THE SCHOOL TO WORK TRANSITION OF AT-RISK YOUTH: PUTTING EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING PROGRAMS INTO CONTEXT

by

Rachel A. Baker

A.B., Sociology, Bryn Mawr College

(1986)

Submitted to the Department of Urban Studies and Planning
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for
the Degree of

MASTER OF CITY PLANNING

at the

Massachusetts Institute of Technology

May 1993

Signature of Author_____
Department of Urban Studies and Planning
May 17, 1993

Certified by_____
Richard Schramm, Senior Lecturer
Thesis Supervisor

Accepted By_____
Ralph Gakenheimer, Professor
Chair, MCP Committee

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I wish to express my heartfelt gratitude towards the many people who supported me through the process of researching and writing this thesis.

This thesis would not have been possible without the confidence and generosity of the fourteen young people who shared their stories with me. I am also grateful to the many organizations and individuals in the San Francisco Bay Area who assisted me with the research: The San Francisco Conservation Corps, The East Bay Conservation Corps (Leigh Raymond), Cathy Sneed of the Horticulture Project, and Mohammed Nehru of the San Francisco League of Urban Gardeners.

My thesis committee went above and beyond the call of duty to support me through the challenging and, at times, daunting endeavor of researching and writing this thesis. I would like to thank Paul Osterman for both his healthy and helpful skepticism and his constant encouragement. I am indebted to Leticia Rivera-Torres for the time and encouragement she extended to help me with this project. I benefitted greatly from her extensive knowledge of the field of employment and training. Finally, I am very grateful to my thesis advisor, Richard Schramm, for his skill in listening, for his guidance helping me organize my ideas, and for his unflagging support throughout the process.

My companions in labor, Celia Cody and Carolyn Mark, spent many an hour reading and discussing this project with me. Their keen intellects and astute observations not only contributed to this thesis but have been perhaps the most integral part of my education at MIT.

Finally, I would never have made it without my friends and family in California: Eileen for her humor and late-night phone calls; Marc for the many stimulating and helpful conversations and for believing in me; and, of course, my mother, father and brother for everything.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

THE SCHOOL TO WORK TRANSITION OF AT-RISK YOUTH: PUTTING EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING PROGRAMS INTO CONTEXT

by

Rachel A. Baker

Submitted to the Department of Urban and Studies and Planning
May 1993 in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the Degree of Master of City Planning

ABSTRACT

The employment and training system designed to help at-risk youth successfully negotiate transition from school into the workforce is characterized by short-term strategies. Most programs seek to improve the skills of participants and place them back into jobs in less than a year. Yet, recent studies show that youth typically experience many years of labor market adjustment before they settle into stable employment.

This thesis examines what might be learned by viewing short-term employment and training programs in the larger context of the multi-year school to work transition. I show that the path into stable employment is more than a simple process of acquiring occupational skills. By linking interviews with at-risk youth to developmental theories I suggest a new way of looking at how at-risk youth develop the skills and maturity to form long-term attachment to the labor market.

The thesis draws on case studies of fourteen at-risk youth. I conducted in-depth interviews with the youth in an attempt to understand their struggles making the transition from school into work, the context of their decisions to seek help through employment and training, and most importantly their own perspectives and explanations of the decisions they have made about work.

The youths' stories illustrate the intensity of their struggles to make the transition into adulthood and stable employment. The process is non-linear and fraught with pitfalls. Many are torn between involvement in the formal economy and the underground economy. Simple exposure to a job is not sufficient to shift the balance for many at-risk youth because the jobs do not meet their developmental needs. Therefore the prevailing strategy to place youth in jobs as soon as possible is myopic and may even be counterproductive for some youth. We should rethink how employment and training programs and entry-level jobs could be improved to meet the developmental needs of youth.

Thesis Supervisor: Richard Schramm
Senior Lecturer
Department of Urban Studies and Planning

INTRODUCTION

THE PROBLEM

When American students leave high school they enter a juncture of life with paths that lead in many different directions. No longer constrained by the institution that has shaped their behavior and options since kindergarten, high school graduates (and dropouts) must choose from a myriad of paths to adulthood. About fifty percent decide to continue on to post-secondary education. The other half, ca. 2.5 million who choose not to go to college each year, embark on the journey into the world of work[1]. Over the past two decades scholars and policy makers have begun to raise serious concerns about the well-being of these non-college-bound youth. Two main factors have fueled their concern: first, non-college-bound youth are faring worse economically today than they did in the past. The gap between wages and employment rates of workers with only a high school diploma and those with a college degree has widened.[2] Second, recent reports attribute one cause of America's declining competitiveness to the fact that other countries have better institutions to guide youth from school into work than the United States.[3]

---

[1] Of course, these categories are blurred in time as some youth drop out of college and other youth decide at a later stage to matriculate into college.

[2] see, for example, Murnane and Levy, 1993.

[3] see, for example, Bailey, 1992; Lynch 1992, Spring, 1987.

The institutional framework for youth leaving high school and not intending to continue their studies is neither well-articulated nor encompassing. Students who continue on to college enter a coherent higher education system that supports and guides them in their steps towards adulthood and skill acquisition and work. In contrast, non-college-bound youth are essentially left to chart their own course into the labor market. The imbalance in the institutional support for non-college-bound youth relative to college-bound youth is reflected in the skewed distribution of public resources allotted to the two groups. Public resources devoted to assisting non-college-bound youth after high school are estimated to be only one seventh of those invested in college students.[4]

We see the consequences of the institutional disjuncture between high school and work manifested in the turbulent and protracted process that most non-college-bound youth go through before they settle into the labor market. Left to their own resources, most of these youth flounder for several years, experiencing high rates of unemployment and job turnover. Many do not appear to settle into the labor market--in the sense of finding a stable job that pays a decent wage--until they are almost thirty years old.[5]

While the transition from school to work is rocky for all non-college bound youth, it is particularly treacherous for about a third. This group fails to develop a strong

---

[4] de Lone, 1992

[5] see Osterman, 1992.

attachment to the labor market even by the age of thirty. Youth at-risk of developing serious labor market problems like chronic unemployment or underemployment have been identified by a cluster of background characteristics. Low-income youth, minorities, high school dropouts and teenage parents are all considered to be "at-risk" of future labor market difficulty.

The employment and training programs that serve out-of-school at-risk youth in the interest of averting labor market problems are often called "second-chance programs. Most second-chance programs are short-term interventions (less than a year) designed to place participants in jobs as soon as possible. Unfortunately, the record of second-chance programs in improving the labor market outcomes of at-risk youth has been extremely disheartening[6].

Though many explanations have been advanced to account for the failure of employment and training programs to produce lasting impacts on participants' wages and employment levels few of these explanations have explored how the youth themselves view their struggles. In this thesis I document the experiences of a group of at-risk youth as they struggle with the school to work transition. I explore what their experiences can tell us about why job-placement does not appear to be sufficient in developing the skills and maturity necessary to form a long-term attachment to the labor force, with particular attention what they say themselves about the paths they

[6]see the National Research Council (1985) for a review of program evaluation studies.

have chosen. Drawing on developmental theories, I bring new data to the discussion and contribute a new way of thinking about the school to work transition that is of such concern to scholars and policy makers today.

I argue that many at-risk youth do not obtain the opportunities they need after they leave high school to develop the skills and maturity to become adult workers. Their developmental needs are not well-met by the labor market or by employment and training programs, and their families and communities are unable to provide them with the resources and support to compensate for this gap.

THE SCHOOL TO WORK TRANSITION

The term "school to work transition" is somewhat misleading when interprated literally. When scholars refer to this transition they mean more than the acquisition of a first job after high school. The term refers to the lengthier process of settling into the labor market, after experimenting with various jobs and developing the maturity and labor force attachment of adult workers.

Studies of the school to work transition suggest that we must recast how we think about youth unemployment to incorporate an understanding of how youth develop the maturity, academic and occupational skills to move from the status of student to that

of solidly employed worker. Programs and policies based on the idea that unemployment was the problem focused efforts on getting youth into jobs. In contrast, programs and policies with the goal of assisting youth in the school to work transition look beyond job acquisition to the extended process through which youth mature into stable, adult workers.

This process extends beyond the simple act of acquiring a job after high school. Studies show that most non-college bound youth spend years floundering in the labor market before they settle into stable employment. This floundering typically involves many spells of unemployment and a high rate of job turnover. A longitudinal study by Osterman (1992) showed that only about 20 percent of the young men surveyed were employed at 16-19 years of age; by the age of 20-23 a little over half of them were employed; that number increased to about 80 percent between 25 and 28 years, and, finally, to 85 percent at the age of 29-31. Thus, the research on the school to work transition implies that simply having a job at a point in time does not indicate that a young person has successfully negotiated the transition into the labor force.

While these studies have shown how turbulent and protracted the process of developing a firm attachment to the labor force is, they have not yet given much texture to the turbulence. We know institutional and structural barriers that contribute greatly to labor market failure, but we know very little about differences in the

experiences of youth after they leave high school that might help us understand why some succeed and others fail.

During the transitional years after high school youth are difficult to track because they often zig-zag in and out of different activities. A typical youth might work full-time for a while, spend several months neither working nor in school, work part time while attending night classes, then quit to look for something else. Because of the ways we collect data such youth are apt to appear and disappear in different kinds of statistics like intermittent blips on a radar screen. One researcher who use a longitudinal survey to chart the pathways that young people follow as they transit from school to work, compared her results to a plate of spaghetti (Lynch, 1992).

Studies of the school to work transition that focus only on employment data leave large gaps in the knowledge of what youth are doing in between jobs and in addition to jobs that might affect their success in settling into the labor market. Youth labor market statistics are quite limited in helping plot school to work transitions. The statistics capture information about who is employed; in what industries and occupations; and, what types of wages they are earning. However, the data are mute regarding the significant percentage of youth who are either unemployed or out of the labor force--telling us nothing about what youth are doing when they're not working or why they aren't working.

