previously been and how multiple competing challenges cannot be resolved by simplistic structural solutions. I was fortunate enough to have the tools and the language to support my navigation through the final stages of the process. We must consider what we are asking of those who may now, and in the immediate future, be struggling with the process of education.

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www.theconversation.com/lessons-from-history-

APPENDICES

Appendix One: Key Dates

Dates	Political and Policy Enactments	Aspiration
1944 1945	Education Act of 1944 Labour Government elected Ellen Wilkinson - Labour	Compulsory secondary education Meritocratic and equity aspired to
1947	School leaving age raised to 15	Additional year of schooling for wartime children
1951-1954	GCE Examinations introduced replacing the School Certificate Florence Horsburgh - Conservative	Intention for greater access to national examinations
1952	Labour adopted comprehensive schooling as a policy	No compulsion for LEA compliance
1954	Eltham Hill Girls school and the opening of Kidbrooke comprehensive	Significant case on the autonomy of LEAs in determining school closures and reorganisation
1955-1959	Conservative governments under Eden and Macmillan Crowther Report 15-18	Offered little to the participant group by way of continuing education
1962	Certificate of Secondary Education introduced LEAs to provide grants for HE students	
1963	Conservative government under Alex Douglas-Hume May Local Elections returned Labour councils in cities including Liverpool Newsom Report – Half Our Future Robbins Report on Higher Education	Plans to introduce city wide comprehensive schemes drawn up
1964	General Election Harold Wilson's government Circular 10/65 published July 1965 by Anthony Crosland requested but	

	did not require LEAs to submit plans to the Ministry	
1965	Circular 10/65 issued requiring every LEA to submit plans for going comprehensive	Secondaries dwindling with comprehensive development. Secondaries entering pupils for GCEs
1967	Plowden Report – Children and their primary schools Middle schools Shirley Williams Minister at Department of Education and Science	
1968	EPAs – Educational Priority Areas established – remained in place until 1971	
1969	Black paper one condemns comprehensive education	
1970	General Election Margaret Thatcher as DES minister under Edward Heath 1,400 comprehensives established between 1970 and 1974 10/65 withdrawn and replaced by 10/70; LEAs no longer expected to go comprehensive	LEAs informed they would have more freedom to determine secondary provision
1972-73	School leaving age raised to sixteen	Bob and Edward and GCE entrance and passes
1973	Oil crisis and subsequent recession	University delayed entrance to a depressed labour market
1974	Labour government under Harold Wilson	
1975	Bullock Report	
1976	Labour government under James Callaghan Ruskin College speech on Great Debate	Full grant and support from school enabled
1977	Taylor Report – A new partnership for our schools	
1979	Conservative government under Margaret Thatcher	

	Fifth black paper condemning comprehensive schools	
	Labour Education Bill suggesting admission by parental choice	
	Conservative win General Election so Education Bill not enacted	

Appendix Two: Sampling Decision Making

Case	Gender	School years	Schools	Parental occupation	Sampling
Case History Mary	Female	Pre-war-1947	Christchurch Penrhyn St Roscommon	Docker	Known through community centre (Shewsy)
Case 2 Tom	Male	1944-1951	SFX Primary SFX High School	Unknown	Contact through family via Facebook
Case 3 Jane	Female	1946 - 1957	Penrhyn St Roscommon	Docker	Snowball connection from Case 1
Case 4 Linda	Female	1948-1961	SFX Primary SFX Girls School	Self Employed : cart and horse	Contact through family via Facebook
Case 5 Frank	Male	1951-1965	SFX primary SFX Grammar	Manual worker	Identified by family member following social media posting
Case 6 James	Male	1957-1968	Salisbury Street The Collegiate	Manual worker	Local archivist and photographer, through local history society
Case 7 Ann	Female	1958-1969	Penrhyn Street Roscommon	Docker	Community respondent following social media posting
Case 8 Sarah	Female	1959-1970	Our Lady Immaculate Anfield Secondary Modern	Docker	Self-identified
Case 9 Edward	Male	1965 - 1974	Cardinal Heenan St Gregorys	Manual worker	Community contact Everton Development Trust
Case 10 Bob	Male	1967 - 1979	Underlea Campion	Manual worker	Contact through local school - historian

