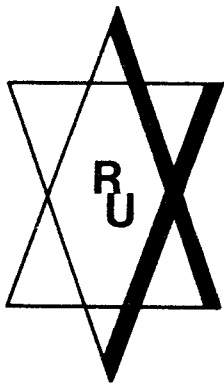


# THE WORK AND EMPLOYMENT OF SUBURBAN JEWS



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# **THE WORK AND EMPLOYMENT OF SUBURBAN JEWS**

**The Socio-Economic Findings of the  
1978 Redbridge Jewish Survey**

**Barry A. Kosmin and Caren Levy**

**RESEARCH UNIT BOARD OF DEPUTIES OF BRITISH JEWS  
1981**

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

### INTRODUCTION AND SUMMARY

### CHAPTER I THE POTENTIAL VERSUS THE ACTUAL ECONOMICALLY ACTIVE POPULATION (EAP)

### CHAPTER II THE DEPENDENT POPULATION

Housewives .....	9
Students .....	11
Sick and Disabled .....	11

### CHAPTER III THE ECONOMICALLY ACTIVE POPULATION

Full-time Workers .....	13
Part-time Workers .....	13
Unemployment .....	14

### CHAPTER IV EDUCATION AND QUALIFICATIONS

### CHAPTER V EMPLOYMENT AND INDUSTRY

Self-Employment .....	19
Industrial Classification of Employment .....	19
Employment Categories and Types of Industry .....	20
Gender Differences .....	20
Age Factors .....	21

### CHAPTER VI OCCUPATIONS AND SOCIO-ECONOMIC GROUP (SEG)

Heads of Household .....	22
Gender Differences .....	23
Comparison with Other Jewish Populations .....	24
Education and Occupation .....	24
The Influence of Cultural Factors .....	25

### CHAPTER VII SOCIAL CLASS

### CHAPTER VIII INCOME ASPECTS

### CHAPTER IX SPATIAL ASPECTS

The Spatial Distribution of Employment by Industry .....	31
The Spatial Distribution of Full-time Work .....	31
The Spatial Distribution of Part-time Work .....	32
Labour Mobility .....	32

### CHAPTER X CAREERS FOR YOUNG PEOPLE

### CHAPTER XI VOLUNTARY WORK

## TABLES

1. A Comparison of the Age Distribution of Economically Active Populations by Percentage.
2. A Comparison of the Age Distribution of Potentially Economically Active Population by Percentage.
3. A Comparison of Age Specific Activity Rates.
4. The Dependent Population among Redbridge Jewry, 1978.
5. The Dependency Ratio in Four Local Jewish Populations.
6. Housewives Reasons for not Working by Percentage.
7. A Comparison of the Number of Sick by Sex as a Percentage of the Total Economically Active Population.
8. A Comparison of the Number of Sick as a Percentage of the Total Economically Active Population by Age and Sex.
9. Employment Status by Sex in the E.A.P., Redbridge Jewry, 1978.
10. A Comparison of Economically Active Retired Jewish People.
11. Number of Unemployed as a Percentage of the Total Economically Active Population for each Sex.
12. Highest Secular Education by Academic Qualification among the Population over 16 years of age.
13. Age Specific Rates for Present Students by Sex.
14. Highest Academic Qualifications of Present Students (over 16 years) by Sex.
15. Percentage Distribution of Present Students by Educational Institution and Sex.
16. Employment Category by Percentage for Redbridge Jewry, 1978, and G.B. 1971.
17. A Comparison of Employment by Industry.
18. Employment Category by Industry, Redbridge Jewry, 1978.
19. Main Occupations of Heads of Household.
20. Brief Definition of the Socio-Economic Groups (SEGS).
21. Industry and Socio-Economic Group by Percentage for Redbridge Jewry, 1978.
22. A Comparison of SEGS in Three Jewish Populations by Percentage.
23. Social Class of Redbridge Jewry by Percentage based on Male and Female Heads of Household.
24. Chief Economic Support of Household by Social Class.
25. Social Class of Jewish Populations by Percentage.
26. The Percentage of Earners in the Households of Redbridge Jewry, 1978.
27. The Percentage of Earners per Household Size, Redbridge Jewry, 1978.
28. Some Multi-Earner Households.
29. What Careers would You Like Your Children to Follow?
30. Who has Given You (a teenager) most Help in Choosing your Career?
31. Percentage Distribution of Voluntary Workers by Age and Sex.
32. Time in Voluntary Work by Employment Status.

## MAPS

1. The London Boroughs.
2. Areas of Work.

## FIGURES

1. Economic Activity and Employment Status of Redbridge Jewry, 1978.
2. Age Distribution of Housewives Among Females Aged 20 to 59 years, Redbridge Jewry, 1978.
3. Age Distribution of the Student Population, Redbridge Jewry, 1978.
4. Distribution of the Economically Active Population (EAP) within the Population Pyramid of Redbridge Jewry, 1978.
5. Highest Academic Qualifications Attained by Redbridge Jews over 16 years of Age.
6. Highest Level of Educational Institution Attended by Redbridge Jews over 16 years of Age.
7. Sex and Age Distribution of Redbridge Jews in Industry 1978.
8. Industry and Employment Status by Place of Work.

## INTRODUCTION AND SUMMARY

Redbridge Jews are typical of Anglo-Jewry. The third or fourth most numerous Jewish population in Greater London, they live in a London Borough which is located in the corridor between the North Circular Road and the London Green Belt, where the most populous and growing Jewish populations are to be found. 'In this colossal girdle of outer London's "villas and semis", lilacs and forsythia, which many foreigners think of as the most typically English landscape of all, most Jewish families are now to be found and the future of Anglo-Jewry lies. Such an area is not urban and it is definitely not rural. In the pre-war years it was accused by critics such as George Orwell and Evelyn Waugh of being one-class, narrow-minded socially, and boringly bland and repetitive in its physical presence. Time has lessened the fury, but it still gets a bad press. Yet it is home to, and regarded with affection by most of the population to be described. They are content to be commuters and suburbanites. On the social and economic level it is a hard won status, in both individual and group terms, and marks the culmination of an apparent process of integration into English society.'<sup>1</sup>

As 'un-poor, un-rich and non-deviant', such people are largely neglected by social scientific enquiries. But as an essential part of 'middle England' they make an interesting group for a micro-study of how the economic turbulence of the 1970s has effected ordinary families. Such suburban areas are of national significance because they are important political barometers. Two of the three Borough parliamentary constituencies are marginals

which changed hands during the late 1970s in line with the political tide.

*The Work and Employment of Suburban Jews* is the third in a series of reports based on an extensive survey. This survey was a stratified random sample of 500 households from among the Jewish population of the London Borough of Redbridge and was carried out by local volunteers between November 1977 and January 1978. The first report *Community Resources for a Community Survey* dealt with the methodology and implementation of the survey, and the second, *The Social Demography of Redbridge Jewry* dealt with their demographic characteristics.

From the latter study it emerged that this population is essentially local in character, and demographically and residentially stable. It was estimated to number 19,350 persons living in 6,493 households and constituted 8.24 per cent of the total Redbridge population.

The survey questionnaire was multi-purpose and dealt with a wide variety of subjects including welfare, demography and religion. Thus, economically oriented questions were only one facet of the survey. This meant that many economic topics were not covered. These included income data, expenditure patterns, savings and job histories. However, other data provided indicators of these factors. The most significant gaps are the absence of time series data and information on the currently topical informal sector. However, we feel that such deficiencies are more than offset by the very detailed picture of the economic activities in which this

MAP 1. THE LONDON BOROUGHS



population is engaged, and the insight we have gained into their overall attitudes to work and employment. It became obvious that in this population voluntary work was an important element in an understanding of overall attitudes and behaviour and it is thus included in this report. Furthermore, the special characteristics of this population threw light on some of the limitations of the 'official cognitive system' as it operates through the Census and other official systems of classification which we applied.

As the title suggests, this section is an introduction and brief overview of a comprehensive study on the work and employment characteristics of Redbridge Jews. The chapters, the section headings within these chapters, the lists of tables, figures and maps have been set out to guide the reader through the more detailed findings. It is hoped that the format is such that some of the substantive chapters can stand in isolation and that it is not necessary for the reader, whose prime interest is the subject of later chapters such as social class, careers or voluntary work, to work through the more technical early chapters which deal with labour force participation and economic activity rates.

The main findings in these early chapters were, firstly, that, in line with national trends, female labour force participation has increased markedly among suburban Jews since the 1960s. Secondly, this population has a low overall level of unemployment but above average rates of sickness and disability, the incidence of which in regard to both factors is very specific by age and sex.

The most striking contrasts in our findings regarding occupations and work are found between males and females, and the older and younger generations. One aspect of this is a low degree of occupational inheritance which includes lack of involvement in family businesses by the younger generation. Another aspect is the differences between these sub-populations which can be traced back to contrasting educational experiences. Upward social mobility is very evident among the young, which reflects the recent importance of higher education among Redbridge Jews. However, there are suggestions that new constraints are beginning to frustrate this trend.

Alongside the apparent demise of the family business, high levels of self-employment and a concentration in the Distribution and Services sector of the economy were found. The new entrants to the workforce, the young and females, have increased the tendency towards the service sector by their lack of involvement in manufacturing. However, the overall range of actual occupations was wide, with over-representation of such diverse groups as taxi-drivers, the liberal professions, and factory foremen and managers in the clothing industry.

The social class profile of Redbridge Jewry was found to be typical of Anglo-Jewry as a whole. This meant that there was a marked lack of semi and unskilled manual workers, while 40% of the population fell into social class III. No questions were asked directly on the extent of ethnic enclosure at work. However, indications are that our

respondents did not perceive themselves as suffering from prejudice or discrimination in employment, and no evidence of the under-utilization of skills and qualifications was found to suggest that this was a problem.

Our demographic study had shown that Jewish households were slightly larger than average because of the population's family orientation, and the resulting lack of single parent families or old people living alone. This household and family structure was found to have considerable economic importance, since it produced a high proportion of multi-earner households, with 46% of homes having two or more earners. One result of this was to 'cushion' the effects of unemployment for those who were out of work.

We also knew from our earlier report that the origins of this population lay in the East End of London, and our spatial analysis found that many returned each day along the path of their residential migration to work. This was linked to the fact that Redbridge Jews were found to be a mobile population with above average levels of commuting to work.

For a population who were found to be very work orientated and interested in maximising their incomes, for example with high levels of economic activity above the normal age of retirement, Redbridge parents held surprisingly qualitative and non-material attitudes towards their children's careers. Moreover, there was an overall lack of parental guidance in this matter. This may perhaps be linked in some way to the high value placed on unpaid community-orientated service, which is reflected in their high participation in voluntary work. Related to this, the importance of part-time workers and the retired among voluntary workers, was also a surprising finding.

The overall picture is of a recently embourgeised population with a rational economic outlook. Yet there are signs of economic vulnerability and some caution, and confusion as far as the future is concerned. It is an open question what influence Jewishness has on these attitudes, or whether they are common to suburbia in general. However, the Jewishness of these people and their divergence from suburban norms is most evident in their avoidance of the most conformist areas of work, that is, the huge amorphous corporations and the civil service. It will be interesting to see how this particular population weathers a future which appears to offer fewer opportunities for paid employment and a technology which demands that society adopt new attitudes to what constitutes work.

#### Notes

1. B. A. Kosmin, C. Levy and P. Wigodsky, *The Social Demography of Redbridge Jewry*, London, Board of Deputies, 1979, p.6.

# Chapter I

## THE POTENTIAL VERSUS THE ACTUAL ECONOMICALLY ACTIVE POPULATION (EAP)

An investigation of economic activity among a defined population can begin to throw light on some of its socio-economic characteristics. More specifically, it begins to answer the following questions: Who are the people who are working and what are they doing? How many in each category are men or women and are they married or single? Why have some people who are potentially able to work, chosen not to? The first three sections of this study will explore these questions for the Redbridge Jewish population by comparing the potential and actual economically active (EAP), and dependent sections, of this population. Figure 1 gives the breakdown of these groups, each percentage representing a proportion of the total number of Jews in the London Borough of Redbridge, which was estimated in the *Social Demography of Redbridge Jewry* at 19,350 persons in early 1978 on the basis of a sample survey covering 1552 respondents.