Other statistics can provide some of the missing pieces. Program records and evaluations show who enrolls in employment and training programs and a little bit about what happens to them afterwards. Yet, evaluations seldom follow youth for more than a year or two. If the participant was nineteen while in the program, we only know what happens to him up to the age of twenty-one, leaving years of development a mystery. Incarceration statistics also tell us what some youth are doing during their twenties; as do welfare data. But because these data are all aggregate and cross-sectional, they are of little help in tracking the sequences of activities that individuals pass through in the journey from school into the workforce.

Recognizing this problem, many recent reports have called for new studies that can help fill this gap. Lerman, for example, calls for "an overall cohort analysis of young people that traces all school, work, and program participation during the late high school years and through the mid-to-late twenties," arguing that "such an analysis can provide information on the uses of school-based training and post secondary and second chance education and training, and on the types of jobs and job durations among the various groups of young people" (Lerman, p. 235). This thesis contributes to such analysis by following the post school experiences of fourteen at-risk youth. I will not draw causal inferences to relate different paths with positive or negative outcomes. Such analysis is beyond the scope of this study. However the case studies provide rich, descriptive data on the variety of post-high school experiences of at-risk youth that suggest directions for further research.

STRUCTURE OF THE THESIS

The first chapter of this thesis introduces a new perspective on the school to work transition, drawing on theories from social psychology to identify the developmental needs and stages of youth entering the work force. Chapter 2 describes the case study of fourteen at-risk youth charting their experiences since leaving high school. Chapter 3 takes a closer look at the youths' own perspective on their struggles in the labor market and on their decisions to enroll in employment and training programs. Finally, Chapter 4 concludes the thesis with some ideas for how we might rethink employment and training interventions based on the findings from the previous chapters.

CHAPTER 1. YOUTH DEVELOPMENT

"Both 'utility maximization' and 'identity formation' take time."

Mercer Sullivan[7]

This chapter seeks to place the school to work transition into the context of the transition from youth to adulthood. In the first section, I review some of the basic concepts of youth development; I then briefly discuss how these needs are normally met and, finally, explore the special needs of at-risk youth.

INTRODUCTION

Increasingly scholars and policy-makers have drawn attention to the developmental needs of children and adolescents in designing social policy and educational institutions.[8] However, few have extended this perspective to youth above the age of eighteen. There is almost a disciplinary handoff between social-psychology and economics when youth leave high school. We cease to view them as juveniles and begin to view them as economic actors. Yet, scholars interested in improving the school to work transition have begun to advocate that we extend developmental

---

[7] 1984: 15

[8] see, for example, Turning Points (1989), the Carnegie Council on Adolescent Development

theories to this period in order to help explain how youth develop the maturity, competency and occupational skills to become solidly employed workers[9].

Studies of the youth labor market clearly identify a developmental trend. Youth start out with different attitudes about work than adults and those attitudes gradually change over time to resemble adult attitudes. In a study of 139 young men between the ages of 16-26, Osterman (1980) identified two different stages of this development. He found that in the first few years after they enter the labor market, youth tended to have a loose attachment to the labor force. During this "moratorium period" they had high quit rates and high job turnover. Many of the youth would "target earn"--working in a job just until they had earned enough money to buy a coveted object, like a car, and then quitting. Over time their attitudes towards work changed. In the second stage they began to "settle down" and develop a firmer attachment to the labor force. How does this happen? Is it simply a function of aging? In this chapter I will draw on developmental theories that help cast some light into the "black box" of youth behavior. I will review what the literature tells us about the developmental needs of young adults and initiate a discussion of how these needs are met.

---

[9] In a major report commissioned by the U.S. Department of Labor, Dilemmas in Youth Employment Programming, Smith and Gambone call for more research into the psychosocial development of at-risk youth and analyses that develop usable knowledge about how these characteristics interact with youth decisions about work and employment and training. The Social Science Research Council is also sponsoring an on-going forum on the developmental needs of youth and how they interact with work and social programs.

THE TRANSITION FROM YOUTH TO ADULTHOOD.

The transition into adulthood is a period of rapid and intense changes. Entering the workforce is only one of the many transitions that youth face when they leave high school. During these years they must assume adult roles and responsibilities in many parts of their lives. One social psychologist describes this time as a period of "dense spacing" of life events (Glen, 1980). These life events include developing occupational skills, establishing independence from parents or guardians, moving out of the childhood home, developing adult sexual and intimate relationships, and becoming parents.

The different transitions enumerated above do not occur in isolation from each other. Developments in non-work aspects of youths' lives can have a significant impact on their behavior in the labor market. For example, research shows that when youth get married their job turnover declines. The responsibilities and commitment of marriage affect their attitude towards work. Conversely, work experiences can retard or reinforce other developments in their lives. For example, studies argue that unemployed young men are less likely to get married because they are unable to fulfill the role of "bread winner."[10] Because of these interactions, it is important to view the school to work transition in the broader context of the transition to adulthood.

---

[10] William Julius Wilson 1990

In the following section I review some of the concepts emerging from developmental theories that may suggest a new way of thinking about the school to work transition.

Competency

The Carnegie Council on Adolescent Development recently produced a report reviewing the literature on youth development (Pittman, 1991). This report distills the basic concepts of youth development from the complex, academic discourse. The report seeks to introduce a new language of youth development to inform the thinking of practitioners and policymakers.

The report defines youth development as "the ongoing process through which young people attempt to meet their needs and develop the competencies they perceive as valuable, both currently and in the future" (p. 30). Pittman constructs the following five categories to describe the range of behaviors and skills needed for adult success:

> o **health, physical competence:** good current health status plus evidence of appropriate knowledge, attitudes and behaviors that will ensure future health;
>
> o **personal/social competence:** intrapersonal skills(self-discipline); interpersonal skills (ability to work with others); coping/system skills (ability to adapt be flexible); judgement skills (ability to plan, evaluate, make decisions);
>
> o **cognitive/creative competence:** broad base of knowledge, ability to appreciate and participate in areas of creative expression; good oral, written language skills, problem-solving and analytic skills, ability to learn/interest in learning and achieving;

o **vocational competence**: broad understanding/awareness of vocational options and of steps needed to act on choices; adequate preparation for chosen career, understanding of value and function of work (and leisure);

o **citizenship competence (ethics and participation):** understanding of nation's, communities history and values, and desire to be involved in efforts that contribute to nation and community.

Youths' Developmental Needs

In order to achieve these adult competencies, and successfully manage the transition into adulthood, adolescents have a set of needs that must be met. Dorman (1985) suggests that early adolescents have the following seven basic needs:

1) **Diversity**: the need for a wide range of experiences to accommodate large variations in development in this age group;

2) **Self-exploration and definition**: the need for opportunities for informal discussion, exploring the world around them;

3) **Meaningful participation:** the need to use their talents, assume responsibilities;

4) **Positive Interaction with peers and adults:** the need to work with peers in small groups, pairs, teams, opportunities for being with non-family adults;

5) **Physical Activity:** the need to exercise and move (programs must recognize the large differences in size and ability);

6) **Competence and Achievement:** the need for variety of opportunities for success and reward, opportunities for service to others;

7) **Structure and clear limits**: the need for clear rules and structures which they have had some role in developing.

I would add to this list the need for **a sense of safety/structure** which is emphasized in many other lists (especially Garbarino et. al. 1992).

Two key points that emerge from the literature about the nature of the transition from youth to adulthood. First, when individuals are transitioning from one stage to another their progress is usually uneven, replete with setbacks and false starts. This is particularly obvious in early adolescence when a fifteen-year-old can act like an adult one day and a ten-year-old the next (Dorman, 1985). But it seems to be a normal feature of every transition period.

Second, individuals going through transition in life experience a great deal of uncertainty. In order to venture into new territory, people need to feel secure that they have a solid base from which to operate. This concept is often illustrated in developmental theory with the example of the stage that a toddler begins to establish some autonomy from her parents. The toddler will waddle off away from her parents but will frequently check back to make sure they are still there and watching. This same need for security when making major transitions continues into adolescence and beyond into the transition into adulthood.

Not all youth have the security in their lives to help support them through such transitions. In this section, I will review some of the special needs of at-risk youth who are growing up in environments less likely to meet their developmental needs. As Pittman reports, "There is growing concern, among practitioners, researchers and

social commentators that the current supports and opportunities available to adolescents, particularly low-income and minority adolescents, are not only failing to help them build all the requisite skills, they are not providing the experiences that are critical to the development of [a sense of competency] (1991: 22)

At-risk youth

Almost by definition, at-risk youth grow up in an environment that poses risks to their healthy development. The stresses of poverty and the violence of many inner-city neighborhoods undermine the stability and security needed for optimal development. Smith and Gambone cite research showing that, "the physical deprivations associated with poverty and the psychological distress that accompanies these conditions will affect a parent's ability to provide the support and nurturance necessary to socialize a child into the role of a self-sufficient adult (Peterson and Rollins, 1987; cited in Smith and Gambone, 1992: 43).

Recently, a number of longitudinal studies have asked what factors distinguish children who emerge unscathed from high risk environments from those who develop serious and persistent problems in youth. In one of most-cited studies, Werner and Smith (1989) followed 700 multi-racial children in Hawaii from the prenatal period to adulthood. Of the 700, one-third were labeled as high risk on the basis of multiple odds against them such as growing up in chronic poverty, being raised by parents with

parents with little formal education, and coming from families troubled by discord, desertion or divorce. Two-thirds of the high risk children developed serious learning or behavior problems. A third, however, grew into competent, caring adults.

Werner and Smith identified a number of factors that distinguished this third from the other children. These resilient children were able to find sources of support such as affectional ties with parent substitutes and involvement in groups that provided them with a sense of meaning and that rewarded competence and cooperation. Later, when these resilient individuals got older many of them left the adverse conditions of their childhood homes, and sought safer environments (Werner 1990). Another scholar, James Garbarino, studied children growing up violent environments and found that those who coped best were able to "retreat to safety, to take time out to recuperate, to comfort themselves, to play traumatic experiences out, and to use fantasy to transform unpleasant reality into more tolerable situations" (1992:102). Thus, the more resilient youth in stressful environments have an innate sense of self-protection that helps them mitigate the environmental risks through such actions as cultivating relationships with caring adults or seeking safe havens. I will refer back to these theories to help interpret some of the labor market decisions of the youth that I interviewed.