Appendix Three:

Number of Pupils in Secondary Schools (England)

1944-1979 (adapted)[660]

	Secondary Modern	Grammar School	Comprehensive	Technical
1946	**719,682**	**488,931**		**59,918**
1950	**1,095,247**	**503,008**	**7,988**	**72,449**
1956	**1,340,591**	**558,645**	**27315**	**90,746**
1960	**1,637,879**	**672,881**	**128835**	**101,913**
1964	**1,640,549**	**726,075**	**199,245**	**88,501**
1968	**1,367,367**	**631,948**	**604428**	**62,021**
1972	**1,085,850**	**540,049**	**1,337,242**	**33,271**
1977	**493,158**	**256,040**	**2,982,441**	**13,673**

KEY to Data significant to the thesis

1950	The first entrants into comprehensive schools were recorded. Numbers were small compared to secondary modern and grammar school attendance and initially enrolment lower than for technical schools also.
1960	Technical school enrolments were always a smaller proportion of the overall population but in 1960 the number of children attending such schools reached its height. After 1960 numbers dwindled considerably.
1964	In 1964 the highest number of grammar school attendees was recorded but the numbers of those attending secondary modern schools was substantially higher with comprehensive school attendance rising considerably.
1977	By 1977 the proportion of pupils attending secondary modern schools had fallen considerable from the high point in 1964. However even with this fall in numbers there

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[660] Simon, B, Education and the Social Order p 583. "Other" forms of school not classified in the definitions have been excluded from this table for simplicity but all were relatively small in numbers of enrolments comparative to overall population.

	were more pupils in secondary modern schools than in grammar schools.
1977	Comprehensive school attendance had risen by 1977 to make this form of schooling the most common with numbers exceeding secondary modern and grammar school totals combined.

Appendix Four:

DECREASING ELECTORATE IN LIVERPOOL CITY BOUNDARIES IN THE 1970s: Local Government Boundary Commission for England Report No 319 [661]

1971	**445,961**	
1972	**430,054**	**7,907**
1973	**427,610**	**10,444**
1974	**421,074**	**6,536**
1975	**416,130**	**4,935**
1976	**415,151**	**987**
1977	**412,407**	**2,744**
Overall decrease		**33,553**

[661] The table shows the impact of the housing re-organisation policy on population which fed into funding for schools in the area.

Appendix Five:

Ward map of Liverpool showing location of Everton [662]