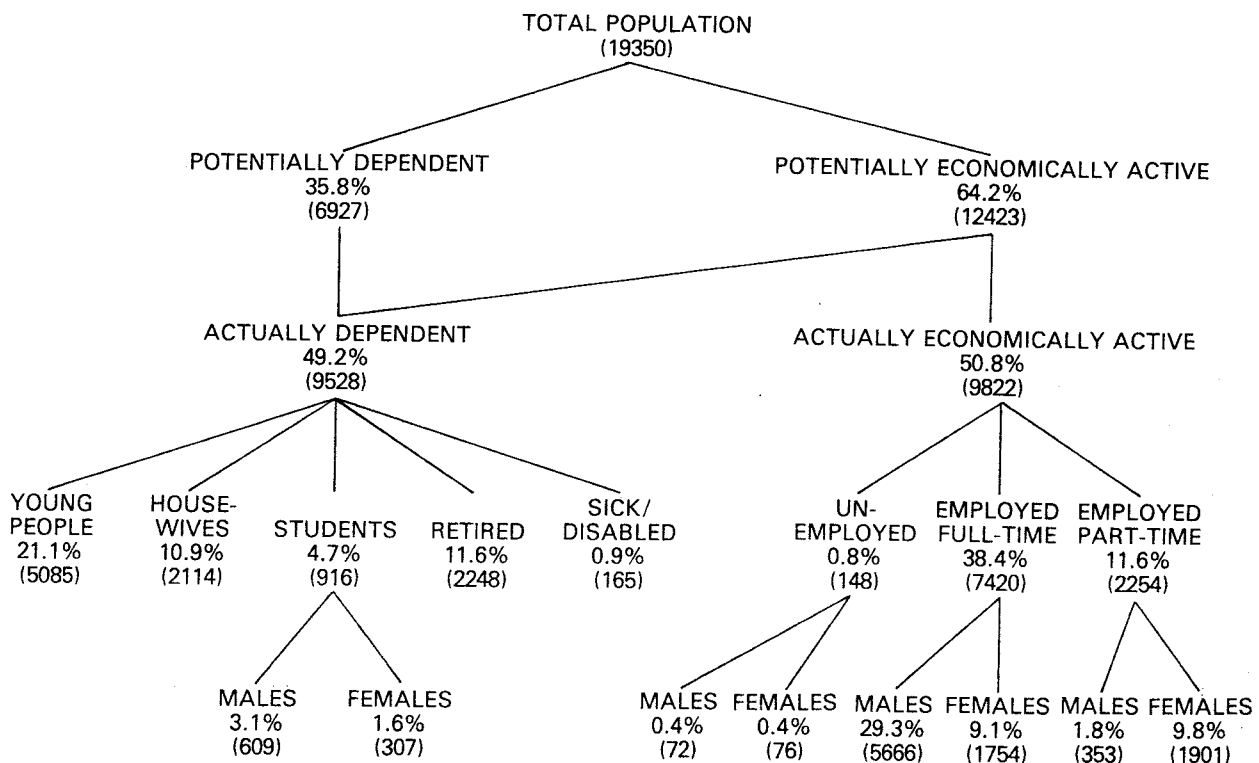
Potentially, 64.2% of the population could be economically active: potentially economically active people being defined as all men aged 16 to 65 years and all women aged 16 to 60 years (i.e. people from school leaving age to retirement age respectively for men and women). This implies that 35.8% of the population are potentially dependent. However, the survey found that only 50.8% of Redbridge Jews were actually involved in economic activity, and that the proportion of dependents was therefore higher, at 49.2%.

Since some of the people working are over retirement age, the reason for the difference between

the potential and actual economically active or dependent populations cannot be traced to any one particular source. However, the major cause of this difference lies with those groups who do not go outside the home to work, i.e. housewives, students, and to a much lesser extent, those who have retired (the majority of retired people being subject to institutional rules which enforce retirement at the generally accepted ages of 65 years for men and 60 years for women). Thus among Redbridge Jewry, this difference amounting to 13.4% of the total population is more than accounted for by housewives who compose 10.9% of the population, and by students over 16 years of age at 4.7%.

Both housewives and students will be discussed in more detail in the next section, but it is interesting to trace their probable impact on the age structure of the EAP. Table 1 is a comparison of the age distribution of three EAPs: Redbridge Jewry, the Suburban Outer or 'B' Boroughs, which include the Borough of Redbridge, and Greater London as a whole. In the top row the proportionately lower percentage of young Redbridge Jews under the age of 24 years who are working, is a function of the number of students, both at school and at other educational institutions among the Redbridge Jewish population. Furthermore, the proportionately lower percentage of Jews between the ages of 20 and 44 years who are working, can be ascribed to the higher than average proportion of housewives in the population, who constitute 26.7% of all Jewish women aged 16 years and over.

FIGURE 1. ECONOMIC ACTIVITY AND EMPLOYMENT STATUS OF REDBRIDGE JEWRY 1978





**Table 1**  
**A Comparison of the Age Distribution of Economically Active Populations by Percentage**

Age Group	Redbridge Jewry 1978	All Outer London Boroughs 1971 <sup>1</sup>	Greater London 1971 <sup>2</sup>
15-19*	5.7	6.9	7.1
20-24	10.9	12.8	13.4
25-34	17.9	18.5	19.1
35-44	17.5	18.6	18.1
45-59	34.9	31.4	30.5
60-64	9.2	7.9	7.7
65+	3.9	3.9	4.1

\*Redbridge Jewry figures are calculated for 16-19 following the raising in 1974 of the school leaving age from 15 to 16 years.

Ultimately, it could be said that the number of economically active people in a population will depend on three factors: the size of the potential EAP, its age structure, and the age-specific activity rates. How do these three factors operate in Redbridge Jewry, and how do they compare to other populations? For the sake of comparison with a comprehensive study of Greater London's EAP, the potential EAP will be redefined as all people over the age of 15 years, thus including retirement pensioners.

The general trend in Greater London in the period 1961-71 was a decrease of 5.7% in the size of the potential EAP because of changes in the age structure. While there are no figures for a pre-1978 comparison of Redbridge Jewry, it is probable that because of the relative youth of the Jewish population, this factor did not apply. A comparison of the age structure of the potential EAPs in Table 2, shows that the percentage of Jewish young people under the age of 24 years is less than that for Greater London and Great Britain. However, the percentage of people between the ages of 45 and 64 years is very much greater than those in the other two populations. It must be remembered that the Redbridge figures are for 1978, whilst the others are for 1971. Thus, shifting the percentage age distribution of Redbridge Jewry back one cohort (10 years) it appears quite probable that the size of the potential Jewish EAP increased during the 1970s. However, the present age distribution does indicate that this will not be the trend in the future. In the next 10 years 28% of the population representing the cohort aged 45-59 years, which has by far the highest proportion of the potential Jewish EAP will be retiring or approaching retirement age. Thus, the potential EAP of Redbridge Jewry will begin to follow Greater London and national trends downwards. It may be remembered that a similar time lag was found in the Jewish age structure trends when compared with those of the London Borough of Redbridge in the previous demographic study.<sup>3</sup>

A direct comparison of the populations in Table 2, highlights other interesting points. The relatively

**Table 2**  
**A Comparison of the Age Distribution of Potential Economically Active Population by Percentage**

Age Group	Redbridge Jewry 1978	Greater London 1971 <sup>4</sup>	Great Britain 1971 <sup>5</sup>
15-19*	8.4	8.2	9.0
20-24	8.9	11.2	10.0
25-34	16.7	16.7	16.3
35-44	14.5	14.7	15.4
45-59	28.0	24.6	24.2
60-64	9.5	8.0	7.6
65+	14.0	16.6	17.4
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0

\*Redbridge Jewry figures are calculated for 16-19, following the raising in 1974 of the school leaving age from 15 to 16 years.

high percentage of people aged 20-24 years in Greater London at 11.2% is reflective of the large floating population of young adults in the Metropolis. The figures would suggest however, that these young people are concentrated in the Inner London Boroughs, and not outer suburban boroughs like Redbridge.

While the proportion of Jewish people between the ages of 45-64 years is much greater than in the other two populations, the relative youth of the Redbridge Jewish population is apparent with only 14% of the potential EAP, aged over 65 years. However, a comparison of the cohorts aged 25-44 years shows a surprising similarity in all populations.

**Table 3**  
**A Comparison of Age Specific Activity Rates**

Age Group	Redbridge Jewry 1978	All Outer London Boroughs 1971 <sup>6</sup>	Greater London 1971 <sup>7</sup>
15-19*	43.4	54.5	56.3
20-24	78.5	80.0	78.3
25-34	68.8	73.6	74.8
35-44	77.0	79.3	80.1
45-59	79.8	80.2	81.1
60-64	61.9	62.3	63.6
65+	18.0	14.9	16.3
Total	64.0	64.5	65.4
		(Redbridge Borough 63.2)	

\*Redbridge Jewry figures are calculated for 16-19, following the raising in 1974 of the school leaving age from 15 to 16 years.

The age specific activity rates for the Redbridge Jews in Table 3 corroborate the trends found in Table 1. The relatively low rates for the 15-19 years cohort implies that more Jews stay on at school after 16 years, and possibly also that there are more students in this age group. The activity rate rises more sharply, to 78.5%, over the next five year

cohort compared with the other populations. However, the figure is indicative of the other feature suggested by Table 1 — the number of women not involved in economic activity. This feature becomes more apparent over the next age cohort, 25-34 years, when the activity rate drops to 68.8%, reflecting the departure from the workforce of newly married women about to start their families. After the age of 35 years, Jewish activity rates return to the upper seventies level, and remain there until the retirement age for women, whereafter, as expected, it drops. A feature which was not reflected in Table 1, shows up in a comparison of activity rates after the age of 65 years (Table 3). Redbridge Jews have a higher activity rate after the official retirement age for men, particularly in comparison with other outer London suburban boroughs. This is indicative of a greater traditional independence of London Jews in the occupational structure through self employment, a

characteristic which will be discussed in the following sections.

In the next two sections, the dependent and economically active populations of the Redbridge Jews will be examined in more detail.

#### Notes

1. M. Balint, *Greater London's Economically Active Population*, Greater London Council, RM 441, 1975, p.11.
2. *Ibid.*, p.7.
3. B. A. Kosmin, C. Levy & P. Wigodsky, *The Social Demography of Redbridge Jewry*, London, Board of Deputies, 1979, p.13.
4. M. Balint, p.6.
5. *Ibid.*, p.22.
6. *Ibid.*, p.10.
7. *Ibid.*, p.8.

## Chapter II

# THE DEPENDENT POPULATION

Nearly half of all Redbridge Jews are economically dependent as Table 4 shows. The actual composition of this dependent population highlights the relative youth of the population as a whole, with children under 16 years accounting for the largest proportion (42.9%) and retired people and housewives each accounting for only approximately half of this. The next most important category are students, with the sick or disabled comprising the smallest component.

**Table 4**  
**THE DEPENDENT POPULATION AMONG REDBRIDGE JEWRY, 1978**

Category	As a Percentage of all Dependents	As a Percentage of the Total Population
Children under 16 years	42.9	21.1
Students	9.6	4.7
Housewives	22.2	10.9
Sick/Disabled persons	1.7	0.9
Retired people	23.6	11.6
	100.0	49.2

In comparison with other Jewish populations on which studies have been undertaken, a dependency ratio of .492 is relatively low (see Table 5). The very high dependency ratio for Sheffield Jewry reflected the relative agedness of that population. In Hackney the high ratio was reflective of the mix of that population which comprised a large proportion of both the old and the young. These characteristics were clearly illustrated in the comparison of the age-sex pyramids of these three populations in the previous demographic study<sup>1</sup>. The dependency ratio for Redbridge Jewry is closest to that for Jews in Edgware in 1963<sup>2</sup>. Although many similarities can be drawn between these two outer London areas, the individual circumstances are clearly different when allowance is made for those age-structure factors which determine the size of the young and elderly sub-groups among the dependent population.

**Table 5**  
**THE DEPENDENCY RATIO IN FOUR LOCAL JEWISH POPULATIONS**

Redbridge Jewry	Sheffield Jewry	Hackney Jewry	Edgware Jewry
1978	1975	1971	1963
.492	.610	.555	.489

### Housewives

The difference between Edgware in the early sixties and Redbridge in the late seventies is highlighted in a comparison of women involved in economic activity between the two populations. In Edgware only 22.3% of women were economically active, in comparison with 38% in Redbridge. This would imply that amongst other things, housewives formed

a much larger proportion of the dependents among Edgware Jewry in 1963, than they do among Redbridge Jews in 1978. The relative economic well-being and the prevailing attitudes to working married women 15 years ago, were both important contributing factors in this situation. Table 6 demonstrates the prevailing attitudes in Redbridge in 1978. When married women were asked 'why don't you go out to work?' it was found that reasons concerned with social status or opposition from husbands no longer played an important role in dictating these women's actions. The lack of perceived economic well-being is shown by the low proportion of women who feel that they have no financial need to supplement the household income.

**Table 6**  
**Housewives Reasons for not Working by Percentage (n = 143)**

Want leisure time	3
Prefer to work at home	9
Do voluntary work	4
Have no financial need	11
Social/status reasons	1
Wish to look after children	55
No adequate facilities for nursery etc.	2
Husband against it	5
Other	10

The majority of housewives are mothers whose prime motive for staying at home is to look after their children. However, when correlated with educational qualifications, it was found that this reason was more common amongst educationally unqualified women. It is thus possible that this reason in part is a rationalization of their poor bargaining position in the labour market, in that their earnings would be unlikely to offset the costs incurred by hiring people to take on their functions in the family and home.

The impact of the change affecting working women over the last 15 years are partly reflected in a closer examination of the age characteristics of Redbridge Jewish housewives. From Figure 2 it can be seen that by far the largest proportion of housewives (22.7%) are between the ages of 25 and 29 years, the age by which they are likely to have all or most of their children. They represent 61.6% of all women in that age cohort. The lack of teenage marriages in Redbridge accounts for the omission of housewives under 20 years. The proportion of housewives drops sharply between the ages of 30 and 34 years as many women return to the workforce, largely on a part-time basis, a fact which will be discussed in more detail in the next section. The percentage of housewives in this age cohort for women now drops to 49%. After the age of 35 years, the overall number of housewives drops slightly and then stabilizes until the retiring age for women at 60 years. However, the number of housewives as a percentage of the number of women in each five-year cohort after the age of 35 years, declines until age 55. Thus between the age of 35 and 39 years, 52.4% of women in that cohort are housewives, a figure which falls to 39% in the next two cohorts. Women aged

50-54 are less likely to be housewives than any other cohort, except those under 25 years. This implies that two-thirds of women between the ages of 40 and 54 are involved in some kind of economic activity. Thus the tendency for women to enter the workforce over the last 15 years appears to have affected those forty plus. An added dimension is brought out when one sees that despite the high dependency ratio of

Hackney Jews, the proportion of housewives was similar to that for Redbridge. This is not only a function of the unique age-structure in Hackney, as previously mentioned, but is also reflective of the range of opportunities which exist in a metropolis like London for women in both populations to work, either through necessity or choice.