CHAPTER SUMMARY

The school to work transition is only one of the many transitions that youth face when they leave high school. These early years of adulthood present a series of rapid and dramatic transitions in the social roles and responsibilities of young people including parenthood, financial independence, and marriage or other intimate relationships. In order to develop the skills and maturity to assume these new roles and responsibilities youth need relationships with caring adults, safety, opportunities to experiment with different occupations, opportunities to take on new responsibilities and try out new skills with room for failure, opportunities to interact with peers constructively. Because of the environmental stresses of poverty, at-risk youth may be particularly vulnerable making the transition to adulthood and thus have a special need for safe, supportive environments and relationships with adults.

The next chapter introduces the case studies of fourteen at-risk youth in the midst of the struggle from school to work and from youth to adulthood. The following chapter draws on the concepts presented in this chapter to explore how the experiences of these fourteen youth during the school to work transition contributed to or detracted from their healthy development.

CHAPTER 2. THE STRUGGLE FROM SCHOOL INTO THE WORKFORCE: CASE STUDIES OF FOURTEEN AT-RISK YOUTH

This chapter draws on material from fourteen in-depth interviews to explore the context in which at-risk youth enroll in second-chance training programs. I interviewed fourteen youth who had all participated at one time in the San Francisco Conservation Corps (SFCC), an employment and training program for at-risk youth. The youth recounted their experiences from the time they left high school up to the present. Their stories provide insight into how their choice to enroll in an employment and training program fit into the broader context of their struggle with the transition to adulthood. In particular, the fourteen case studies illuminate how at-risk youth perceive their options after leaving school and how they make choices between employment and other activities in their lives.

METHODOLOGY: IN-DEPTH INTERVIEWS WITH YOUTH

Most of the existing studies of the school to work transition have used data from large longitudinal surveys like "High School and Beyond" to analyze the patterns and consequences of post school choices of young workers (see, for example, Lynch 1992 or de Lone 1992). The knowledge gained from these large-scale quantitative studies has been very valuable in linking background characteristics with labor market outcomes, tracing changes in labor market status over time, and revealing other aggregate trends. However, such data are less useful for understanding youth as

purposeful decisionmakers. How do they view their labor market options and how do they explain their decisions? What are their conceptions about work and training? How do they experience the boundaries between work and other spheres of their lives?

In order to explore these issues I conducted a set of fourteen case studies of at-risk youth. I elected to conduct in-depth interviews for the following reasons:

To capture youths' motivations and self conceptions in their own words-- The in-depth interview format complements studies based on structured questionnaires by providing a rich account of youth's self-conceptions. The factors that youth highlight to explain their labor market successes and failures reveal how they perceive their situation and the way that they think employment and training programs will help them. Understanding what motivates youth is important to a theoretical analysis of the youth labor market as well as to program design.

Furthermore, many researchers have had little contact with low-income youth in urban areas, especially minorities. Through these interviews I hope to convey a sense of the lives of these individuals that does not emerge from quantitative studies.

To reach youth who are often lost in longitudinal surveys-- This study reaches a population that is often under-represented in quantitative surveys that rely on telephone interviews or written responses. At-risk youth are very difficult to follow in

longitudinal surveys of youth. They move frequently and may not have a telephone. Youth who have spent time in jail or who have drug abuse problems are particularly hard to follow. Youth who have poor basic skills have difficulty with written questionnaires. Asking youth to reconstruct a personal history of their activities in one-on-one interviews is an alternative to strategy to document the school to work paths of this difficult-to-track population.

To obtain more information about participants' background and outcomes than is available in program-based research and records-- Most employment and training programs do not collect extensive, detailed information on participants' prior history. While intake forms and interviews usually inquire after the major background characteristics like high school graduation status or criminal record, few programs collect detailed information on youths' post school experiences. The same is true of most program evaluations. On the other end, few studies of employment and training programs have the resources to extend follow-up research more than 6-12 months after they leave the program. Even fewer programs have the time and resources themselves to follow-up with participants and find out what has happened to them. Unlike schools, programs seldom forward records and information to other programs that youth may enter down the road. Thus, program operators and evaluators may know little detailed information about what youth did before they entered a given program or what happened to them afterwards.

To obtain sensitive information about involvement in the underground economy--

Some youth earn money from drug dealing and other criminal activities. Based on my experience working in employment and training, I can say confidently that a significant number of at-risk youth have engaged in such activities at one time or another. Many others, of course, have not. It is important, however, to be able to ask youth questions about drug dealing in the context of learning about their labor market experience. Participation in the underground economy is difficult to document in questionnaires because of under-reporting. In these case studies I interviewed youth with whom I already had prior relationships in order to increase the likelihood that they would divulge sensitive information about their past activities, legal and illegal.

THE CASES

The interviews that constitute this case study are the outgrowth of my background in the field of employment and training. My experiences working for three years in the San Francisco Conservation Corps (SFCC) formed the backdrop of these interviews, allowing me to build on prior relationships with participants and an intimate familiarity with the program's design and implementation.

I originally planned to interview a random sample of youth that were in the San Francisco Conservation Corps while I worked there. I wanted to interview youth with whom I had some kind of prior relationship for the confidence reasons that I explain

below. I also wanted to interview youth who had been in the program several years ago so I could also document what they had done since then.

To identify a random sample, I chose a roster from a given month in 1990 and tried to contact all the members of a single crew. It proved extremely difficult to trace the whereabouts of former participants. Most of the youth no longer lived at the same addresses and were not to be found. Asking around, I found out that some were in jail, some had drug problems and would not be easy to interview, some had moved from the city. This experience only confirmed how difficult it is to follow at-risk youth.

My final sample of fourteen youth, therefore, is not random. I believe, however, that the value of my prior acquaintance with the youth offsets the loss of generalizability. The sample also roughly reflects the general population of participants in the employment and training program, the San Francisco Conservation Corps.

The Informants

Table 2.1 describes the background characteristics of the individuals. All the names of the youth in this thesis have been changed to protect their privacy.

Ten of the youth that I interviewed are African-American, three are Latino, and one is White. I interviewed fewer Latinos relative to their proportion in SFCC (about 33%) because of a conscious decision not to interview recent immigrants. The majority of Latinos in SFCC are recent immigrants, not all of whom are working in this country legally. Thus their labor market problems are quite different than those of youth who have grown up in the U.S. Therefore, I only interviewed Latinos who were either born in this country or moved here when they were small children.

Only two of the youth that I interviewed are women. SFCC is only 10% female. Like many employment and training programs, SFCC is quite skewed in terms of gender. This stems, in large part, from a division in funds between training monies targeted to welfare-recipients and other training funding sources. In addition, women are quite under-represented in the San Francisco Conservation Corps, due in part to its local reputation for hard, physical outdoor work. The experiences and perceptions of the youth in this study, therefore, should be viewed in perspective as probably more representative the male perspective.

While there are no income-eligibility requirements for SFCC, almost all of the youth come from low-income families. Most reported a high degree of instability in their housing arrangements. Many of the youth have moved more than once a year over the past six or seven years. Three of the fourteen lived in State-funded group homes as teenagers, and another spent several years in a residential program for juvenile offenders. Five of the interviewees graduated from high school, and four of the others have obtained their General Equivalency Degrees (G.E.D.).

At the time of the interviews, four of the youth were still corpsmembers in SFCC. Two youth were now enrolled in another training program. Four former participants were now working as staff in the corps. Two were working as landscapers in a non-profit community garden program. The other two were unemployed (one of them was temporarily laid off because business was slow and the other had no job.)

TABLE 2.1

Interviewee Characteristics

NAME	AGE	ETHNICITY	H.S.GRAD	PROGRAMS*	GENDER
1.Raymond	17	Black	No	AND/SFCC	Male
2. Robert	21	Latino	No	CCC/SFCC	Male
3. Londa	22	Black	No	SFCC/YB	Female
4. Kate	22	Black	No	SFCC/YB	Female
5. Perry	22	Black	Yes	JC/SFCC	Male
6. Miguel	22	Latino	No	ROP/SFCC	Male
7. Marcell	23	Black	No	SFCC	Male
8. Eric	23	Black	No	SFCC	Male
9. Melvin	24	Black	Yes	SFCC	Male
10. Daren	24	Black	Yes	SFCC/AND	Male
11. Jose	24	Latino	No	YB/SFCC	Male
12. Art	24	Black	No	SFCC/SLUG	Male
13. Brian	26	White	No	SFCC/CCC	Male
14. Rodney	26	Black	Yes	SFCC	Male

* SFCC--San Francisco Conservation Corps
AND--Asian Neighborhood Design
YB--YouthBuild
CCC--California Conservation Corps
SLUG--San Francisco League of Urban Gardeners
ROP--Regional Occupational Program
JC--Jobcorps

The Employment and Training Program: The San Francisco Conservation Corps

The San Francisco Conservation Corps (SFCC), founded in 1984, is frequently confused with the federally-funded Jobcorps, though there is no relationship. SFCC is an independent non-profit modeled on the Depression-era Civilian Conservation Corps. Like the Civilian Conservation Corps, SFCC operates with the twin goals of providing employment and training for unemployed youth while simultaneously carrying out civic service projects. The program is non-residential.

The approximately 120 "corpsmembers," as participants are called, work in crews of ten to twelve on a variety of projects designed to fill unmet needs in the City. Work projects include building play-structures at parks and community centers, planting street trees, recycling at parades and festivals, and construction retaining walls and community gardens. Almost all the work is physical and out-doors.

Corpsmembers earn slightly above the California minimum wage to start, $4.35. Thereafter they are eligible for periodic raises and bonuses based on attendance and work performance. Work starts at 7:30 a.m. and ends at 4:00 p.m., Monday through Thursday. On Fridays corpsmembers attend mandatory classes to work on their basic skills. Attendance, punctuality and performance standards are strict. Many corpsmembers lose their jobs during the first few months for violating the rules.

Training is not targeted at a specific occupation, though most projects include light carpentry, construction or landscaping components. Corpsmembers learn how to use a variety of hand and power tools, how to read blueprints and the measuring tape. The primary emphasis is on developing pre-employment skills like self discipline, punctuality, a constructive attitude, and the ability to work with others. The official program length is one year.