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[662] Although the shape of the boundaries of Everton changed marginally over the time period the area has fundamentally remained unchanged.
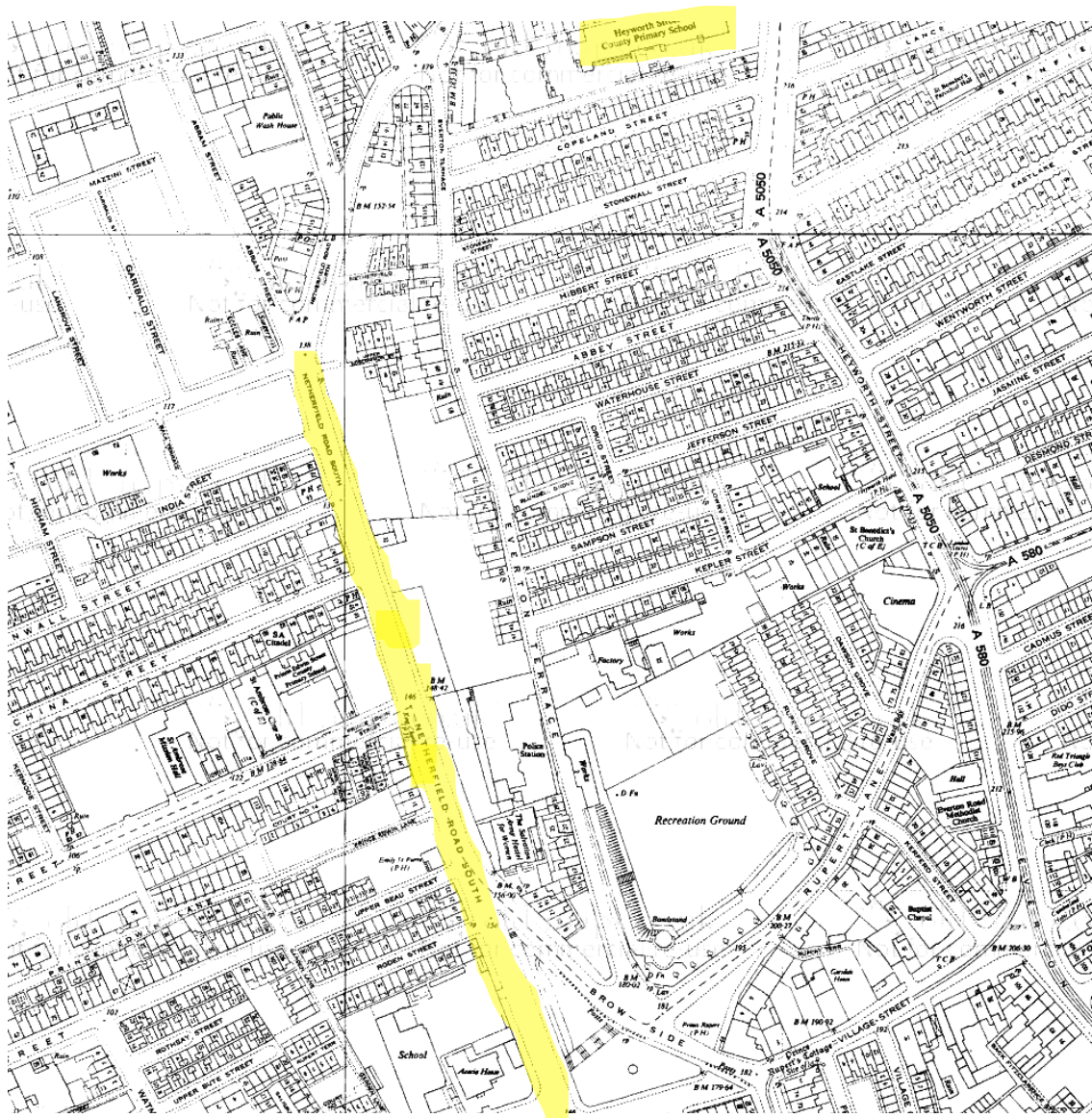
Appendix Six:

Everton in 1930s

Showing densely populated housing – towards the centre of area A Roscommon Street can be seen; the arterial roads – Netherfield Road and Everton Road can be identified as can Margaret Street, home of Margaret Street baths.

Appendix Seven: Everton in 1964

Everton in 1964 with holes appearing in the dense fabric of housing following housing policy to rehome families to outlying areas. Netherfield Road is shown for context, also Heyworth Street county primary. Much of the pre-war housing was still in occupation at this time.

Appendix 8:

Everton in 2000

Showing outline lower density housing configuration, and proximity to city centre including key cultural landmarks such as the museums, art galleries and football grounds.
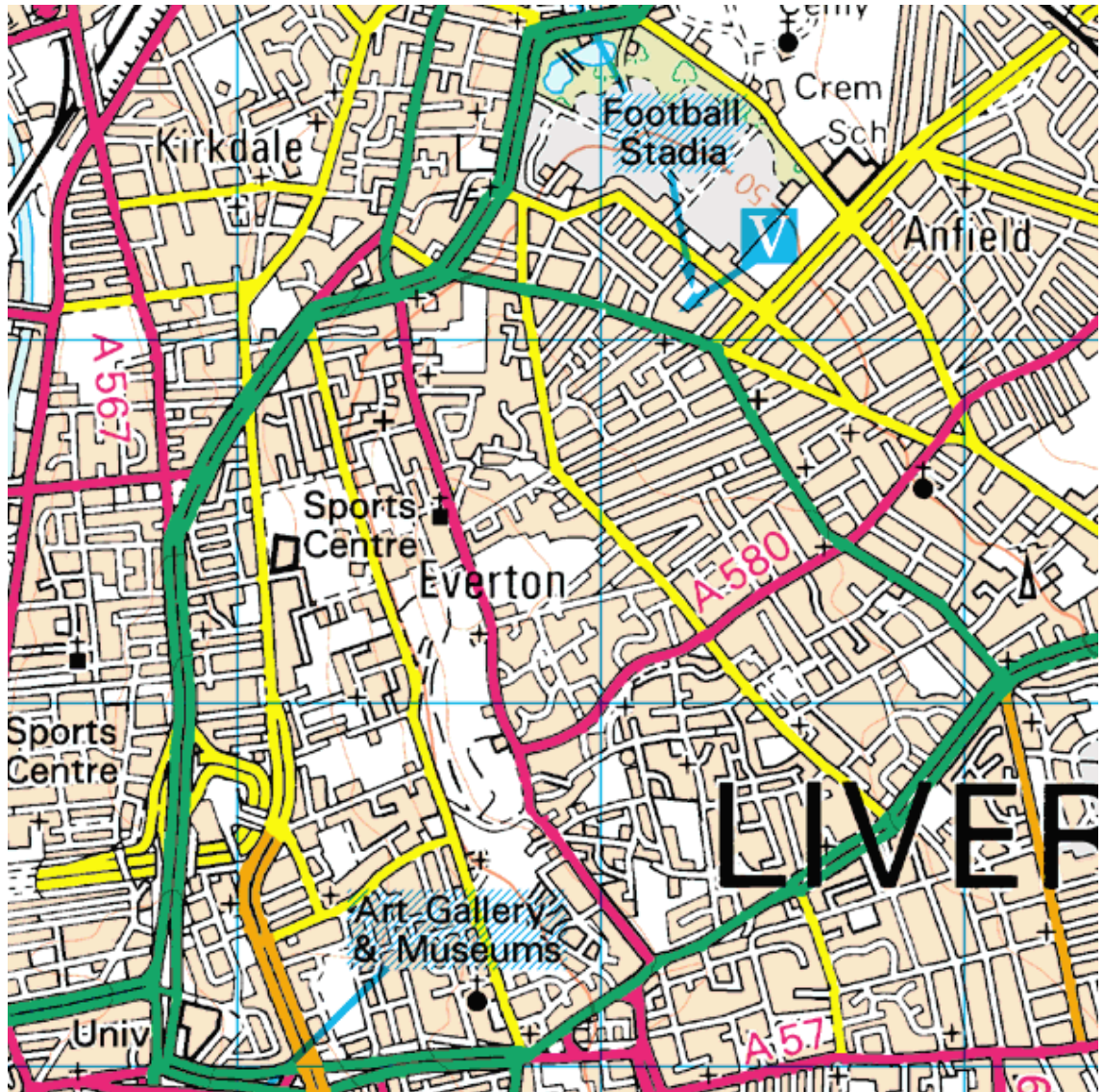
Appendix Nine:

Eligibility for Free School Meals in Everton Ward – Ward Profile 2018

Free school meal eligibility is seen as a proxy indicator for poverty and the structural inequality in the Everton area can be seen here in a national context but also in comparison to the city of Liverpool overall. Illustrates the ongoing nature of poverty and deprivation.

	Primary school %	Secondary school %
Everton Ward	40	37
City of Liverpool	26	22
England and Wales	15	13