FIGURE 2

AGE DISTRIBUTION OF HOUSEWIVES AMONG FEMALES AGED 20 TO 59 YEARS, REDBRIDGE JEWRY, 1978

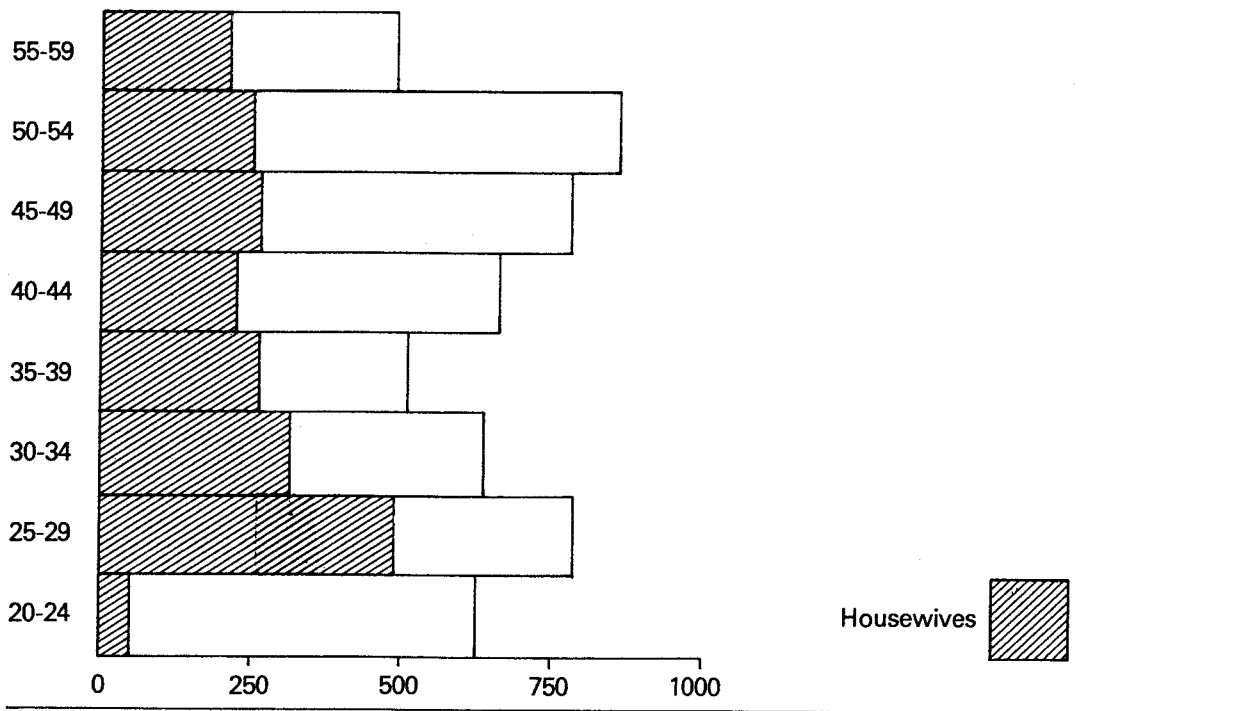
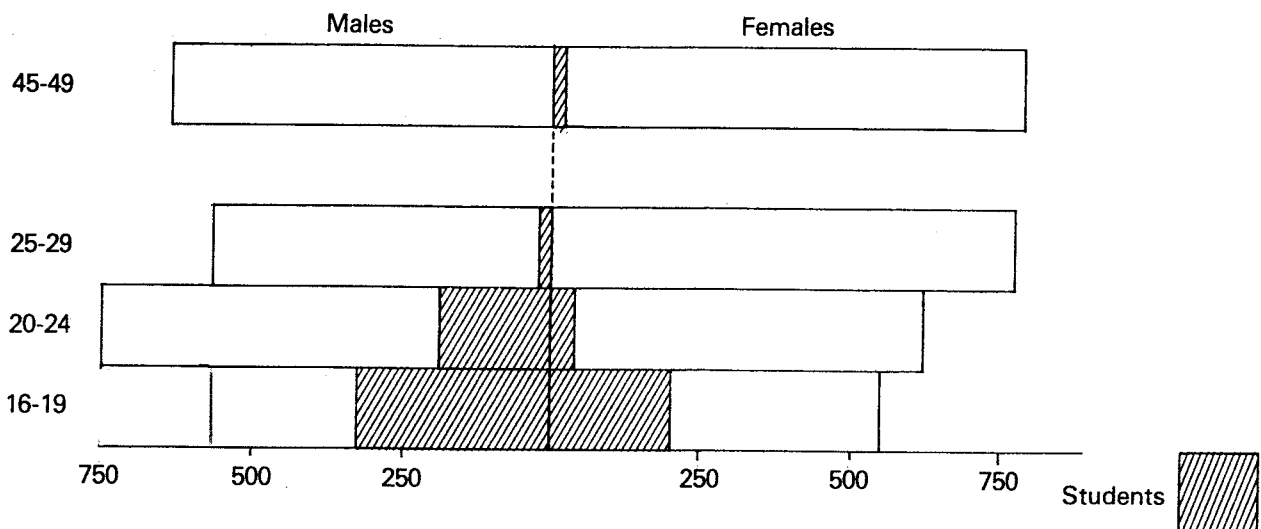


FIGURE 3

AGE DISTRIBUTION OF THE STUDENT POPULATION, REDBRIDGE JEWRY, 1978



## Students

Closely linked to all these trends is education, and while this will be discussed in more detail later, it is interesting to look at the age-sex structure of the students above the school leaving age of 16 years, who form 9.6% of the dependent population. As Figure 3 shows, 66.5% of them are male and only 33.5% are female. This reflects particular attitudes and priorities about the education of young males and females and the kind of jobs considered appropriate or accessible to each. Not surprisingly, the majority of students, 71.7% are between the ages of 16 and 19 years, representing 48.8% of young people in that age group. This figure drops sharply for the next five year cohort to 25.4% of all students, representing only 17.1% of that age cohort. Although the percentage drop is approximately the same for both males and females, there is a wide discrepancy between the sexes. This gender disparity is further highlighted in a comparison of the percentage that each comprises of their age group. 25% of males between the ages of 20 and 24 years are involved in some kind of further or higher education, while this figure is only 7.7% for females in the same cohort. As expected, only 2.8% of students are over the age of 25 years. The interesting fact is that half are men between the ages of 25 and 29 years, and half are women between the ages of 45 to 49 years. The latter fact is compatible with the known increasing desire for women to be involved in more activities out of the home, particularly as their children become older and more independent. While some women return to the workforce others decide to further their studies either for personal fulfilment or to upgrade their work skills, but both groups reduce the housewife population.

## Sick and Disabled

The percentage of all dependents who are sick or disabled at 1.7% is very small, and as such does not have any great impact on the size of the dependent population. However, on closer examination it was found that as a percentage of EAP, the proportion of sick or disabled was twice as large for Redbridge Jews compared to the Borough as a whole and all the Outer London Boroughs, and a third greater than that for Greater London (Table 7).

Table 7

**A COMPARISON OF THE NUMBER OF SICK BY SEX AS A PERCENTAGE OF THE TOTAL ECONOMICALLY ACTIVE POPULATION**

	Males	Females	Total
Redbridge Jewry 1978	1.9	1.4	1.7
Redbridge Borough 1971	0.8	1.0	0.8
Outer London Boroughs 1971	0.7	0.9	0.8
Greater London 1971	1.0	1.1	1.1

This table shows that proportionately more men are sick/disabled than women among Redbridge Jews than in comparison to other populations. Although there is no obvious reason for the higher morbidity rate, the latter gender bias may reflect the impact of the pressures and tensions of the stressful occupations in which a large proportion of Jewish men are involved. (This will be discussed in a later chapter). This is borne out by the strikingly different age-sex distributions of the sick among the EAP of Redbridge Jews and the EAP in Greater London in Table 8. In Greater London the sick are distributed through every age-group, the number and proportion rising with age. In contrast, among Redbridge Jews, the sick are concentrated after the age of 35 years, with the proportion of Jewish sick men over the age of 60 years almost double that for Greater London. Even allowing for some definitional inconsistencies, this situation has important implications for the Jewish welfare agencies operating in Redbridge, and their efficient operation in the interests of the community, and needs further investigation. This is especially pertinent in the light of the high ratio of widows and widowers and the lower male life expectancy which was suggested by the demographic study.<sup>3</sup>

Table 8

**A COMPARISON OF THE NUMBER OF SICK AS A PERCENTAGE OF THE TOTAL ECONOMICALLY ACTIVE POPULATION BY AGE AND SEX**

	15-19	20-24	25-34	35-44	45-59	60+	Total
<i>Redbridge Jewry</i>							
Males	—	—	—	2.3	2.4	6.5	1.9
Females	—	—	—	—	3.9	—	1.4
Total	—	—	—	1.4	2.9	4.4	1.7
<i>Gt. London 1971</i>							
Males	0.5	0.5	0.7	0.9	1.3	3.3	1.0
Females	0.8	0.7	1.0	1.1	1.5	1.8	1.1
Total	0.7	0.6	0.8	1.0	1.4	2.9	1.1

The age structure of the Redbridge Jewish population suggests that in the next 15 years the size and structure of the dependent population will change and this will most affect the two biggest categories of the dependent population, the young and the retired. Because of the bulges in the age-sex structure, the proportion of retired people will rise while the proportion of children under 16 years will fall. Despite steady trends in the past, the least predictable group in the dependent population are the housewives, whose numbers over the next 15 years will depend on a mesh of socio-economic and cultural factors.

## Notes

1. *The Social Demography of Redbridge Jewry*, p.12.
2. E. Kraus 'The Edgware Survey: Occupation and Social Class', *The Jewish Journal of Sociology*, XI (1969), 76
3. *The Social Demography of Redbridge Jewry*, p.20.

# Chapter III

## THE ECONOMICALLY ACTIVE POPULATION

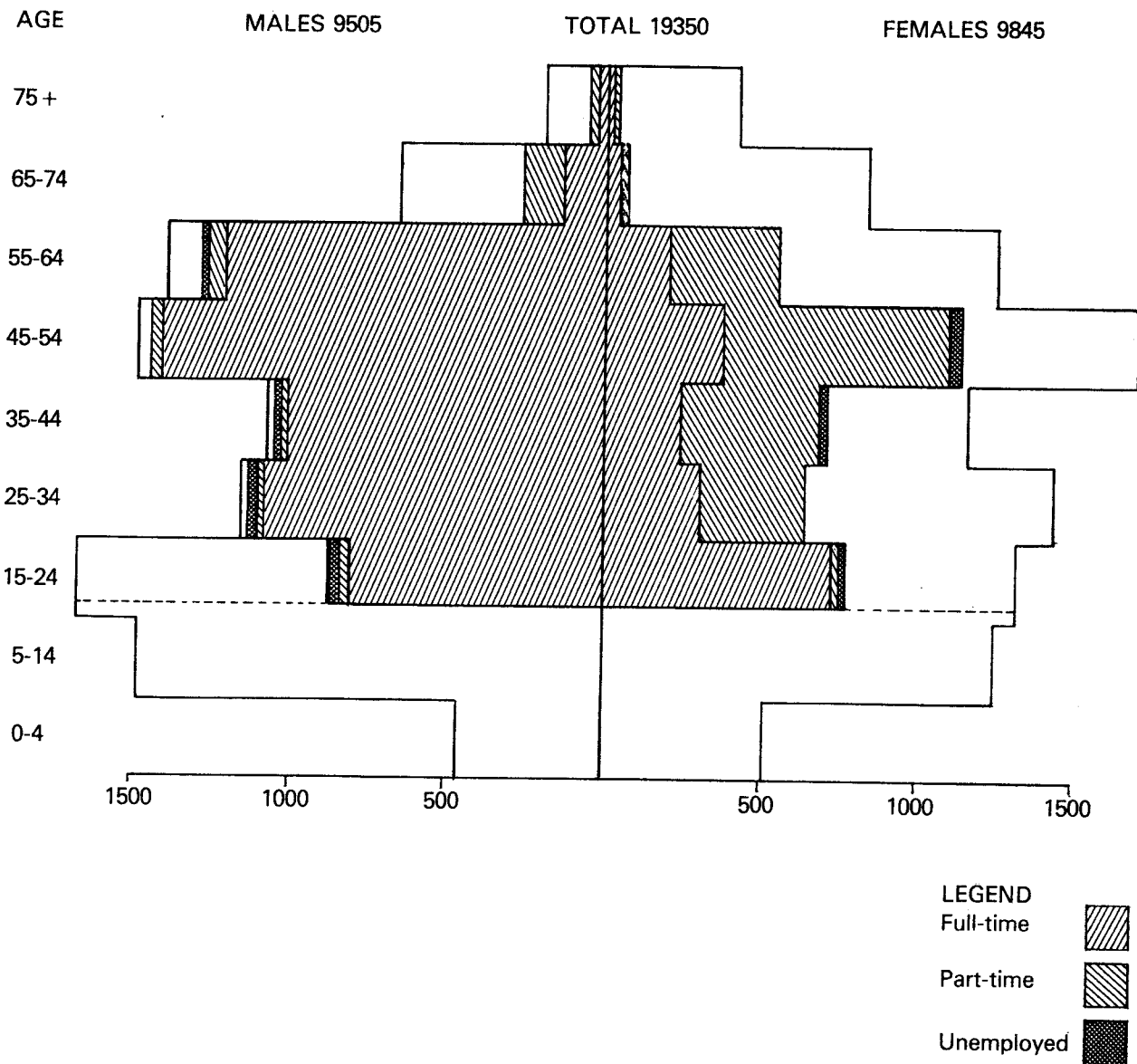
The way the 50.8% of Redbridge Jewry who were economically active are distributed within the age-sex pyramid of the total population is shown in Figure 4. Certain patterns are immediately apparent from this. Firstly, the majority of the EAP are involved in full-time employment. 75.6% of economically active Redbridge Jews were working full-time, 22.9% working part-time, and 1.5% were unemployed. Secondly, by far the largest proportion of full-time work is taken up by males. Thirdly, there is a concentration of part-time work among women. More significantly, and in contrast to their men, economically active women among Redbridge Jews are distributed almost evenly between full-time and part-time work, with 47% involved in the former, and 51% in the latter.