The Interviews

Pilot Interviews. Before beginning the bulk of the interviews, I conducted pilot interviews with two former participants in SFCC, whom I have known well for more than three years. These initial interviews helped me to identify some of key issues I would pursue in subsequent interviews and familiarized me with some of the institutions and language that would crop up later.

My close relationship with these young men enabled me to ask them very frank questions about topics like drug dealing and prison. I believe that in later interviews with youth my level of knowledge in these areas may have encouraged more honest answers by demonstrating that I was not naive.

Interview Format. I met with each youth for about 90 minutes, tape-recording most of the interviews. I asked each respondent to start with the time that they left high

school and recount their experiences from that time up until the present with particular attention to their labor market experiences.

Other Information Sources

The intrinsic value of the interviews is the insight that they provide into how youth make sense of their experiences since high school, what motivates them, what they perceive to be barriers that they face and what their plans are for the future. These accounts are necessarily subjective. To put these stories into perspective, I relied on several other sources.

Program Staff. I spoke with program staff about all the youth that I interviewed in order to get their observations about each person as well as their general impressions about the motivations of participants to enroll in the program. In some cases, disjunctures between the youth's explanation and those of the observers were very enlightening.

Program Records. I had full access to program records at SFCC, including the files of many of the participants. These records constituted an important cross reference. I also collected materials from some of the other programs youth had participated in.

Personal Experience. Finally, my personal experience working at the San Francisco Conservation Corps for three years and my current role on the evaluation team of the YouthBuild Demonstration both played an important role in this study. My first-hand knowledge of the youth and the programs helped my see beyond the level of ideal representation. I knew many of the youth when they were participants in the San Francisco Conservation Corps, and I was a staff person. My past experiences with them provided a context for their personal histories as they related them to me in the interviews.

YOUTH PROFILES

I begin this section with several profiles to render a richer sense of post high school experiences of youth than can be drawn from quantitative survey research. Following the profiles, I will discuss the fourteen youths' experiences since leaving high school.

Melvin Smith

Melvin Smith stands six foot three and weighs over two hundred pounds. His imposing stature is crowned by a kind, boyish face and a gentle demeanor. Melvin found his very first job after graduating from Balboa High School with the help of a jobsearch club for teenagers. He worked as a part time janitor for a short time. Through his brother he learned about an agency that hired and supplied security guards for various businesses. After several short assignments, Melvin was hired permanently as the security guard for the Safeway supermarket in a dangerous part of San Francisco, known by residents as "the swamp." He earned about $6.00 an hour.

Melvin found the security job very stressful. Shoplifting was rampant; he would often catch customers stealing meat. Many of the shoplifters lived in the same neighborhood as Melvin and they would "jump him" (beat him up) on the weekends in retribution.

The difficulty of enforcing the law on people that he knew personally was exacerbated when Melvin learned that his employers did not fully trust him. On one occasion when he was on duty as the cashiers were locking up the store, two gunmen who had hidden in the store after hours staged an armed robbery. The Safeway managers accused Melvin of having been complicit in the crime and he was forced to take a polygraph test to vindicate himself. He was caught between employers who did not trust him and people from the neighborhood who resented his role in their arrest.

The late hours, the stress and danger, and the isolation took its toll. After almost a year he quit. "I couldn't face doing it anymore. They offered me other places to go, but I didn't like doing security no more...Cause sometimes late hours, graveyard shift and stuff like that. I couldn't adjust to that. I wouldn't go to sleep during the daytime. Basically I was wearing myself down; I could actually feel myself just breaking down, shaking."

Melvin had begun developing a drug abuse problem while working at the security job, smoking crack and drinking. Whether the stress of the job contributed to his drug abuse or the drug abuse contributed to his problems with the job is a complex interaction that cannot be sorted out from the interview. But, it seems likely that there was some kind of relationship.

After leaving the security job at Safeway, Melvin "hung out" on the streets smoking crack and drinking. He was on the streets for five months. His mother and his aunts exerted pressure on Melvin to find a new job, especially because his girlfriend was pregnant and they thought it was his responsibility to prepare to support her. Finally, tired of his ragged lifestyle and under pressure from his family, Melvin went down to the San Francisco Conservation Corps.

Rodney Green

At twenty six, Rodney is one of the oldest youth that I interviewed. I got to know him four years ago when he worked for me in the SFCC summer program. By the end of the summer we didn't much like each other, a fact that now makes us laugh.

Rodney is tall and narrow. He wears his hair in a shoulder length style that, combined with his strong jaw, makes him look vaguely apollonian. With his dry sense of humor and sense of timing, Rodney is a gifted story teller. He carries himself with pride and, if he feels affronted, can flash with anger.

Rodney' mother abandoned him and his older brother Chris, when he was twelve years old. Thereafter, until he graduated from high school, Rodney lived in a group home for boys. He has fairly good memories of the group home, and sometimes muses that he would like to run one in the future.

Rodney has "always worked." For many years this work included both legal and illegal jobs. He first got involved with drug dealing at the age of eight or nine, when he started "running" drugs (delivering) for his uncle. Ironically, he also worked as a deliverer for the Municipal Department of Transportation for a year and a half while in junior high school. His other early work experience included federally-funded C.E.T.A. summer programs and occasional jobs for local painters.

In 1984, he graduated from Bay Senior High School with a partial basketball scholarship to City College. He never made it there. That July he was arrested for dealing cocaine. Since it was not his first offense, he was sentenced to 8 months and 20 days in the county jail. He spent part of his time at a work camp in the mountains firefighting, and was released two days early.

He returned to San Francisco to live with his brother Chris and to deal drugs. Six months later he was arrested again. This time he was tried as an adult and sentenced to 13 months in Soledad, a state penitentiary. When he was released, at the age of 20, he went to Saint Louis to visit his family. Three months later he was back in San Francisco selling dope and smoking marijuana. Like many serious dealers, Rodney never touched the stuff he sold, preferring the more manageable effects of weed.

Rodney made a lavish amount of money drug dealing. He estimates that he took in $1100 a day. He spent most of this money on women and cars. Once, he went on a

cruise to Jamaica with his brother. During the same time period, however, he also worked for $6.00 an hour doing construction work with an uncle, including roofing and light plumbing.

Later that year, after being out for only nine months, Rodney was arrested for the last time. This time he was charged with possession of a firearm as well as drug dealing. Dealing was a dangerous profession; he had been robbed twice and shot once over the years. Rodney was sentenced to fours years of prison. He had just turned twenty one. Rodney was transferred around quite a bit at first. He finally ended up at the S.L.O. Correctional Facility where he developed a relationship that would have a profound impact on his life.

"Papa Smurf," an old man in the same prison wing who was serving a life term, saw something in Rodney. Papa Smurf wanted to deter Rodney from making the same mistakes that he had made that had cost him his freedom permanently. He pushed Rodney to justify his drug dealing and gang involvement. When Rodney was preparing to leave after 27 months, Papa Smurf made him promise that he wouldn't ever be back. Rodney describes Papa Smurf as almost a father to him and says that meeting him was the only good thing that happened to him in jail.

Now 23 years old, Rodney was released on probation. This time, wanting to make a break from his old life, he decided not move back in with his brother Chris, who was

still dealing drugs. Instead, he moved into an apartment with his girlfriend, Jeanette. Rodney valiantly looked for work for a month. But no one wanted to hire a 6'3" ex-felon. After a month, he went down to apply to the San Francisco Conservation Corps.

Rodney was a corpsmember for six months on a regular crew. His wit and intelligence were noted by staff, but he also had a short fuse and a nasty temper. Nevertheless he was offered a leadership position the first summer in the Corps, leading a crew of 12- to 14-year-olds. The experience was not terribly successful. Rodney's temper proved to be a problem; he was quick to assume that others were out to get him or exploit him in some way. At the end of the summer he returned to a regular crew. The next spring, slightly more than a year after he joined SFCC, Rodney was fired by his supervisor for a heated argument that erupted while the crew was preparing a performance for the weekly community meeting.

Rodney remembers that the executive director called him at home a week after he was fired, asking him what had happened and encouraging him to come back and apply for a second chance in the program. He was assigned to a different crew and soon was appointed to the position of crew leader. During the fall of 1990, Rodney was invited to try the position of crew leader for the 12 to 14 year olds again, the one that he had faltered in the first summer he was in the corps. In the intervening years Rodney had made significant progress controlling his temper, and was prepared to assume more

responsibility than he had two years earlier. After nine months in this position Rodney applied for and was offered a full/time, professional staff position with the summer program. He was one of three corpsmembers ever to have been offered a summer supervisor position.

That fall, SFCC had hoped to have an opening for one of the salaried, full-time crew supervisor position that Rodney could apply for. But funding was tight and SFCC had to drop two crews. Rodney was on his own. He was unemployed for five months. He lived with a girlfriend and her daughter. She worked full time and paid the rent. He helped take care of the little girl. He was very depressed and discouraged. Around January, the staff at SFCC called him to notify him that they would be interviewing again soon for crew supervisor positions. Rodney was offered the job.

A VARIETY OF TRAJECTORIES FROM SCHOOL TO WORK

This section charts the experiences of the fourteen respondents since they left school. My purpose is to document the content, sequence, and duration, of the major activities of at-risk youth who have left school with special interest in the point (or points) in this process that they enrolled in employment and training programs.