**Table 9**

### EMPLOYMENT STATUS BY SEX IN THE EAP REDBRIDGE JEWRY, 1978

	<i>As a % of EAP</i>	<i>As a % of EA Men/Women</i>	<i>As a % of all Men/Women</i>
<i>Full-time</i>			
Males	57.7	93.0	76.6
Females	17.9	47.0	22.3
<i>Part-time</i>			
Males	3.6	5.8	4.8
Females	19.3	51.0	24.1
<i>Unemployed</i>			
Males	0.7	1.2	1.0
Females	0.8	2.0	1.0

**FIGURE 4**  
DISTRIBUTION OF THE ECONOMICALLY ACTIVE POPULATION (EAP) WITHIN THE POPULATION PYRAMID OF REDBRIDGE JEWRY 1978



Finally, unemployment seems to be relatively low, but concentrated in certain age groups. Table 9 shows that while as a proportion of the EAP it is approximately the same for both men and women, as a proportion of economically active men and women respectively, it is almost double for women. The following paragraphs consider the three types of employment status in the EAP in more detail.

### *Full-time Workers*

Figure 4 shows the age-sex distributions of Redbridge Jews who work in full-time employment. As was noted earlier, the majority, 76.4%, are men, but despite their small proportion, the age distribution of women involved in full-time work has a marked effect on the distribution of all full-time workers.

The low proportion of people working full-time between the ages of 16 and 19 years, at 6.7% is to be expected, given the proportion of students in this category. In this cohort, full-time workers are distributed almost evenly between the sexes, at 3.4% for men and 3.3% for women. However, this masks the interesting point that age-specific activity rates for this cohort can reveal that 10% more women between the ages of 16 and 19 years work full-time, than do men of the same age. The trend is continued into the next five-year cohort, not only corroborating the discussion on male and female students in the previous section, but also suggesting a new element; that women in these two young adult cohorts are 'subsidising' the education of men of the same age, becoming household earners while brothers or husbands (the latter is less likely in this context) study. In addition to this, the 20 to 24 years age cohort is significant because it represents the highest proportion of full-time workers, at 13.9%. This is not only attributable to the entry into the full-time workforce of the majority of young men at this age. This cohort also contains the highest concentration of women in full-time work.

As women marry and begin their families, they leave full-time employment. This trend is reflected in the drop of nearly a third in the proportion of full-time working women between the ages of 25 and 29 years from the peak in the previous cohort. There is a concomitant drop in the female age specific activity rates in these cohorts from 76.9% to 24.7%.

After the age of 30 years, the women's role in the full-time workforce stabilizes and the fluctuation in the distribution of full-time workers over the next four age cohorts are due essentially to the male age-distribution, as the age-specific activity rates for men in these cohorts are consistently over the 90% level, while those for women approximate the 15% level.

The second highest concentration of full-time workers, 13.4% and 10.2% occurs in respectively the 50 to 54 years and 55 to 59 year cohorts. This is due to two factors. The first is the re-entry into the full-time workforce of women, though not to their previously high level; this is reflected in the female activity rates for both cohorts which rise to just over 22%, and in the rise in the proportion of female full-time workers in both cohorts.

The second factor is, as explained above, due to the male age distribution, resulting in the highest proportion of male full-time workers (10.7% and 8.8%) being concentrated in these two cohorts.

As retirement ages for men and women are reached, involvement in full-time work drops off, as do activity rates. It is interesting to note, however, that the activity rate for men over the retirement age in full-time employment is at approximately the same level as that for the majority of the female cohorts.

### *Part-time Workers*

Part-time work is by far the most important source of employment for Jewish women in the London Borough of Redbridge. As was noted earlier, women account for 84.3% of the part-time workforce. Moreover, the age distribution of part-time workers also largely reflects the changing participation of women in economic activity, according to the changing demands of their family's life cycle.

The proportion of part-time workers between the ages of 16 and 24 years is at its lowest, as are the activity rates for these age cohorts. It seems reasonable to assume that these jobs are taken up largely by persons combining study with work or school leavers awaiting a full-time job. The proportion of part-time workers between the ages 25 and 29 rises to 5.1% of whom the vast majority are women. The activity rate of the cohort rises from 0.9% in the previous one to 8.5%. More revealing is the difference between the activity rates for men and women aged 25-29 years which is 11.6% for women and only 4.3% for men. This marks the beginning of the movement of women into the part-time workforce, the majority of whom at this stage are either newly married and are working until they have their first child, or are returning to work in a part-time capacity after having started families. This trend continues, as the proportion of part-time workers between the ages of 30 and 34 years doubles, and women now constitute 94% of this age group. This is reflected in the part-time activity rates of the cohort, as the male rate drops to 2.3% while the female rate rises sharply to 35.9%.

Between the ages of 35 and 39 years the cohort's proportion of all part-time workers drops to 6.8%, due largely to the fall in the number of women. There are two possible and inter-related reasons for this. Firstly, this cohort accounts for the smallest proportion of women below the age of 70 years in the age distribution of Redbridge women. Thus, despite the drop by almost half in the proportion of female part-time workers in the cohort, the female activity rate only falls to 28.5%. Secondly, the increasing demands of a growing family at this stage of the family life cycle probably result in some women foregoing their jobs to spend more time in their home.

However, as their children become more independent, women return to the part-time workforce and the three cohorts between the ages of 40 and 54 years account for the highest proportion of part-time workers at 14.1%, 16.1% and 17.6% respectively, by far the largest majority of whom are women. There is

a concomitant rise in the female activity rates to 48.2%, 46.4% and 41.3% respectively, the highest activity rates for all economically active women over the age of 24 years. Male part-time workers in the first two of these cohorts are noticeably absent, but the proportion rises to its highest yet, for men between the age of 50 and 54 years.

The proportion of part-time workers and the activity rates decline sharply over the next five-year cohort. The drop is solely due to part-time workers leaving the workforce, as activity rates for full-time workers in this age cohort remain constant, indicating no shift from full-time to part-time work in this more aged section of the population. The reason for this decline is not absolutely clear, as the proportion of part-time workers almost doubles for the next cohort to 12.8%. Significantly, women between the ages of 60 and 64 years again constitute nearly all these part-timers. A large proportion of these women are likely to be full-time workers who having reached retirement age, prefer to continue working on a part-time basis, rather than give up work altogether. This is certainly true of men over the age of 65 years who constitute 8.1% of the part-time workforce, the highest proportion of men working part-time in any male age cohort. The activity rate for part-time men over the age of 65 years also rises to its highest level at 21.3%, higher than the activity rate for full-time economically active men of the same age.

These tendencies in the part-time workforce of Redbridge Jewry reflect trends in the wider population as a recent OPCS study of older workers in retirement indicates. 'A two to one majority of all the workers interviewed said that they would like to taper off their hours rather than retire suddenly from full-time work to none at all, and over half of the retired wished they had been able to do so gradually.'<sup>1</sup> In a Jewish population in which the work ethic is supposed to be so important, it is not surprising to find that over a third of retired Jewish men, and 17.4% of retired Jewish women are involved in some economic activity. Table 10 shows that this trend has been noticeable in the Jewish communities of Sheffield and Hackney as well, which have also been a subject of study over the last decade.

**Table 10**

**A COMPARISON OF ECONOMICALLY ACTIVE RETIRED JEWISH PEOPLE**

	<i>Redbridge</i> 1978	<i>Sheffield</i> 1975	<i>Hackney</i> 1971
Working men over 65 years as a % of retired men	37.4	37.0	34.0
Working women over 60 years as % of retired women	17.4	10.0	18.0

**Table 11**

**NUMBER OF UNEMPLOYED AS A PERCENTAGE OF THE TOTAL ECONOMICALLY ACTIVE POPULATION FOR EACH SEX**

	<i>Males</i>	<i>Females</i>	<i>Total</i>
Redbridge Jewry 1978	1.2	2.0	1.5
Redbridge Borough 1971	2.6	2.8	2.6
Greater London 1971	3.7	3.4	3.6

*Unemployment*

As stated earlier, unemployment among Redbridge Jewry in 1978 was relatively low. Table 11 compares the 1978 rates of unemployment among economically active Redbridge Jews, with those of Redbridge Borough and Greater London, both at 1971 levels. In the deteriorating economic climate of the 1970s, the unemployment rate nationally jumped from 4.2% in 1972 to 6.4% in 1976, highlighting the low rates of the more recent Redbridge Jewish unemployment figures. Moreover, there are two other noticeably different characteristics among the unemployed in this population.

Firstly, unemployment among Redbridge Jewish women, at 2% of the EAP, is almost double that for the men which stands at 1.2%. As Table 11 shows, unemployment rates for men and women in the Borough as a whole and for Greater London are approximately the same. Whether this is a characteristic peculiar to Redbridge Jewry and linked to Jewish women's movement in and out of employment, or whether it reflects a more general trend in the British economy, is difficult to establish.

Secondly, as Figure 4 shows, unemployment is concentrated in certain age groups, this contrasts with the more even spread in the age distribution of the unemployed among the 1971 EAP in Greater London. The highest proportion of unemployed in any age group in the Redbridge Jewish EAP is the 11.9% of young men between the ages of 15 and 19 years, which corresponds to the well documented general trend of severe unemployment for young male school leavers in recent years. In fact, this relates to only a handful of youngsters in the survey since the majority of Jewish boys remain students. Of course it might be that prolonged education is actually a defence against youth unemployment. However, whatever the situation among school leavers, male unemployment between the ages of 20 and 34 years falls to zero, while unemployment among young men in Greater London continues. These two cohorts (20-34) are also significant with respect to women, as it marks the beginning of a relatively low, but consistent rate of unemployment amongst women till retirement age, the highest proportion occurring among women aged between 20 and 24 years, at 4.7%. This would indicate that while there is a general desire of women, the majority of whom have families, to work, appropriate work



opportunities, presumably of a local and part-time nature, are not always readily available.

Unemployment rises for men between the ages of 35 and 44 years, and can perhaps be ascribed largely to mid-career changes. The marked absence of unemployed people of both sexes over the age of 59 years, is in contrast to the figures for Greater London and raises an interesting issue. It may be remembered that the distribution of sick people among Redbridge Jews are concentrated in this age group, particularly for men. This could suggest that elderly Redbridge Jews prefer to classify themselves as sick rather than unemployed, for social and cultural reasons, or more probably for practical purposes regarding social security benefits. The latter is particularly preferential for the self-employed who are very much over-represented among older Jewish men.

It is very likely that the unemployment rate moved closer to the national norm by 1980. This is because the South-East region began to be affected more by the contemporary economic recession. Moreover, the particular and serious problems of the East London clothing trade<sup>2</sup> must have affected Redbridge Jewry more than most. Later chapters will show there was still a traditional bias towards male employment in small, and therefore vulnerable manufacturing, wholesale, and retail firms in the clothing industry.

#### *Notes*

1. *OPCS, Older Workers and Retirement*, London, HMSO, 1980.
2. See 'The Rag Trade in Tatters', *Jewish Chronicle*, 8.viii. 1980.

# Chapter IV EDUCATION AND QUALIFICATIONS

The educational qualifications of the Redbridge Jewish population are summarized in Table 12. To those who hold to a stereotype of Jews as highly educated and intellectual it may be surprising to find that over half the population, 54.6% have no academic qualifications. Most of these people received only a basic education in Secondary Modern and Elementary Schools in the East End of London. In fact, after the Secondary Modern (26.9%), the State Grammar Schools have been responsible for the education of the second highest proportion of Redbridge Jews. Unlike the Secondary Modern Schools, the selective State Grammar Schools have achieved a more evenly distributed level of academic qualifications. Approximately a third of all Redbridge Jews completing their education in Grammar Schools, have attained 'A' levels, a third 'O' levels, and a third no qualifications at all. This important role of State Grammar Schools in the higher academic qualifications of Redbridge Jewry will decrease as the Borough responds to the national policy of Comprehensive Education, and the local Grammar Schools are closed. By 1980 only two Grammar Schools with selective entry remained.

In summary then, less than half of all adult Redbridge Jews have any academic qualifications. Those with degrees are 6% of the population, a further 18.3% have 'A' level or its equivalent, and 17.4% have passed 'O' level. A further examination of educational qualifications in terms of age and sex, reveals large differences between the education of different generations, and between men and women. For instance, graduates compose 3.0% of those aged over 60, 6.0% of those aged 30-59, 9.0% of those aged 25-29, and 12.0% of those age 20-24. Female graduates were only found in significant numbers at ages 45-54 and 20-24.

Figure 5 analyses the academic qualifications of Redbridge Jewish men and women of different ages. The Figure reveals that older Redbridge Jews are less academically educated than younger Redbridge Jews.

Furthermore, qualifications are more evenly distributed among the younger groups who no longer reflect the two extremes of Matric/degree or nothing, found among the older age groups. The anomaly whereby those over 60 years are better educated than those between the ages of 50 to 59 years, arises

FIGURE 5

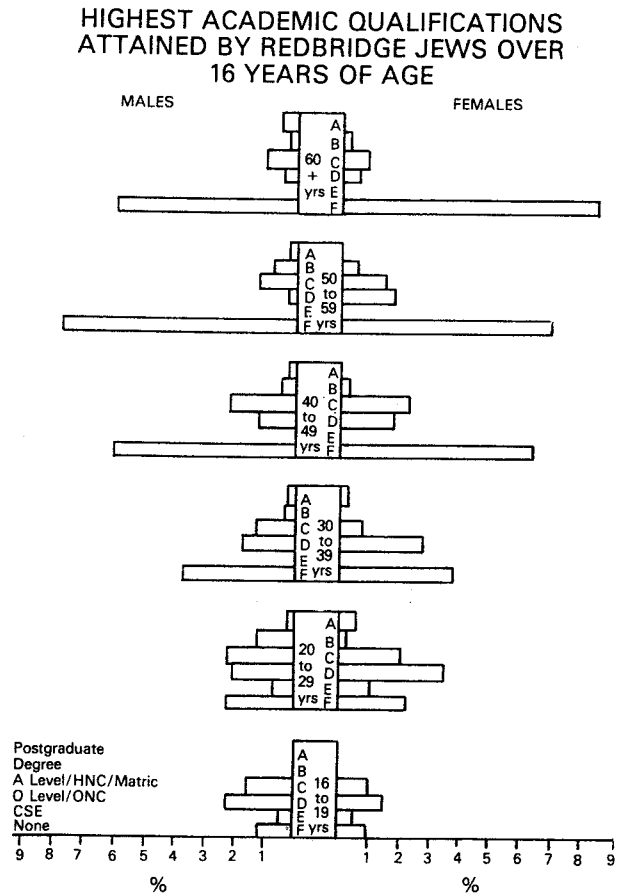


Table 12

## HIGHEST SECULAR EDUCATION BY ACADEMIC QUALIFICATION AMONG THE POPULATION OVER 16 YEARS<sup>1</sup> (n = 1051)

### HIGHEST ACADEMIC QUALIFICATIONS

	Postgraduate Degree	Degree	'A' Level/ HNC/ School Cert/ Matric	G.C.E. 'O' Level/ ONC	CSE	None	Total
<b>HIGHEST SECULAR EDUCATION</b>							
Poly/University	1.4	3.9	2.8	0.7	—	0.7	9.4
Art/Educ/FE College	0.2	0.5	3.5	3.1	0.5	1.3	9.1
State Grammar	—	—	7.4	7.9	0.5	7.5	23.5
Ind/Public/Private	—	—	1.0	0.8	0.1	1.3	3.2
Comprehensive	—	—	0.6	1.7	0.8	3.9	6.9
Secondary Modern	—	—	2.0	2.1	1.8	21.1	26.9
Technical	—	—	0.8	1.0	—	3.3	5.1
Elementary	—	—	0.2	0.1	—	15.5	15.8
<b>Total</b>	<b>1.6</b>	<b>4.4</b>	<b>18.3</b>	<b>17.4</b>	<b>3.7</b>	<b>54.6</b>	<b>100.0</b>

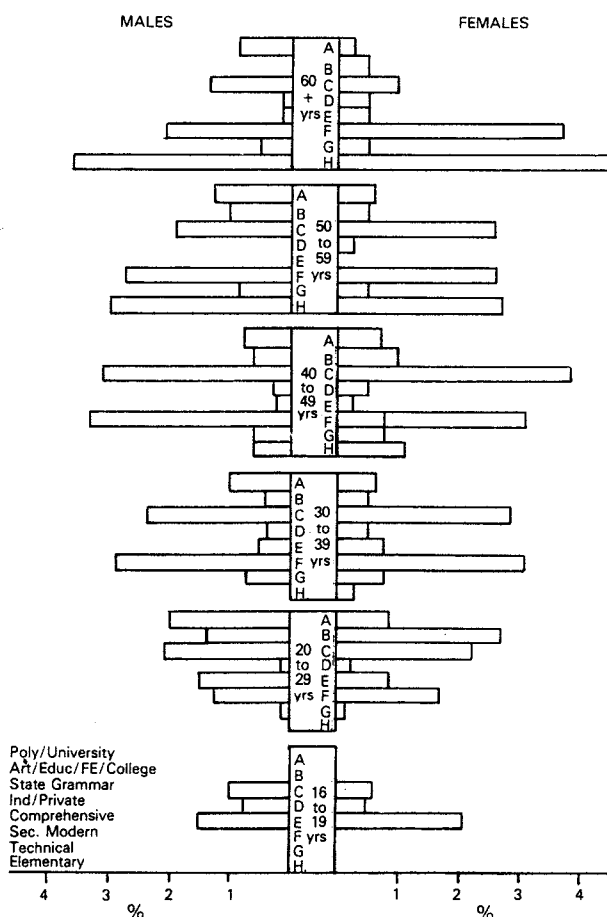
because of the disruption caused by the war. The majority of people in this age group lived in the East End and had their education interrupted by evacuation, or, particularly in the case of men, by military service. However, when comparing the education of men and women, Figure 5 shows that while differences between the two sexes are hardly noticeable for the older age groups when most had no qualifications, young Jewish men are better qualified than women.

Figure 6 shows the highest level of educational institution attended by Redbridge Jewish men and women of different ages. Since the majority of older men and women do not have qualifications, it is not surprising to find that most attended Elementary and Secondary Modern Schools. However, the strongest pattern to emerge is the dominance of males among those educated in Grammar and Independent Schools, and therefore not unexpectedly among those who went on to the Polytechnics and Universities.

This emphasis on the Redbridge Jewish man's education, seemingly at the expense of the Redbridge Jewish woman's, so apparent from Figures 5 and 6, can still be traced among the present population of

FIGURE 6

HIGHEST LEVEL OF EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTION ATTENDED BY REDBRIDGE JEWS OVER 16 YEARS



Redbridge Jewish students. Table 13 shows that over a third more males than females between the ages of 15 and 19 years are students. Furthermore, over the next five-year cohort, female student numbers decline much more dramatically than those of male students. Approximately 30.0% of student men continue with their studies after the age of 20, while only 15.0% of student women do the same. Moreover, only male students are found between the ages of 25 and 29 years.

Table 13

AGE-SPECIFIC RATES FOR PRESENT STUDENTS (OVER 16 YEARS) BY SEX

	16-19	20-24	25-29
Male students as a % of all males in each age group	69.4	20.8	2.2
Female students as a % of all females in each age group	48.8	8.0	—

Table 14 showing the academic qualifications of the present male and female students, indicates that although over two-thirds of students are male, the proportionate distribution of academic qualifications gained at the secondary level between male and female students respectively, is approximately the same. Only at the tertiary level do male students outstrip female students. One result arising from this is that all postgraduate students among this population are men.

Table 14

THE HIGHEST ACADEMIC QUALIFICATIONS OF PRESENT STUDENTS (OVER 16 YEARS) BY SEX

	Males	Females	Total
Degree	6.5	—	6.5
'A' Level/HNC	27.9	14.8	42.7
'O' Level/ONC	27.9	11.5	39.4
CSE	—	—	—
None	4.9	6.5	11.4
<b>Total</b>	<b>67.2</b>	<b>32.8</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Table 15 shows the educational institutions in which the present generation of nearly 1,000 Redbridge Jewish students are educated. They are obviously better at fitting males rather than females for degree-level education. The bias in comprehensive education is caused by the local education authority's earlier closure of the Grammar Schools for girls. However, the expectations of more male than female graduates are realised because four-fifths of current university students are men compared with a rate of 63.0% nationally. This higher educational investment in males is mirrored in the 80.0% of boys among the fee-paying pupils in the fifth and sixth forms of private schools.

**Table 15**

**PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION OF PRESENT STUDENTS BY EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTION AND SEX**

	<i>Males</i>	<i>Females</i>	<i>Total</i>
Poly/University	24.1	6.1	30.2
Art/Edu/FE College	7.6	6.1	13.7
State Grammar	19.7	3.0	22.7
Ind/Public/Private	6.1	1.5	7.6
Comprehensive	6.1	18.2	24.3
Secondary Modern	—	1.5	1.5
<b>Total</b>	<b>63.6</b>	<b>36.4</b>	<b>100.0</b>

In Chapter 2 we suggested that this emphasis on the education of young Redbridge Jewish males rather than females is not only achieved at the expense of female educational qualifications, but is also largely 'subsidized' by them, since women enter

the full-time workforce earlier. Subsequent chapters will explore the impact of this, as well as that of the general rise in the level of education among younger people on the kind of employment and career aspirations held by Redbridge Jews. The social implications for marriage patterns and the family structure of a relatively uneducated female Jewish population are less certain and worthy of separate study.<sup>2</sup>

*Notes*

1. Some apparent anomalies in Table 12 are due to the changed role of certain types of educational institution, such as the Polytechnic during the last few decades. Some people pursued vocational courses at Polytechnics without any formal educational qualifications. Some Open University students also do not hold the usual minimum university entry standard of G.C.E. 'A' level.
2. For instance, if the university is a major source of marriage partners, one implication is obvious, and that is that differential educational investment and attainment for Jewish males could be a major factor in the rate of out-marriage.

# Chapter V

## EMPLOYMENT AND INDUSTRY

### Self-Employment

One of the over-riding employment characteristics of the Redbridge Jews is a high degree of self-employment. It reflects a mesh of historical, social, religious and economic factors which resulted in a 'tradition of self-employment', which for Redbridge Jews has its roots in the conditions of the East End of London from where the majority of them or their parents originate.<sup>1</sup> Table 16 highlights this situation, showing that in 1978, 34.5% of EA Redbridge Jews were self-employed, in comparison to the 1971 national figure of 7.4%.

Table 16

#### EMPLOYMENT CATEGORY BY PERCENTAGE FOR REDBRIDGE JEWRY 1978 AND G.B. 1971

	Redbridge Jewry 1978		Gt. Britain 1971		
Self-employed No employees	17.7	} 34.5	Self-employed without employees	4.5	
Self-employed 1-25 employees	15.8		} 7.4		
Self-employed 25+ employees	1.0			Self-employed with employees	2.9
Paid employee	64.4		Employee	92.6	
Unpaid worker in family business	1.1				
Total	100.0			100.0	

In fact, the national figure probably had not changed very much by 1978, as the final report of the Royal Commission on the Distribution of Income and Wealth refers to a national (Great Britain) rate of self-employment of 7.2% in 1974-75.<sup>2</sup> The Commission also stated that self-employed people are more likely to own their own home (70% did) and to have a car (86% did). With home ownership at 93.5% and car ownership at 84.2% of the population, the self-employed among Redbridge Jewry are likely to have similar characteristics. However, comparing the Redbridge Jewish and national figures, Table 16 does reflect a divergence in the ratio of self-employed people without employees to those with them. The Redbridge Jewish self-employed are evenly distributed between the two, with a distinct bias to small firms (1-25 employees) in the latter. The national figures have a bias toward self-employed working on their own account i.e. these are 60.8% of the self-employed. Nevertheless the lack of large businesses demonstrates that Redbridge Jews are not a major group of capitalists.

The same tendency towards self-employment has been found in other Jewish populations in the U.K.: 66% of males in Edgware (1963), 21% in Hackney (1971)<sup>3</sup> and 44% in Sheffield (1975).<sup>4</sup>

Both the high level of self-employment and the distribution between types of self-employed establishments have to be taken into account in the industrial and occupational classification of the Redbridge Jewish EAP.

### Industrial Classification of Employment

Table 17 compares the distribution of employment by industry of the Redbridge Jewish EAP with that of Hackney Jews and the Redbridge Borough.<sup>5</sup> The distribution of the Redbridge and Hackney Jews between industrial sectors is very similar, the differences largely reflecting the differences in the age and socio-economic levels of the inner London and suburban Jewish populations. Thus, in Redbridge there are less people involved in manufacturing (20.3% to 25.1% in Hackney) and more in the Distribution and Service sector (65.1% to 57.5% in Hackney). The distribution of industrial employment among Redbridge Jews reflects in part the high level of self-employment among them, and when comparing it to the sector employment for the Borough as a whole, it is certainly a factor in the differences between them. Thus, Redbridge Jews are most highly concentrated in the Distribution and Services sector (65.1% to 48.6% for Redbridge Borough), with a low concentration in the Public Administration and Defence sector (2.8% to 6.2% for the Borough) where everyone is an employee.

The former bias is in line with national trends. While the low proportion of the workforce in government employment is contrary to national trends, it is in keeping with the traditional Jewish employment distribution in Britain.<sup>6</sup> It is not surprising that a population which reflects such a high degree of independence through self-employment would tend towards employment outside government bureaucracies. However, the way the official classification system operates does tend to over emphasise this bias. For instance, many Jewish health and medical staff are categorised under 'Services' and the one public service which employs some number of Jewish workers, the Postal Service, is classified as a 'utility'. It is the uniformed services, Whitehall, and the Town Hall — the police, armed forces, administrators and executive officers — rather than the health, educational or technical arms of the public service which are shunned by Redbridge Jews.