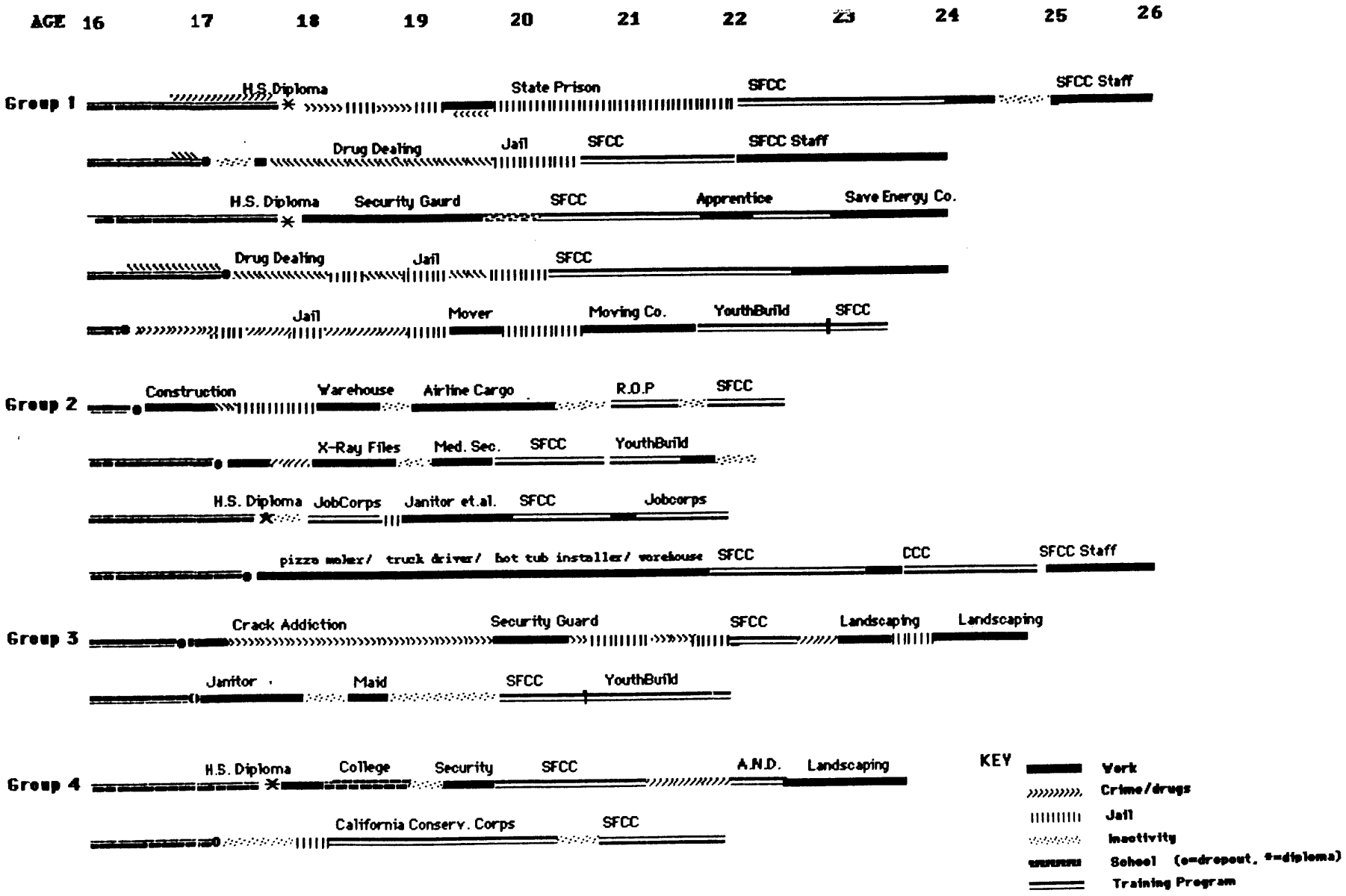
Paths from School

Chart 1 maps the paths taken by each of the fourteen youth from high school into the labor market. Since the youth I interviewed range from seventeen to twenty-six, the paths vary considerably in length. Some of the youth have just embarked on the school to work transition while others left school almost eight years ago.[11]

There is no predominant path from school to work among this group. It is noteworthy to find so much variation in the experiences that led all fourteen of these youth to the same employment and training program, the San Francisco Conservation Corps. This suggests, as I will discuss later, that there is no single "labor market problem" characteristic of all corpsmembers. In fact, the chart graphically illustrates the fact that the transition into adulthood for these youth is a messy, complex process that defies easy categorization.

[11] Though the chart aligns the respondents' paths by age, the reader should note youth were not the same age at the same time.

CHART 1. PATHS FROM SCHOOL TO WORK



Though there is wide variation between the individuals, I have divided the youth into four groups on the basis of the most salient differences between their school to work paths.

1. **Serious Problems Initially, but then Slow, Steady Progress:** The five youth in this group all had either serious drug abuse problems or involvement in crime during the years following high school. For most of them, drug activity displaced employment--either because the income was sufficient or drug abuse interfered with employment. Thus, three of them had almost no work experience before the training program. For all five of them, enrolling in the training program marked the beginning of a break with the underground economy. Each has distanced themselves from those activities and successfully completed training programs. Three have progressed well beyond the training programs to hold steady jobs for over a year. In all cases, the progress was slow and stretched out over several years.

2. **Extensive Work Experience:** I group these four individuals together because they all had comparatively extensive work experience after high school and before enrolling in a training program. Three of them had worked in more than five jobs before enrolling in the training program, working steadily for at least nine consecutive months. The fourth person has interspersed training programs and jobs. Their ability to locate, secure, and maintain employment distinguishes them somewhat from the other youth in the study. It suggests that they possessed a certain basic level of employment skills and it raises the interesting question of why they would want to

enroll in a training program (which will be addressed in a subsequent section.) However, because they have held many jobs, both before and after participating in a training program, it is difficult to conclude whether these four have made much progress settling into the labor market since leaving high school.

3. **Faltering Progress--with Backsliding:** These two young men have made uneven progress in the transition from school to work. They both had a little work experience before enrolling in a training program. Each had successful experiences with the training but neither has yet made definitive progress in securing unsubsidized employment. Both are still grappling with some of the same issues that led them into training program in the first place.

4. **Still Struggling:** Neither has successfully held a job for very long. Each has serious problems to resolve before they can become self-sufficient economically or emotionally. Both of them have drawn on more than one training program. The most important observation about these two is that they are still making a serious effort to enter the formal economy . One is battling a long-term crack addiction and the other has an extremely abusive and disruptive history in group homes.

5. **Just Setting Out:** The youngest person I interviewed was only seventeen. He is not included on the chart because he is too young to compare with the other youth in the group. However, it is noteworthy that SFCC, like many employment and training

programs, accepts youth this young as well youth up to six or seven years older given the vast difference in their life experiences.

Work Experience

Most of the jobs that these youth had held fit the definition of secondary labor market jobs. The list contains very few manufacturing or production jobs. Many youth found their positions through temporary agencies, and worked on short assignments. Kate in particular had found many short assignments through a temporary agency, including inventory control, x-ray file clerk, and receptionist positions. Miguel found temporary work as a day laborer pouring concrete. Another common trend was seasonal work. Perry worked at the post office at Christmas; Kate worked at Sears over Christmas. When the seasonal crush abated their jobs ended.

Table 2.2

WORK EXPERIENCE

(Total Number of Interviewees Ever Holding Particular Jobs)

Types of Jobs	# of Youth Having Held This Job
Cleaning Services	3
Restaurant (busboy, cook)	3
Security Guard	3
Laborer (warehouse, movers)	3
Unskilled Construction	4
Driver/Delivery	2
Manufacturing	2
Recreation Worker/Childcare	2
Post Office	2
Emp. & Trng. Prgm. Staff	3
Skilled Labor: landscaping insulation furniture assembly	5

Experiences with Employment and Training

Chart 1 also reveals interesting information about the way that the young people used the employment and training programs in their transitions from school to work. Few sought out employment and training directly after leaving high school, not reaching the decision to enroll in a training program until the age of nineteen or twenty. Despite this similarity, their experiences leading up to the decision to enroll in the programs varied widely. Some had participated only in the underground economy before they entered SFCC. Others had held a wide array of different jobs. No single labor market "problem" drove them to the program.

Program Hopping and Program-steading. Several of the youth received well over a year of training despite the fact that the official length of the training programs were between six months and a year. Some youth actively manipulated the system of training programs in the region, assembling longer training experiences by hopping from program to program. For example, Jose studied for his General Equivalency Exam the entire year he was enrolled in the program YouthBuild. When the program ended, he still had not passed the exam; so he enrolled in SFCC and passed the exam several months later.

The other noteworthy trend is that several of the youth had been in the training program far beyond a year. Though the San Francisco Conservation Corps is

officially a one-year program, the staff make many exceptions that extend the period of time that corpsmembers can stay in the program. Whenever a corpsmember is promoted to a leadership position in the program (there is approximately one leadership position for every six regular positions) he or she is automatically allowed to stay in the program for a year from the date of the promotion. SFCC adopted this policy to create room for a kind of internal ladder to support corpsmembers who showed promise and initiative.

Beyond these one year extensions, SFCC also expands the program length for some corpsmembers by hiring some of them into entry-level staff positions. Rarely, they hire a former corpsmember into a full, salaried
staff position in the program as in the case of Marcel and Eric in this study.

I believe that these phenomena, program-hopping and program-steading, are important because they show how participants and program staff modify the short-term design of the employment and training system to create more room for the gradual development of skills and maturity.

CHAPTER SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

The data reviewed in the preceding sections show above all that the school to work transition is not a linear trajectory from school into the working world. For these fourteen at-risk youth the experience has been messy and complex, and fraught with pitfalls. Young people are sorting many things out in this period, and the choices they are grappling with have dangerous and serious implications--especially the tension between the norms of the formal economy and the attraction of the underground economy. If we are to improve the effectiveness of programs designed to integrate them successfully into the formal economy, then we would do well to take a closer look at what youth say about the behaviors they have chosen. The next chapter turns to this task, conveying the post school experiences of these youth from their own perspective.

CHAPTER 3. THE STRUGGLE FROM SCHOOL TO WORK FROM THE YOUTH PERSPECTIVE

This chapter takes a closer look at what young people themselves say about the behaviors they have chosen. The chapter presents several findings from the interviews that challenge some of the conventional assumptions about the economic motivations of youth. I apply some of the youth development concepts presented in the first chapter to help analyze these findings. The ethnographic data presented in this chapter is not intended to vindicate any particular hypothesis but instead to illustrate the value of expanding our conception of the school to work transition and the role of employment and training programs to incorporate a developmental perspective.

The youths' stories help explain why simply finding a job may not be a sufficient way for some youth to develop the skills and maturity needed to form a long-term attachment to the labor force and develop into healthy adults in the fuller sense. In fact, the interviews revealed that being thrust into the labor market might actually be counter-productive for some youth. By sorting through how the youth perceived the options available to them and tried to assemble their own portfolio of experiences, we gain a better sense of what they need and how employment and training programs might meet those needs.