Table 17

#### A COMPARISON OF EMPLOYMENT BY INDUSTRY (PERCENTAGE)

	Redbridge Jewry 1978	Hackney Jewry 1971	Redbridge Borough 1971
Agriculture and Mining	—	—	0.2
Manufacture	20.3	25.1	28.1
Construction	1.0	3.5	5.4
Utilities & Transport	10.8	12.4	11.7
Distribution & Services	65.1	57.5	48.6
Public Admini- stration & Defence	2.8	1.5	6.2
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0

Table 18

**EMPLOYMENT CATEGORY BY INDUSTRY  
REDBRIDGE JEWRY 1978 (PERCENTAGE)**

	<i>Self-employed No employees</i>	<i>Self-employed 1-25 employees</i>	<i>Self-employed 25+ employees</i>	<i>Total Self-employed</i>	<i>Employee</i>	<i>Unpaid</i>
Manufacture	1.5	3.8	0.5	5.8	14.4	0.1
Construction	0.1	—	—	0.1	0.9	—
Utilities & Transport	6.9	0.9	—	7.8	3.0	—
Distribution & Services	9.2	11.1	0.5	20.8	43.3	1.0
Public Admin. & Defence	—	—	—	—	2.8	—
				<b>Total</b>	<b>64.4</b>	<b>1.1</b>

The lower proportion of the Jewish EAP in Manufacture and Construction is probably due to socio-economic factors other than the issue of self-employment, and will be discussed in the following chapters.

*Employment Categories and Types of Industry*

The relationship between self-employment and the distribution of industrial employment for Redbridge Jews is more clearly shown in Table 18. 20.8% out of the 34.5% self-employed are concentrated in the Distribution and Service sector, approximately evenly distributed between own account workers, the lone self-employed, and those with small firms. The large number of taxi drivers in the population accounts for the second highest concentration of self-employed people in the Utilities and Transport sector, at 7.8%. The Manufacturing sector constitutes only 5.8% out of the self-employed, the majority of whom run small firms in the clothing industry. Table 18 also shows that employees, accounting for 64.4% of the EAP, are also highly concentrated in the Distribution and Service sector, with Manufacture the second most important sector, but with only 14.4% out of all employees. Thus, the majority of Redbridge Jews do not work in large hierarchical firms or the public sector. In an economic recession, the self-employed are also in a particularly vulnerable financial position, even if their work situation allows more room for flexibility and adaptability, than do large hierarchical organisations.

*Gender Differences*

The most important employment differential between men and women is in the sphere of self-employment. Economically active Jewish men are 10 times more likely to be self-employed than their womenfolk. This factor can thus be added to the significant differential in part-time and full-time employment. These in turn affect the industrial

pattern. As it is by far the largest sector of Redbridge Jewish employment, it is not surprising that the highest concentration of both full-time and part-time workers is in the Distribution and Service sector. As Table 19 shows, full-time employment reflects the distribution of the total EAP by industry, while for part-time employment, the Distribution and Service sector is the single dominant sector. As the majority of part-time employment is taken up by women, it is also not surprising that Figure 7 shows that the majority of female employment is concentrated in this sector, and constitutes almost half of all employment (47%) in the sector. Figure 7 also shows that, not unexpectedly, the pattern of male industrial employment is largely a mirror image of that for full-time workers and for the EAP as a whole. The only sector in which more women than men work, is in Public Administration and Defence (2.0% to 0.9% of the EAP). There are substantially less women than men in Manufacture (3.7% to 16.5% of the EAP), and in Utilities and Transport (0.9% to 9.9%). The large difference in the latter is due to the high proportion of taxi drivers, which remains a male occupation.

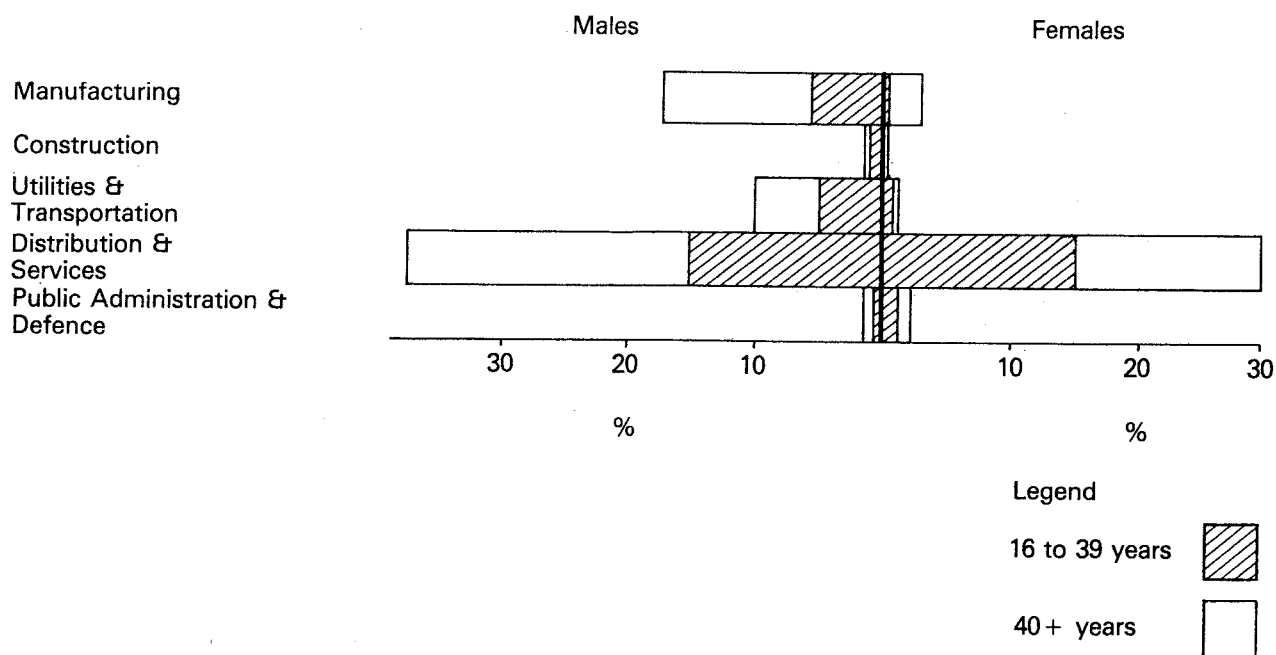
Table 19

**EMPLOYMENT STATUS BY INDUSTRY  
AMONG REDBRIDGE JEWRY 1978  
(PERCENTAGE)**

	<i>Full-time</i>	<i>Part-time</i>	<i>Total</i>
Manufacture	17.6	2.7	20.3
Construction	0.9	0.1	1.0
Utilities & Transport	10.2	0.6	10.8
Distribution & Services	47.4	17.7	65.1
Public Admin. & Defence	1.7	1.1	2.8
<b>Total</b>	<b>77.7</b>	<b>22.2</b>	<b>100.0</b>

FIGURE 7

SEX AND AGE DISTRIBUTION OF REDBRIDGE JEWS IN INDUSTRY, 1978



Age Factors

Figure 7 also gives a crude reflection of the age distribution of employment by industry, each sector having been divided into two age groups, 16 to 39 years, and over 40 years. Perhaps the most striking feature of this division is that fewer Redbridge Jews in the youngest age group, particularly women, are working in the Manufacturing sector. This is a sign of the changing socio-economic structure of the population, and its adaption to middle-class suburban norms. It probably also reflects the large scale decline of London as a manufacturing centre over the past two decades. Problems of definition apart, the fact that the public service still seems unattractive to young Jews is surprising. Their much better standard of education compared with the older generation should have opened up opportunities for them within a meritocratically based hierarchy. Moreover, the growth in secure and well paid public service jobs, particularly in local government, has been an important feature of recent years. However, the age distribution demonstrates that this younger population is increasingly concentrated in the Distribution and Service sector.

As far as self-employment is concerned, the younger age groups are moving away from this which would be in line with long term national trends. This is particularly true for women under 35 years and men under 25 years. Of course it may be that self-employment is related to time and experience in a job and that these people may go 'independent' later in their working lives.

Notes

1. B. A. Kosmin, 'Exclusion and Opportunity: traditions of work amongst British Jews', in S. Wallman, ed. *Ethnicity at Work*, London, Macmillan, 1979, p.36.
2. *Royal Commission on the Distribution of Income and Wealth*, Cmnd 7679, HMSO, 1979.
3. B. A. Kosmin and N. Grizzard, *Jews in an Inner London Borough*, London, Board of Deputies, 1975.
4. B. A. Kosmin, M. Bauer and N. Grizzard, *Steel City Jews*, London, Board of Deputies, 1976.
5. London Borough of Redbridge, Dept. of Planning & Development, *Redbridge Borough Plan — Employment*, London, 1977.

# Chapter VI OCCUPATIONS AND SOCIO-ECONOMIC GROUP (SEG)

## Heads of Household

Industrial classification which was the subject of the last chapter is determined without reference to the actual job or occupation of the EAP, but solely in terms of the business or economic activity in which the occupation is followed.

Table 20 now presents the most common occupations given by heads of households, the data relating to a mainly male, middle-aged sample. As expected, the theme of self-employment and a dominant Distribution and Service sector raised in previous sections, are apparent among the most popular occupations. The characteristically high number of taxi drivers among Redbridge Jews has been mentioned before, and as Table 20 shows, taxi driving is the occupational category accounting for the highest number of heads of household.<sup>1</sup> Another feature is the concentration in occupations linked to various sectors of the clothing industry.

Table 20

### MAIN OCCUPATIONS OF HEADS OF HOUSEHOLD (n = 293)

a) More than 2% .%	b) 1-2% %	c) Less than 1% %
Taxi drivers 10.7	Clerks 1.9	Catering jobs
Company directors (non-specific) 7.7	Wholesalers 1.7	Teachers (all female)
Office/factory managers 4.8	Medical practitioners 1.7	Computer jobs (1 consultant, 1 systems analyst, 1 data processor, 1 computer stock checker)
Shop workers (retail, wholesale) 4.3	Market traders 1.7	Chemicals (1 public analyst, 2 research chemists, 1 chemical engineer)
Retail shop owners 3.8	Poulterers & butchers 1.7	Pharmacists
Accountants 3.8	Printers/compositors 1.7	Dentists
Tailors/dressmakers 3.4	Secretaries (all female) 1.7	Solicitors
Sales representatives 2.6	Hairdressers 1.1	
	Opticians 1.1	
	Insurance (brokers, assessors etc.) 1.1	
	Jewellery trade 1.1	
	Pattern cutters 1.1	
Cumulative Percentage frequency	41.1	58.9
		66.9

Based on a classification of occupations and what is referred to in this study as employment category (referred to as 'employment status' in the Census definitions), socio-economic groups for the economically active population were defined for Censuses between 1951 and 1971. Brief definitions of the socio-economic groups (SEGs) appear in Table 21. The question of the relevance of such a classification, the intention of which is 'that each socio-economic group should contain people whose social, cultural and recreational standards are behaviour are similar'<sup>3</sup>, is certainly raised when considering the techniques as applied to Redbridge Jews, whom many would regard as a communal unit and with similar social origins and outlook. Its utility is even further questioned when applied to diverse Jewish populations on the basis of SEGs in Table 23.

Table 21

### BRIEF DEFINITIONS OF THE SOCIO-ECONOMIC GROUPS<sup>2</sup> (SEGs)

- (1) **Employers and managers in central and local government, industry, commerce, etc. — large establishments**
  - 1.1 Employers in industry, commerce, etc.  
Persons who employ others in non-agricultural enterprises employing 25 or more persons.
  - 1.2 Managers in central and local government, industry, commerce, etc.  
Persons who generally plan and supervise in non-agricultural enterprises employing 25 or more persons.
- (2) **Employers and managers in industry, commerce, etc. — small establishments**
  - 2.1 Employers in industry, commerce, etc. — small establishments. As in 1.1 but establishments employing fewer than 25 persons.
  - 2.2 Managers in industry, commerce, etc. — small establishments. As in 1.2 but establishments employing fewer than 25 persons.
- (3) **Professional workers — self-employed**  
Self-employed persons engaged in work normally requiring qualifications of university degree standard.
- (4) **Professional workers — employees**  
Employees engaged in work normally requiring qualifications of university degree standard.
- (5) **Intermediate non-manual workers**
  - 5.1 Ancillary workers and artists  
Employees engaged in non-manual occupations ancillary to the professions, not normally requiring qualifications of university degree standard; persons engaged in artistic work and not employing others thereat. Self-employed nurses, medical auxiliaries, teachers, work study engineers and technicians are included.
  - 5.2 Foremen and supervisors non-manual  
Employees (other than managers) engaged in occupations included in group 6, who formally and immediately supervise others engaged in such occupations.
- (6) **Junior non-manual workers**  
Employees, not exercising general planning or supervisory powers, engaged in clerical, sales and non-manual communications and security occupations, excluding those who have additional and formal supervisory functions (these are included in group 5.2).
- (7) **Personal service workers**  
Employees engaged in service occupations caring for food, drink, clothing and other personal needs.
- (8) **Foremen and supervisors-manual**  
Employees (other than managers) who formally and immediately supervise others engaged in manual occupations, whether or not themselves engaged in such occupations.
- (9) **Skilled manual workers**  
Employees engaged in manual occupations which require considerable and specific skills.
- (10) **Semi-skilled manual workers**  
Employees engaged in manual occupations which require slight but specific skills.
- (11) **Unskilled manual workers**  
Other employees engaged in manual occupations.
- (12) **Own account workers (other than professional)**  
Self-employed persons engaged in any trade, personal service or manual occupation not normally requiring training of university degree standard and having no employees other than family workers.
- (13) **Farmers — employers and managers**  
Persons who own, rent or manage farms, market gardens or forests, employing people other than family workers in the work of the enterprise.