THE DEVELOPMENTAL NATURE OF JOBS

Some at-risk youth quit jobs because the stresses of their jobs combined with the stresses in the rest of their lives were overwhelming.

A number of youth had quit jobs that paid fairly well before they came to the training program. Several youth had worked as security guards. Security jobs do not seem to be difficult for youth without criminal records to obtain. Furthermore, they pay fairly well relative to many other secondary labor market jobs ($8.00 to $10.00/hr.). Despite the good wages and the wide availability of these jobs, many youth find that the stress imposed by the working conditions are beyond their ability to tolerate.

Recall Melvin's experience with the security guard job that was presented in the previous chapter. Melvin had explained why he quit:

> I couldn't face doing it anymore. They offered me other places to go, but I didn't like doing security no more...Cause sometimes late hours, graveyard shift and stuff like that. I couldn't adjust to that. I wouldn't go to sleep during the daytime. Basically I was wearing myself down; I could actually feel myself just breaking down, shaking.

Melvin's inability to cope with the security job must be viewed in the context of the other stresses in his life. He lived in the Sunnydale housing project where violence is a feature of daily life. In "the swamp," as the neighborhood is known, Melvin reported regularly seeing purse snatchings, high speed chases and shoot-outs, in broad daylight.

Another youth, bolstered by a strong family and living in more stable circumstances (in other words, a non-at-risk youth) might find the conditions of the security job tolerable and even attractive given the good wages. Yet, Melvin's decision to withdraw from the security job can be seen as a healthy way of coping with an overaccumulation of stress that squares with the resiliency theories of Werner and Garbarino presented in the first chapter. Effective coping behavior includes withdrawing from stressful situations, postponing an immediate response, finding better and more manageable situations, restructuring the environment and working toward maintaining optimal conditions of adjustment, security and comfort (Garbarino et. al. 1992).

The security job is a fairly extreme example of an unhealthy job. But the case illustrates how the external, non-work context of young workers' lives can either offset or exacerbate the effects of experiences in the secondary labor market. When jobs are poorly suited to youths' developmental needs (as many secondary labor market jobs are) young people must find ways to meet those needs in other areas of their lives. They need support and encouragement, they need positive relationships with adults, they need contact with other young people, they need a safe environment, and they need clear, incremental steps to measure their progress. Few typical youth jobs provide this, especially those most often filled by low-income youth with no education beyond high school.

When youth have other opportunities to acquire and test competencies or develop supportive relationships with adults, the developmental nature of their jobs may be much less important. For example, a study of work and youth development by Borman draws attention to importance of nonwork experiences when the job itself does not promote development (cited in Mortimer, 1988). Borman found that having a supervisor who acts as a mentor was especially conducive to the emergence of positive work orientations and the integration of the new worker into the work setting. However, he also found that relatively few employers or supervisors were willing to invest their time and energy in developing such a relationship with youth since they tend to view the young worker as transient and as lacking the capacity to assume major responsibility. Because of the absence of such support on the job, the availability of emotional support in other spheres of youths lives becomes more important to ease the transition from school to work.

A menial job that is not developmental may be counterbalanced by other developmentally healthy environments in the youth's life. For example, a college student who works in a repetitive, boring job has another arena in which they can measure their achievements and master new skills. A youth whose only activity is a menial, repetitive job, on the other hand, and who lacks other opportunities to develop new skills and measure progress may fail to acquire the sense of competence needed to become mature adults and workers. Many of the at-risk youth that I interviewed

had no other part of their life to support their healthy development when the jobs that they had were non-developmental.

EXTENDING THE DEVELOPMENTAL PERIOD: HOW YOUTH USED EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING PROGRAMS

Some youth used the employment and training programs as a way to prolong a period of experimentation and postpone the responsibilities of adulthood. One factor that may motivate youth to switch jobs frequently and to enroll in training programs is the desire to prolong the period of experimentation. There is some disagreement in the literature regarding this type of behavior. Conventional labor economics views turbulence in the youth labor market as a by-product of new workers' search for the right fit between their skills and preferences in the many kinds of jobs available [see Osterman 1980: for a review]. Others, however, have found that "there is little evidence of search for bundles of learning and earning opportunities" (Osterman, 1980: 4) Osterman argues that youths' decisions about jobs are not the product of such a rational calculus. His research on youth found instead that--

1. the sequence of jobs held by youth does not follow career patterns;

2. the range of opportunities and search process seems limited in that most youth find their jobs through relatives;

3. unemployed youths usually take the first job offer;

4. and, youth rarely described their job acquisition process in terms of choice or selection. (1980: 41)

In my interviews I did get a sense that some of the turbulence of the school to work transition stemmed from the fact that youth wanted to experiment. Their experimentation, however, differs somewhat from the human capital concept of shopping for the best job.

Instead, the interviews conveyed a sense that some of the youth simply wanted to postpone the responsibilities of adulthood by donning the mantle of learner and doffing the responsibilities of worker. Some of them were not ready to think of themselves as having settled into a career or a job, especially in the jobs that they had.

Perry, who has a high school diploma, has successfully completed two eight-month certification courses in the Job Corps--one in building maintenance and one in child development. He has also worked as a janitor, a security guard, and a sorter in the post office. His wages in those jobs ranged from $5.00/hour to $8.50/hour. In addition to the Jobcorps, he has participated in the San Francisco Conservation Corps. Now 22, Perry explains his predilection for training programs and different jobs in this way:

"I like to observe new jobs. That way I have a better feeling of everything. That way when I get my mind set on what I really want to do, I say 'Well, I've done this before'--just go on, apply and stay there."

While in employment and training programs youth are accorded the status of learner by society. As soon as they are out of the programs they again feel the pressure to act like adults, pick something and settle down. Golden Venters, the job placement counselor at the construction training program, YouthBuild, equates youth in training programs with college students. College gives students the flexibility to try out different disciplines, to consider different occupations, and many college students dread the end of their final year because it represents the end of the "free-play" period and the beginning of the stage when they must truly commit to a certain trajectory. In contrast, we expect non-college bound youth to grow up much more quickly and settle into a steady job much sooner. Employment and training programs strive to take eighteen and nineteen year olds, teach them occupation-specific skills, and expect them to settle into their new careers. If they don't settle down in this way both the program and the individuals are judged failures. I would suggest that we reexamine our expectations about the speed at which we expect non-college bound youth to turn into steady workers especially when compared to the amount of flexibility we accord college students as a matter of course.

EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING PROGRAMS AS "SAFE REFUGES"

Some youth used the employment and training programs as buffers between them and negative influences in their lives. One theme that emerged from many of the interviews is that young people used the employment and training programs as buffers

between them and the temptations of the rest of their lives when they were ready to abandon negative behavior. For four of the youth, who had all been incarcerated at least once, the programs provided the structure and support they needed once they had decided to break from their old ways.

Marcel, for example, was released from jail for the last time when he was 20 years old. During his five-month, fifteen-day stint in jail, he had decided that he wanted to leave behind the crack addiction that had ruled his life since he had dropped out of high school three years earlier. He had prayed, played a lot of dominoes, and made up his mind "no more dope." He felt good, and looked good; he'd spent a lot of time working out in the jail weight room.

Marcel had been out for a week, when a friend told him about the San Francisco Conservation Corps. His friend came by the house to pick him up at 5:30 a.m. Monday morning. The next day, Marcel started at SFCC.

In explaining his decision to enter the corps, Marcel said.

> I didn't care **what** it paid. Number one, I needed to get away from Double Rock; I had a fresh clean mind. I just needed to get away and do something different. I did not buy crack, touch it or smoke it--though I was tempted to deal. But I tried to keep myself occupied. At first, I didn't feel like I was getting anything out of SFCC except getting away from Double Rock. But I kept coming, every day, it was a job, I was getting paid.

It was clear, though, that SFCC soon became more than just a place to be every day. Marcel was assigned to a crew with Ginny Jordan, a 60-year old woman who had once worked as a longshoreman in the Oakland shipyard. Marcel stressed the fact that the supportive relationships he made were more important than the skills he learned while in the corps. While Ginny didn't teach him as many hard skills as he later learned on other crews, he felt that the affection and caring she gave him were much more important.

Robert Montalvan also saw enrolling in SFCC as a way to keep himself off the streets. He had been working as a temporary laborer pouring concrete. All his assignments were short jobs, four hours here and there. He hated the instability and uncertainty, saying that he'd rather make $5.00 an hour on a steady job than $10.00 an hour working sporadically. That's why he joined the conservation corps.

> See when I first started here I started here not because I was gonna be getting money; I wanted to work here to keep me out of trouble. You see, Pittsburgh is small; you're going to bump into trouble 'cause trouble's just there. I can't stay in the house all day...

Robert commuted three hours every day from Pittsburgh to San Francisco to get to the corps.

> I live in Pittsburgh (an hour and a half from San Francisco). Now I come with my mother. I leave every morning at 6:00 a.m. I get up at 5:30 a.m. and throw my uniform in my back pack. At first I wasn't getting a ride, and I was paying for the train myself. But I came anyhow 'cause even if you have to work just to pay for the transportation, that's gonna keep you out of trouble, and that might lead you to better things. Even if you're not going to come up from working you're gonna get stay out of trouble from working.

Robert had pretty moderate expectations about the kinds of skills he was learning, but he felt that being in the program was crucial in keeping him off the streets.

> Once I get my G.E.D., I don't know what I'll do after that. You know, what I'm learning here, it's cool and everything, but when I leave here I'm gonna be right where I was before--just being able to work hard; this time I just know a little bit more about this and that. I've learned a lot of stuff here but mainly how to have better work habits. In my other jobs I used to get drunk a lot and I'd come to work the next day still drunk from the night before. I used to work real crazy and try to sweat it off. But I don't do that here.

The resiliency theories introduced in Chapter One suggest that it might be healthier for Robert and Marcel and some of the others to be in the programs than in unsubsidized jobs. The jobs they were able to get didn't seem to provide the kinds of structure or relationships that they needed as buffers to from the risks of their environment. In seeking out the safety and support provided by SFCC, they have been able to balance their risk factors and protective factors. In the short run, this solution may not seem like the best labor market outcome; but it may be that in the long run these youth are more likely to develop into stable workers than similar youth who were unable to find developmental opportunities in their jobs.