- (14) **Farmers — own account**  
Persons who own or rent farms, market gardens or forests and having no employees other than family workers.
- (15) **Agricultural workers**  
Employees engaged in tending crops, animals, game or forest, or operating agricultural or forestry machinery.
- (16) **Members of armed forces**
- (17) **Occupation inadequately described**

Table 22 shows the relationship between SEG and industry for the Redbridge Jewish population. The largest occupational category is SEG 6. These junior non-manual workers account for 29% of the EAP, and as might be expected, they are heavily concentrated in the Distribution and Service sector. The next highest is SEG 2, employers and managers in small establishments, most of whom are again concentrated in the Distribution and Service sector. At 16.3%, SEG 12, or non-professional own account workers, is the third highest category, mainly because the high proportion of taxi drivers falls into this group.<sup>4</sup> Own account workers are almost evenly distributed between the dominant Distribution and Services sector, and the Utilities and Transport sector, with few independent artisans.

SEGs 2 and 12 form part of the general group referred to in the Redbridge Borough report on employment<sup>5</sup> as professional workers, employers, managers or self-employed which accounted for 23% of the Borough EAP in 1971. In comparison, numbers 2 and 12 alone account for 36.7% of the Jewish EAP, and with the addition of numbers 1, 3 and 4 which would more fully fit the report's description, this general group constitute 51.7% of the Jewish EAP.

Other non-manual workers were 42% of the Redbridge Borough workforce in 1971 and 41% in 1978<sup>6</sup> compared with 36% of Redbridge Jews. As a final pointer to the occupational differences between the local Jewish and general populations, it is interesting to look at the proportion of manual

workers. Among Redbridge Jews the figure for manual workers at around 12%, is much lower than the 34-36% for the Borough during 1971-8, and this contrasts even more strikingly with the national figure of 48.1% in 1979. However, we must also bear in mind the anomalies the Jewish self-employment bias creates. Turning to Table 21, it can probably be said that in practice the figures for SEG 12 in the manufacturing and transport sectors account for manual workers. This is particularly true of the taxi drivers, most of whom are trades union members and whose independent status is a myth caused by the taxation system rather than a realistic appraisal of their true economic and class position. To the 8% of all workers in the two industrial SEG 12 categories of transport and manufacturing could probably be added the majority of those in these sectors in among the small proprietors in SEG 2. From a practical viewpoint the manual worker component among Redbridge Jews is probably half the national average, and not the quarter that a first impression of the data suggests. The lower social status of these workers is perhaps better brought out by the data on social class which follows this chapter.

### Gender Differences

A closer look at the sex composition of the SEGs for Redbridge Jews, reveals some interesting differences. As Figure 8 shows, the two most important categories for male workers are those closely linked with self-employment, number 2 with 16.5%, and number 12 with 14.4% of the EAP. The female workforce however, is overwhelmingly concentrated in clerical and allied work in category number 6, constituting 21.4% of the EAP. In fact, only 23.2% of respondents and their spouses had occupations which fall into the same SEG.

This highlights some of the limitations of basing much socio-economic analysis on heads of households alone, particularly in an era when working

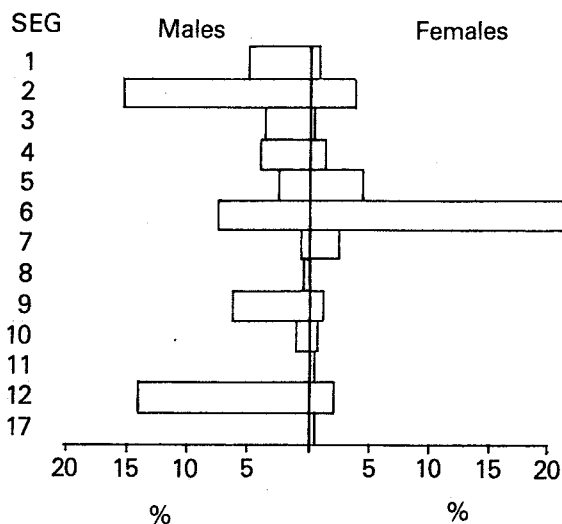
Table 22

#### INDUSTRY AND SOCIO-ECONOMIC GROUP BY PERCENTAGE FOR REDBRIDGE JEWRY 1978 (n = 699)

SEG	Manufacture	Construction	Utilities & Transport	Distribution & Services	Public Admin. & Defence	Total
1	3.0	—	0.4	1.9	0.6	5.9
2	5.0	—	1.0	14.4	—	20.4
3	0.4	—	—	3.5	—	3.9
4	0.9	0.3	—	4.0	—	5.2
5	0.3	—	0.1	5.6	0.9	6.9
6	2.7	0.5	1.5	23.3	1.0	29.0
7	—	—	—	2.6	—	2.6
8,9	5.7	0.1	0.7	0.8	0.3	7.6
10	1.0	0.1	0.3	0.6	—	2.0
11	—	—	—	0.1	—	0.1
12	1.3	—	6.8	8.2	—	16.3
17	—	—	—	0.1	—	0.1
Total	20.3	1.0	10.8	65.1	2.8	100.0

women are an ever increasing proportion of the workforce. Moreover, there was little direct correlation between the SEGs of respondents and spouses. The highest correlation was that 10.5% of respondents in category 12 had spouses in category 6. However, since these two categories constitute two of the highest proportions of men and women workers respectively, this is not unexpected.

FIGURE 8  
SOCIO-ECONOMIC GROUP BY SEX, REDBRIDGE  
JEWRY 1978



### Comparisons with other Jewish Populations

Table 23 brings to light some interesting differences between the three Jewish populations of Redbridge, Sheffield and Hackney. The differences are all the more significant against the background of a classification which is grouped according to social, cultural and recreational standards and similarities. Is Jewishness not a strong enough unifying element in the three communities making social, cultural and recreational characteristics similar, or does this comparison reveal some of the limitations of the SEG analysis itself? One could reasonably expect differences between an inner London and suburban Jewish population. Thus, Hackney has a lower proportion of the workforce in the professional and managerial groups (numbers 1, 2, 3 & 4). In addition, unlike the other two suburban populations, skilled and semi-skilled manual workers (SEG 7-10) constitute the largest proportion of the Hackney workforce. Notwithstanding this difference, self-employment, though not as high as the other two populations, is still a significant characteristic of the Jewish Hackney population, as the 19.6% in SEGs 1 and 2 suggests, and 13.5% in SEG 12 definitely shows.

Table 23

### A COMPARISON OF SEGs IN THREE JEWISH POPULATIONS BY PERCENTAGE

	Redbridge Jewry 1978	Sheffield Jewry 1975	Hackney Jewry 1971
SEG			
1, 2 (13)	26.3	23.2	19.6
3, 4	9.1	24.2	2.8
5	6.9	11.7	10.7
6	29.0	9.5	19.5
8, 9	7.6	4.1	13.1
7, 10 (15)	4.6	1.9	18.1
11	0.1	—	2.5
12 (14)	16.3	21.5	13.5
16 (17)	0.1	3.9	0.2
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0

In all three Jewish populations, the proportion of self-employed is several times the national norm. The traditional petit bourgeois pursuits still cover around 33.45% of Jewish populations whether in a provincial town, an inner city area, or a metropolitan suburb. This tendency remains more significant than the movement into professional occupations (SEG 3, 4) which was so apparent in Sheffield but which obviously meets demographic and other practical constraints among Jewish populations as large as those in Redbridge (19,000) or Hackney (30,000).

We can also see that there are marked occupational differences between the Jewish suburban populations of Redbridge and Sheffield. Self-employment was at an even higher level in Sheffield than in Redbridge. Moreover, there is an interesting divergence between the proportion of people in SEGs 5 and 6 in the two populations. The reasons for these differences are a function of the differing age group and education profiles of the females in the two populations, as well as structural factors relating to the differing work opportunities in the two cities.

### Education and Occupation

It is particularly important for the purpose of this discussion to note that the educational qualifications investigated in this survey, were framed in terms of the census definitions, and therefore refer to academic, rather than technical and vocational skills and qualifications. In order to gauge the impact of this type of education on the occupations of Redbridge Jews, comparisons were made with the Redbridge Borough as a whole. Two general observations are pertinent. Firstly, as was discussed in Chapter 4, the younger Redbridge Jews are more educated than their elders and as a whole proportionately more Redbridge Jews have some educational qualifications than does the Borough population. However, there were proportionately more university graduates in the Borough in 1971 (8%) than among Redbridge Jews (6%). Secondly, more Redbridge Jews have occupations in the upper SEGs than does the Borough population, with nearly three times as many Redbridge Jews in the

professions. Thus, the links between educational qualifications and SEGs seem to have operated positively for Redbridge Jews.

Within SEG categories, it was found that the relationship of qualifications to occupations was similar in both the Redbridge Borough and Jewish populations. This would indicate that since there are no differences in the educational background for people doing the same occupations, Redbridge Jews do not suffer discrimination or a relative under-utilization of academic qualification in employment. This is interesting considering their 'avoidance' behaviour with respect to certain sectors of the economy e.g. government and industry.

'Professionalism' stands out as an important occupational status for Redbridge Jews. However, only a small proportion of them in the relevant SEGs have university degrees. Most have entered the professions with the lowest possible academic qualifications, and till late 1960s 'O' level qualifications were generally accepted in some liberal professions e.g. accountancy, surveying and law. However, these standards have been raised considerably through the 1970s, and by 1980, nearly every profession required a university degree for entry. In terms of young people entering these professions in recent years, this has meant that an extra five years of formal education is now required. Therefore, unlike the positive link between higher education and higher SEGs in the past, the higher education breakthrough of young Redbridge Jews is unlikely to lead to great changes in the occupational structure for this group. Rather, the rising level of higher education among the young is more likely to maintain the 1978 SEG pattern of Redbridge Jews in the future. Nevertheless, such education enables them to keep out of manual and unskilled work, and therefore apparently those jobs worst hit by unemployment.

The overall impression, then, is that the education of Redbridge Jews over the last decade has only kept up with the rising standards for entry into the professions, and therefore, is not the tremendous avenue of economic and social mobility it has proved to be in the past. This raises the question as to whether the pre-occupation with higher education, currently found among Jews, will be maintained in the future. The first indications of such a change could be found in the attitude of parents to their children's careers which will be discussed in a later chapter.

### *The Influence of Cultural Factors*

In the past, the unbalanced industrial and occupational distribution was assigned to a number of cultural and historical factors.<sup>7</sup> For instance, for an immigrant population language and nationality problems precluded entry into the public service. Of course, the Redbridge Jews of 1978 did not suffer these disadvantages. English is the home language of nearly everyone and 93.4% are British subjects by birth.

Another factor which might concentrate Jewish employment is hostility from the general population.

However, Redbridge Jews did not feel that they were living in a hostile and prejudiced society. Only 10% claimed that they, or any of their family had met anti-Jewish prejudice at work in recent years. Of course, this happy situation could have been buttressed by the 'avoidance' behaviour referred to earlier. On the other hand, the larger than average numbers of people who are in daily contact with the general public, such as retail workers and taxi drivers should have offset this factor.

The most common explanation of Jewish self-employment has been the religious factor. It has been claimed that earlier in this century, orthodox Jews required time dispensations on Friday afternoons, Saturdays and Jewish holidays that most large businesses, especially in manufacturing, even some that were Jewish owned, just could not meet. What then is the position today?

Only 16.4% of Jewish men and 18.1% of Jewish women gave responses which showed that they held a religious and ideological objection to working on the Sabbath, i.e. they were *Shomrei Shabbat*. The earlier importance of this factor can be demonstrated by the replies of elderly people over 65 years where the figures were 27% for men and 34% for women. However, among the 35-44 age group the objectors shrank to 8% of men and 9% of women. Of course, this is the generation which bears most of the financial obligations and so may contain most of those who have to rationalise their actions. This may account in turn, for the fact that among the under-25s the objectors rise again to 17% for men and 18% for women. Nevertheless, such figures do not suggest that religious practices are an employment problem for Redbridge Jews, notwithstanding that the employment sectors such as the public service, are more likely to work a five day week than are the sectors where Jews are over-represented such as retail distribution.

While such factors are no longer of much practical importance, they are part of the historical-cultural 'baggage' and were important in moulding the basic occupational structure of British Jewry. Some changes are already visible among younger Redbridge Jews, but it can be expected that it will take several generations to overcome the inertia exerted by historical and cultural forces acting in conjunction with the caution which arises from minority status.

#### *Notes*

1. For a full discussion of Jewish involvement in the taxi trade see Kosmin 'Exclusion and Opportunity', pp.63-67.
2. OPCS, *Classifications of Occupations 1970*, HMSO, 1970 p.xi.
3. *Ibid*, p.x.
4. All taxi drivers are classed as self-employed and are responsible for their own income-tax returns and national insurance. However, a high percentage are journeymen whose means of production, the cab, is hired on weekly or mileage rates.
5. *Redbridge Borough Plan-Employment*, para 35.
6. Department of Environment, *National Dwelling and Housing Survey*, London, HMSO, 1979, p.159.
7. J. Jacobs, *Studies in Jewish Statistics*, London, D. Nutt, 1891, p.36.

## Chapter VII SOCIAL CLASS

Social Class is the Census classification of a population into broad categories so that each 'is homogenous in relation to the basic criterion of the general standing within the community of the occupations concerned'<sup>1</sup> in this case, the 'occupations concerned' being those of the heads of household. Such a definition raises questions, both generally and in the case of the Redbridge Jews.