Youth may prefer to be in training programs rather than jobs when the program meets their developmental needs better than the jobs. Most staff and policy makers believe that youth come to training programs because they want to get a job. Some modify this statement to include a "better job" or a "decent job". It is on this crucible that employment and training programs are measured and found wanting. In

defining "decent job" researchers usually emphasize wages. For example, Lafer (1992) defines a decent job as one paying enough to disqualify the youth for JTPA funding[12].

The idea that all youth really want is a "decent-paying job" and that that's why they enroll in employment and training programs is widely accepted. As long as this assumption holds then it seems logical to evaluate employment and training programs by how many youth obtain well-paying jobs after the program. Yet, studies have found "that the intended beneficiaries of social programs may have quite different conceptions of goals, accomplishments, and shortcomings than do evaluators and staff" (Wells, 1981). Asking the youth participants themselves why they enrolled in an employment and training programs reveals that some youth use criteria differ from those of adults. In fact, the interviews uncovered motivations for entering and remaining in training programs that contradict the assumed desire to get a "decent job" that pays a "livable wage."

There were several examples of youth willing to accept the lower wages of the training programs over the wages they could get in available jobs. There was something about the programs that appealed to them more than the jobs. I believe that this was the support that the programs provided and the chance to develop and the

[12] set at 70% of the New York Department of Commerce's Lower Living Standard Income Level.

permission to continue being a youth. There were several examples of youth not wanting to take on more responsibility. It may be that the increased responsibility was more than they could handle given the other stresses in their lives.

The contradiction between the perspective of the participants and the assumptions of evaluators and staff was evident in the following occurrences:

Melvin

After being in the conservation corps almost a year, Melvin exchanged his yellow hardhat for a green one. This symbolized his promotion to the position of crew leader for which he received a raise from $4.35 an hour to $5.00 an hour. A few months later, his supervisor told him about an entry level job opening in a woodworking shop that paid $6.00 an hour. The job was advertised as an entry level position with the potential for learning the woodworking trade. Melvin went down for an interview and was offered the job. Two months later he quit and applied to SFCC for readmission .

I asked Melvin why he quit the job. At first he explained that he didn't like his job duties. Each day he swept up the sawdust around each of the workstations, emptied the vacuum receptacle that collected all the airborne particles, and cleaned the bathrooms. He found one job particularly odious--emptying the funnel that collects all the dust, because he would get covered with particles. I reminded him that the work he had been doing in SFCC required him to get equally dirty and was equally unpleasant and he earned 20% less than he made at the woodshop. Why would he want to return to the training program?

Melvin then explained how he was the only young person in the place and the only African-American. He had to work alone, doing the same tasks in the same place every day. Though his supervisors had repeated "we'll teach you, we'll teach you," they had not taught him anything new during the two months he was there. Since his main duties were sweeping up sawdust and cleaning the bathroom, he thought they might just be using him as a janitor.

His decision to return to SFCC, was clearly not based on wages, since his pay fell by $1.50 an hour when he returned to the program. His decision seemed to balance the probability of future advancement and the present working environment. At SFCC he had close, supportive adult supervision, he worked with other people his age, and he could see concrete, immediate steps to advancement.

After working at SFCC one more year, Melvin obtained a good, unsubsidized job that really wasn't that different from the woodworking job, except that he finally felt competent to take on the responsibility and deal with the negative aspects better.

Jose also quit a higher-paying unsubsidized job to enroll in a training program:

Jose worked for a moving company for a year prior to enrolling in a construction training program. At the moving company, he earned $8.50 an hour. Despite the wages, he found the work dissatisfying. The work was backbreaking and at the end of the day there was no tangible product. "Moving stuff around, you don't really have anything to show for it." Jose enrolled in the construction training program because he believed that a job in the construction industry was a career, not just a job. "I could go back to the moving company, if I wanted to," he said. But at the training program, "It's like, you still learning, you know. Better than not doing nothing, or being stuck in a job you don't like--just doing it for the money. My moving job was like that--all for the money. If that was the case I could be washing dishes somewhere. It's not really all for the money."

Melvin and Jose expressed a preference for the conditions of the training programs that transcended their response to the higher wages available in other jobs. Their stories lend plausibility to the idea that the training programs met their needs better than the jobs, at least at that point in their development.

CHAPTER SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

The theme that ties these discussions together is failure--failure from the conventional viewpoint. Yet, viewed in the light of some of the developmental theories presented in the first section, these "failures" take on a different dimension.

In the first section I presented the case of youth who quit what seemed to be decent jobs. Yet, what at first glance might seem like an inability to stick with a job may in fact be a healthy mechanism to cope with the over-accumulation of stress factors.

In the second section I presented the case of youth who go from training program to training program instead of into the labor market. Viewed with the expectation that youth who do not go on to college should settle down and act like adults, their behavior might seem immature. When we grant them the same understanding that we accord college students, such behavior becomes an age-appropriate desire to experiment with a variety of options.

The preceding sections showed that some youth enroll or remain in training programs for reasons other than to acquire a set of occupational skills. With this in mind, the next chapter will explore how we might expand our conception of the role of employment and training programs in the school to work transition beyond the myopic emphasis to get youth out into jobs as soon as possible.

CHAPTER 4. CONCLUSION: DIRECTIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH AND POLICY.

This thesis has illustrated the complexity of the school to work transition for at-risk youth and has set this transition into the larger developmental process of becoming adults. The in-depth interviews provided a window into how at-risk youth themselves experience this struggle, how they perceive their options and cast some light on the reason that jobs alone are insufficient to meet their developmental needs. This chapter concludes the thesis by reflecting on what might be gained from this new perspective to suggest ways that employment and training policy might be more effective. I present some of these ideas in the hope that they might open the door for further thinking and research in this area.

Many youth need more than just a job to set them on the road to stable employment and labor market success. When jobs are not developmental, youth must find other ways of meeting their needs and acquiring the opportunity to develop new capacities. This is true for non-at-risk youth as well as at-risk youth. Unfortunately, at-risk youth may have fewer resources to compensate for the lack of developmental opportunities after high school than youth from more fortunate backgrounds. Fortunately, the youths' stories about why they enrolled in employment and training programs also suggest some ways that employment and training policy might be more effective in

supporting their development and perhaps ultimately improving their labor market outcomes.

EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING PROGRAMS

The following sections present some ideas about how to make employment and training programs more responsive to the developmental needs of at-risk youth.

1. Change the Length or Sequence of Programs. This thesis documented two phenomena that should be explored further, program-hopping and program-steading. I believe that some youth buy extra time by assembling short-term employment and training programs into a portfolio that provides the developmental opportunities they need. Staff with whom I spoke also acknowledge doing this--referring youth to other programs when they know those youth are not yet ready for the labor market. But, because these referrals are not formal and because each program is evaluated separately, we do not learn about the potential cumulative effects of training programs. Future program evaluations might devote more attention to investigating whether participants have been in other programs and whether participation in more than one program is associated with better labor market outcomes in the long run.

2. Differentiate Training Programs Along Developmental Lines.

Youth enter employment and training programs for different reasons and at different points in the school to work transition. Some youth come to programs with significant

work experience; some come with none. Programs would benefit by a greater recognition of the diversity of experiences. As a recent report to the Department of Labor states: "the problem has been that all employment and training programs have been prescribed for all disadvantaged youth regardless of the external or personal barriers that prevent them from either labor market success or success in other parts of their lives" (Smith and Gambone, 1992).

Employment and training programs like the San Francisco Conservation Corps and YouthBuild are open to a wide age range of participants, from 18-24. The programs differentiate very little within this group according to age--essentially treating participants as though they all shared the same labor market difficulties. But developmental literature and the data presented in this thesis suggest that it might be more effective to differentiate services more by age. A seventeen or eighteen year old, just out of high school, is still at an age to experiment. Trying to push youth this age to pick an occupational specialization and expecting them to pursue this occupation steadily after the program, is inconsistent with what we expect of other youth their age and even what might be healthiest for their ultimate development. On the other hand, I think that employment and training programs could reconsider their upper age limits. My research showed that youth who seem lost in the first several years after high school may yet come around with age. But, a 24-year-old who wants to leave the underground economy and needs the support of caring adults and a structured environment will find few programs willing to accept them. Research on

the youth labor market shows that 24-year olds who are floundering in the labor market are not rare. Employment and training programs should keep the door open to them.

3. Base Programs on Human Development Rather Than Human Capital Models. Finally, I provide an example of a developmentally-oriented program that might serve as a guide for thinking about how to make employment and training programs more responsive to developmental processes. The program, Project Match, is designed to help women on welfare make the transition into work. While the program is geared towards a different populations it is also designed to help participants in a transitional stage.

The premises of the Project Match model are quite consistent with the patterns of school to work transition that I documented in this thesis. First, development does not occur at the same time, nor in the same order for every individual. Second, development is uneven. People making transitions may make significant advances and then revert back to earlier behavior. They may fail repeatedly before succeeding. Third, people making transitions need opportunities to test themselves and to measure small increments of progress.

Project Match

Project Match was started in 1985 as a demonstration program of the Illinois Department of Public Aid. The program is a "research and service welfare-to-work program developing, testing, and articulating strategies to move long term welfare dependent families to economic self-sufficiency (Herr and Halpern, 1991). Project Match serves over 600 hundred residents of an inner-city Chicago neighborhood, the majority of whom fall into the category of long-term welfare dependent.

Like many other welfare-to-work programs, Project Match is designed to motivate and enable welfare recipients to make the transition from public assistance to economic self-sufficiency. The basic premises of Project Match, however, are fundamentally different than the prevailing philosophies about work welfare. Rather than viewing the process of helping people become economically self-sufficient as one of providing education and training, Project Match's founders view it as one of fostering personal growth and change. Their model is one of human development rather than human capital.

In the human development model that Project Match propounds, achieving economic self-sufficiency is seen as a **process** rather than an event. Whereas other programs see getting a job as the **end** of the welfare-to-work process, Project Match views it as just the beginning. Toby Herr, the director, explains the problem with the traditional programs:

> Al the attention and all the help comes **before** the job. The job is the end of it. Programs do these very complicated assessments, they track people into education or training..they do job development and placement, and teach resume writing and interview skills, they get people jobs and that's it. A month later or 90 days later you have no idea what's happened to people. Even the big formal evaluations only track how many months people work in a year, say, and the average savings to the welfare department. We have no idea why people who lost their jobs lost them, or when, or what we could do to improve that; we have no idea why people kept their jobs and what we could learn from that. But the programs are absolutely not set up to do that. (Kennedy 1992: 3).

Project Match hoped to answer some of these questions. They set up an elaborate Management Information System to track the clients. After five years they analyzed the data and came up with the following conclusions that they have incorporated into the program design.

First, they observed that the routes out of welfare varied tremendously among individuals; there is no one route out of welfare dependency. Based on the longitudinal data they have developed a framework to analyze the career histories of participants, identifying ten characteristic routes. Six of the routes fall under the

rubric "steady progress." Three routes fall under the rubric "unsteady progress," and the final category is "lack of progress."

Their approach to assisting women off welfare is noteworthy for the length of time it encompasses and for the way that they define success and failure. Most work welfare programs define success as securing a job or getting the participant into some type of skills training or remedial education class. In contrast, Project Match follows participants much farther down the path because participants often lose their first jobs, reregister for welfare, and then eventually find another job. They may repeat this process several times before they succeed in settling into a job. Minor successes and intermittent setbacks, when viewed from Project Matches' human development perspective, are a normal part of the learning process.

Another important facet of the program is the flexibility it allows the participants in choosing their paths out of welfare. Based on their analysis of the longitudinal case histories, the founders concluded that there is no correct sequence of steps out of welfare. Many work welfare programs designate the sequence of steps that a participant must follow. For example, they strongly recommend or even require that women with low basic skills start with academic remediation rather than a job search or skills training. However, Project Match realizes that many women, especially those who are high school dropouts, remember school as a negative experience. For these women, enrolling in an education and training program can be a demoralizing first

step. Moreover, some women need the experience of attempting to secure a decent job before they can come to their own conclusion that education is important.

Finally, based on their experience Project Match has determined that securing a job or enrolling in school may be too big a first step for some women on welfare. They have reevaluated their approach to assisting these women and concluded that some women need to start with smaller, incremental steps. The case workers now encourage these women to start by volunteering for community service or taking an active parenting role rather than forcing them to attempt and fail at the more traditional work welfare activities.

In summary, the main features of the human development approach that Project Match has developed to assist women in the transition from unemployment into work and economic self-sufficiency are the following:

- a broad range of activities and a flexible sequence, including small, incremental steps towards independence for those who need them; and,

- an expanded time frame for assistance that supports women beyond the point at which they get a job in recognition of the fact that the path towards economic self-sufficiency is a long and faltering one for most women, and women may need help getting back on track after setbacks.

CONCLUSION

The Project Match principles are a good starting point for rethinking the role of employment and training programs in assisting at-risk youth in the school to work transition. The current focus of employment and training policy to get youth into jobs as soon as possible has not proven to be very effective in increasing the long-term labor market success of at-risk youth. This thesis has helped to suggest some reasons why simply obtaining a job may not be sufficient to develop the skills and maturity needed to form a permanent attachment to the labor market and to develop into a healthy adult. When youth have few other supportive resources to draw on, being thrust back into the labor market might actually be counterproductive. "Without the affiliation and security of caring relationships youth often hesitate to incur the costs or take the risks that conventional success may require" (Ferguson, 1990: 8). The encouraging finding of this thesis is that employment and training programs may already be meeting some of the developmental needs that are not met in the labor market, a role that has not been sufficiently valued or acknowledged in program evaluations. We must explore how these strengths might be augmented and expand our thinking beyond the strict labor market perspective to explore how we can better support at-risk youth through this difficult transition from school to work, and from youth to adulthood.

REFERENCES

Anderson, Elijah. "Some Observations on Black Youth Employment." Youth Employment and Public Policy. Ed. Bernard E. Anderson and Isabel V. Sawhill. Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1980.

Anderson, Elijah. "The Social Context of Youth Employment Programs." in Youth Employment and Training Programs: The YEDPA Years. National Research Council. Washington, D.C.: The National Academy Press, 1985

Borman, Kathryn M. "The Process of Becoming a Worker." in Work Experience and Psychological Development Through the Life Span. Ed. Jeylan T. Mortimer and Kathryn M. Borman. Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press, 1988.

Brunswick, Ann F. "Young Black Males and Substance Abuse." Young, Black, and Male in America: An Endangered Species. Ed. Jewelle Taylor Gibbs. New York: Auburn House, 1988.

de Lone, Richard. "School to Work Transition: Failings, Dilemmas, Policy Options." Dilemmas in Youth Employment Programming: Findings from the Youth Research and Technical Assistance Project. Employment and Training Administration. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Labor, 1992.

Dorman, Gayle. 3:00 to 6:00 P.M.: Planning Programs for Young Adolescents--Participant Notebook. University of North Carolina: Center for Early Adolescence, 1985.

Epstein, Cynthia Fuchs. "The Cultural Perspective and the Study of Work." The Nature of Work Ed. Kai Erikson and Steven Peter Vallas. 1991

Ferguson, Ronald F. "How Professionals in Community-Based Programs Perceive and Respond to the Needs of Black Male Youth." Discussion Paper Prepared for the Urban Institute, Washington, D.C., 1990.

Ferguson, Ronald F. unpublished memorandum to Social Science Research Council, 1993.

Freeman, Richard and Harry Holzer. "The Black Youth Employment Crisis: Summary of Findings." The Black Youth Employment Crisis. Ed. Richard B. Freeman and Harry J. Holzer. National Bureau of Economic Research. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1986.

Garbarino, James, Nancy Dubrow, Kathleen Kostelny and Carol Pardo. Children in Danger: Coping with the Experiences of Community Violence. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1992.

Greenstone, J. David. "Culture, Rationality and the Underclass." The Urban Underclass. Ed. Christopher Jencks and Paul E. Peterson. Washington, D.C.: The Brookings Institution, 1991.

Herr, Toby and Robert Halpern with Aimee Conrad. Changing What Counts: Rethinking the Journey from Work to Welfare Chicago: Center for Urban Affairs and Policy Research at Northwestern University, 1991.

Kazis, Richard. "Improving the Transition from School to Work in the United States." Washington, D.C.: American Youth Policy Forum, Competitiveness Policy Council, and Jobs for the Future, 1993.

Kennedy, David. "The Ladder and the Scale: Commitment and Accountability at Project Match." Case Study for the John F. Kennedy School of Government, Harvard University, 1992.

Lafer, Gordon. "Minority Unemployment, Labor Market Segmentation, and the Failure of Job Training Policy in New York City." in Urban Affairs Quarterly. Vol. 28, No. 2, December 1992: 206-235.

Lerman, Robert. "Youth in the 90s: Recent Trends and Expected Patterns." Dilemmas in Youth Employment Programming: Findings from the Youth Research and Technical Assistance Project. Employment and Training Administration. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Labor, 1992.

Lott, Tommy. "Marooned in American: Black Urban Youth Culture and Social Pathology." The Underclass Question Ed. Bill E. Lawson. Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1992.

Lynch, Lisa. "Young People's Pathways into Work: Utilization of Postsecondary Education and Training." Report to the National Academy of Science Committee on Postsecondary Education and Training for the Workplace, 1992.

Mortimer, Jeylan T., Jon Lorence, Donald S. Kumka. Work, Family and Personality: The Transition to Adulthood. Norwood, New Jersey: Ablex Publishing Corps, 1986.

Mortimer, Jeylan T. "Introduction." in Work Experience and Psychological Development Through the Life Span. Ed. Jeylan T. Mortimer and Kathryn M. Borman. Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press, 1988.

Moss, Philip and Chris Tilly. "Raised Hurdles for Black Men: Evidence from Interviews with Employers." Presented at the Annual Conference of the Association for Public Policy Analysis and Management, 1991.

Murnane, Richard J. and Frank Levy. "Why Today's High School Educated Males Earn Less Than Their Fathers Did: The Problem and an Assessment of the Responses." Harvard Educational Review Vol. 63: No. 1, Spring 1993.

National Research Council. Youth Employment and Training Programs: the YEDPA Years. Washington, D.C.: National Academy Press, 1985.

Osterman, Paul. "Is There a Problem with the Youth Labor Market and If So How Should We Fix It?--Lessons for the U.S. from American and European Experience." A Paper Prepared for the Joint Center for Political and Economic Studies, 1992.

Osterman, Paul. "The Politics and Economics of CETA Programs." American Planning Association Journal October, 1981: 434-446.

Osterman, Paul. Getting Started: The Youth Labor Market. Cambridge, Mass.: The MIT Press, 1980.

Pittman, Karen with Marlene Wright. "A Rational for Enhancing the Role of the Non-School Volunteer Sector in Youth Development." Carnegie Council on Adolescent Development, 1991.

Smith, Thomas J. and Michelle Alberti Gambone. "Effectiveness of Federally Funded Employment and Training Strategies for Youth." Dilemmas in Youth Employment Programming: Findings from the Youth Research and Technical Assistance Project. Employment and Training Administration. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Labor, 1992.

Sullivan, Mercer. Youth Crime and Employment Patterns in Three Brooklyn Neighborhoods. Vera Institute of Justice, 1984.

Tienda, Marta and Haya Stier. "Joblessness and Shiftlessness: Labor Force Activity in Chicago's Inner City." The Urban Underclass. Ed. Christopher Jencks and Paul E. Peterson. Washington, D.C.: The Brookings Institution, 1991.

Wells, Miriam J. "Success in Whose Terms? Evaluations of a Cooperative Farm." Human Organization, Vol. 40, No. 3, 1981.

Werner, Emmy E. and Ruth S. Smith. Vulnerable but Invincible:A Longitudinal Study of Resilient Students and Youth. New York: McGraw-Hill, 1989.

-----The Forgotten Half: Non-College Youth in America. Youth and Ayymerica's Future: The William T. Grant Foundation Commission on Work, Family and Citizenship, 1988.