The first is whether an analysis based on the occupation of the head of household gives a true picture of the total population, an issue which was raised in the last chapter when discussing the SEG of respondents and their spouses among Redbridge Jews. Although only 8.3% of heads of households are female, Table 24 shows that the differences between the class structure of male and female heads of household are great. (The female bias in the unclassified households in Table 24 is due to the large proportion of female headed households consisting of retired women usually widowed and living alone).<sup>2</sup> In a population where 46.2% of households have more than one earner (Chapter 8), and where male and female occupation and, probably, the occupations of the young and old in the workforce are different, analysis based on the occupation of the head of household in the name of the Redbridge Jewish population as a whole, will give a biased view.

Table 24

### SOCIAL CLASS OF REDBRIDGE JEWRY BY PERCENTAGE BASED ON MALE & FEMALE HEADS OF HOUSEHOLD (n = 469)

	Male	Female	Total (Male & Female)
I Professional	12.3	—	11.3
II Intermediate occupations	31.9	5.2	29.6
III M Skilled manual occupations	26.1	5.1	24.3
IV N Skilled non-manual occupations	13.7	41.0	16.0
V Partly skilled occupations	3.7	—	3.4
VI Unskilled	1.6	—	1.5
VII Unclassified (retired, out of work, no answer)	10.7	48.7	13.9
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0

The second question that this definition raises is whether minority groups and the general population share a common notion of the status of 'general standing' of occupations in the community. Certainly, the differences reflected in Table 25, which is a comparison of the national and Redbridge Jewish class structures, might suggest that, despite over a century of integration into the U.K. population, priorities among Redbridge Jews at least are slightly different. Some might go as far as to suggest that in this population of 'income maximizers' (Chapter 7), income rather than status is regarded as the priority.

As Table 25 shows, the highest proportion of household heads in both the national and Redbridge Jewish populations at 42.5% and 40.3% respectively, have skilled occupations which make up Class III. However, looking at the distribution of the skilled occupations between manual and non-manual occupations, approximately 6% more Redbridge

Table 25

### CHIEF ECONOMIC SUPPORT OF HOUSEHOLD BY SOCIAL CLASS

	1971 G.B.	1978 Redbridge Jews
I	4.2	11.3
II	17.3	29.6
III M	30.2	24.3
III N	12.3	16.0
IV	16.3	3.4
V	6.6	1.5
Unclassified	13.0	13.9

Jews had non-manual occupations that did the G.B. population in 1971. The second largest group in both populations is found in Class II, the substantially higher percentage of Redbridge Jews in this class reflecting the high degree of self-employment among the Jews. The third largest group in the general population falls into Class IV, the partially skilled occupations, which at 16.3% is only 1% less than the percentage of people in Class II. The third largest group for Redbridge Jews, however, are the professional occupations making up Class I at 11.3%, the class which constitutes the smallest proportion of the general population. The classes constituting the smallest proportions of the Redbridge Jewish population are the partly skilled and unskilled occupations in Classes IV and V.

It is interesting to compare this with some of the findings of the study on 'The Social-Class Structure of Anglo-Jewry, 1961' by Prais and Schmool, particularly with their 1961 comparison of the general and Jewish populations.<sup>3</sup> The differences reflect the economic boom years of the 1960s, a period of upward mobility for the general population and certainly for a suburban Jewish population. Thus in comparison, the 'upward tilt' of the 1961 Anglo-Jewry social class distribution compared with the general population, is even more pronounced for the Redbridge Jews of 1978, despite similar upward trends in the social class distribution of the general population between 1961 and 1971.

The social class distribution of Redbridge Jews in 1978 would seem to indicate, then, that certain differences in the way that Jews assess the 'general standing' of occupations in comparison to the general population, could exist. Is this in fact so for Jews of different ages and living in different urban conditions in the U.K.? Table 26 compares the social class distributions of four Jewish populations in different areas at different times, as well as two national samples for Jews constructed by Prais and Schmool. The latter samples represent Jews of a different generation, as the first is based on deaths registered in 1961, while the second is an estimate distribution of the live Jewish population in 1961.<sup>4</sup> In a comparison of these two samples, three factors stand out: first, there are no unskilled persons

Table 26

**SOCIAL CLASS OF JEWISH POPULATION BY PERCENTAGE  
(EXCLUDING UNCLASSIFIED HOUSEHOLDS)**

	<i>Older National Sample 1961</i>	<i>Younger National Sample 1961</i>	<i>Edgware 1963</i>	<i>Hackney 1971</i>	<i>Sheffield 1975</i>	<i>Redbridge 1978</i>
I. Professional	4.1	11.1	16	6	29	13.1
II. Intermediate occupations	34.7	37.8	43	31	34	34.4
III. Skilled occupations	46.9	40.0	39	48	36	46.8
IV. Partly skilled	14.3	11.1	2	11	1	4.0
V. Unskilled	0	0	0	4	0	1.7

making up Class V in either sample; second, the younger population has less people in the skilled and partly skilled occupations in Classes III and IV; and third, there are more people in the intermediate and professional occupations in the younger population, with Class I more than doubling its proportion. Table 26 shows that the 1961 younger national sample is more representative of all the local Jewish populations except for Hackney, which is similar to the older national sample. However, as an ageing and declining inner London borough population, representative of the roots of most suburban Jewish populations, this is not surprising.

The upward mobility of the younger Jewish populations is largely a function of the increasing diversity of work opportunities in the liberal professions, and the expansion of education and training since World War II in the U.K. Approximately 40% of Redbridge Jewry is representative of the true 'middle class', with the rest mainly in skilled occupations. Few can now be found in the traditional manual working class occupations with which East End Jews were associated at the beginning of the century. Despite this, the underlying bias to self-employment continues and, as was discussed in the previous chapter, constitutes a significant proportion of the workforce in all these Anglo-Jewish populations.

Though not ideal, social class classification does perhaps give a truer reflection of the social status of Redbridge Jews than some of the amalgamations based on SEG. The bias towards taxi cabs and the 'schmutter trade' makes this a more economically vulnerable and less bourgeois population than some analyses might suggest.

Of greater consequence is the similarity between the Redbridge and 1961 National samples. This suggests that Redbridge Jewry may be typical of British Jewry as a whole. The lack of conformity to English class norms and the unique Jewish outlook on such questions of class and social status can however, be seen when individual household returns from the survey are examined. The hairdresser who is a doctor's daughter, or the director of a large manufacturing company who sends his daughter to work on a stall in a Sunday market to find out 'what life is really about' are definitely not attached to the social norms of the stockbroker belt to which many of the suburban bourgeoisie aspire.

*Notes*

1. OPCS, *Classification of Occupations 1970*, London, HMSO, 1970, p.x.
2. *The Social Demography*, p.33.
3. S. J. Prais and M. Schmool, 'The Social Class Structure of Anglo-Jewry, 1961', *The Jewish Journal of Sociology*, XVI (1975), 5-15.
4. *Ibid*, pp.8 and 11.

## Chapter VIII INCOME ASPECTS

Although the Redbridge Jewish Survey did not ask any direct questions on the always sensitive subject of income levels, there are many indicators of these which give an idea of the relative earning power of Redbridge Jews. In this respect, the factors dealt with in a previous report are good indicators of relative incomes: the high level of home ownership, at 93.5% of the population, and of car ownership at 84.2%. The structure of the Jewish workforce in terms of SEG and social class, the subject of previous chapters in this report, points to a middle-class suburban population which is relatively comfortable and well off.

Moreover, there are other characteristics of the workforce which would indicate that Redbridge Jews are 'income maximizers', in the sense that they try to get the highest economic returns for their labour, irrespective of social status and working conditions, while placing a high value on independence and autonomy. These overlapping characteristics include: firstly, the percentage of elderly people still working after retirement at 7% of the workforce (Chapter 3); secondly, the number of part-time workers in the workforce at 22.9%, providing a second household income; thirdly, and closely related to this, the number of working women at 38%, including the early entry of young women into the full-time workforce (Chapter 3). The known differentials for income and career prospects for boys and girls means that, in 1978, it was worthwhile for one's daughter to leave school at 16 years and to work as a secretary or in clerical work, rather than train for a career. This, however, is not the case for men, where the income differentials between jobs requiring qualifications, and those which do not, are much wider. Therefore, income maximization in this instance can be seen in the greater willingness to discount present for future income in the case of boys.

**Table 27**

### THE PERCENTAGE OF EARNERS IN THE HOUSEHOLDS OF REDBRIDGE JEWRY 1978

No. of Earners	% of Households	
0	12.0	
1	41.8	
2	30.6	} 46.2%
3	12.2	
4	3.2	
5+	0.2	

Such factors find expression in Table 27, which shows that 46.2% of Redbridge Jewish households have more than one earner, resulting in a higher proportion of multi-earners than single-earner households. In this context, it could be expected that the more people per household, the more earners there are likely to be. Table 28 shows that this is in fact the case, with the proportion of multi-earners per household size increasing as the household size increases. Thus, 34.1% of two person households are multi-earning, a proportion which rises to 61.3% of five person households.

Two interesting factors arise from this pattern of multi-earning households. Firstly, while only 12% of

households have no earners, Table 28 shows that more than half of these, 55.9%, are concentrated in the one-person households, all of whom were either on retirement or disability pensions. Secondly the unemployed are 'cushioned' by multi-earning households. Only 2.6% of all households have an unemployed person(s) in them, and only 0.6% of households contain unemployed persons and no earners. Yet 1.5% of households have an unemployed person residing with two or more earners. Thus, it could be said that for three-quarters of the households containing an unemployed person, the pressure to take the first job, no matter what it is, is relatively low, given that there are other earners in the household. Compared to the national population in 1978, this was a very favourable situation. However, one wonders whether such 'cushioning' could still be maintained in a deepening recession.

**Table 28**

### THE PERCENTAGE OF EARNERS PER HOUSEHOLD SIZE, REDBRIDGE JEWRY 1978 (n = 469)

Household Size Persons	Household with no Earners	Single-Earner Households	Multi-Earner Households
1	55.9	44.1	0
2	25.6	40.3	34.1
3	3.1	48.0	48.9
4	0	39.7	60.3
5+	2.0	36.7	61.3

The multi-earner household is, in part, a function of the age structure of Redbridge Jewry which has a bias towards middle-aged persons with teenage and young adult children. This typical nuclear family, which is featured in the examples in Table 29, is the affluent group in the population. Residents of households with shared overheads, and a house which is either owned outright or on a very low mortgage, constitute most of the 40% of households which own more than two motor vehicles. A further indication is the fact that 98% of four or more person households were car owners, compared to only 30% of one person households. These households also contained most of the 26% of Redbridge Jews who had been able to afford to visit Israel. This indicator provides further evidence of the relatively affluent minority within Redbridge Jewry, since half these tourists have been twice or more.

Alongside this group of affluent households with a great deal of discretionary income, live two disadvantaged groups. The elderly people on retirement pension, often living alone, and the single earner with an inverted dependency ratio. The latter accounts for around 40% of the larger households; there the example is of a male breadwinner, with a wife, two young children, and an elderly parent to support. Instead of four incomes supporting four people, we have one income and a small pension supporting five. Moreover, the generational effect can add to the burden. It is likely that the younger married man probably bought his home next door to the multi-earner family later and, therefore, at a higher price, and is burdened by a much larger mortgage.

Table 29

## SOME MULTI-EARNER HOUSEHOLDS

<i>Person</i>	<i>Employment Status</i>	<i>Job Title</i>	<i>SEG</i>	<i>Industry</i>	<i>Place of Employment</i>
Husband	Full-time	Shop manager	2	Frozen foods and freezers	E. London
Wife	Part-time	Sales assistant	6	Gowns	EC/WC London
Son — 22	Full-time	Sales assistant	6	Paper	EC/WC London
Daughter — 20	Part-time	Accounts assistant	6	Insurance office	EC/WC London
Husband	Full-time	Taxi garage proprietor	2	Taxi garage	E. London
Wife	Part-time	Receptionist	6	Hospital	Redbridge
Son — 21	Full-time	Trainee taxi driver	9	Taxi	All London
Son — 17	Full-time	Trainee mechanic	9	Taxi garage	E. London
Husband	Full-time	Production manager	2	Dress manufacturer	N. London
Wife	Part-time	Secretary	6	Solicitors	E. London
Son — 22	Full-time	Surveyor	4	Estate agent	EC/WC London
Daughter — 19	Full-time	Secretary	6	Hotel	W. London
Husband	Full-time	Salesman	6	Menswear	N. London
Wife	Full-time	Stationery Officer	5	Education	E. London
Daughter — 26	Full-time	Social Worker	5	Social Work	E. London
Daughter — 20	Full-time	Accountant	4	Accountancy	N. W. London
Husband	Full-time	Underwriter	2	Insurance	Redbridge
Wife	Full-time	Cashier	6	Building Society	W. London
Son — 20	Full-time	Hairdresser	7	Salon	Redbridge
Daughter — 18	Full-time	Clerk	6	Unit Trust	Redbridge
Husband	Full-time	Director	2	Launderette	N. London
Wife	Part-time	Shop assistant	6	Shop	Redbridge
Son — 20	Part-time	Apprentice	9	Electronics	Essex
Daughter — 18	Full-time	Trainee home economist	4	Food industry	E. London

Given the facts we should be aware that the relative homogeneity of this population in terms of socio-economic indicators, occupation or social class does not mean that there are not very large income differentials, particularly on a household basis. This has important implications for membership fees and fund-raising within the organised Jewish community.

The general emphasis on social mobility and what some of our enumerators regarded as an obsession with household furnishings and consumer goods, puts a great deal of pressure on households to acquire more income. One of the biggest financial pressures among Redbridge Jews is housing. To get a better home, and preferably, to own their own home, was the original motive which drove most to settle in Redbridge in the first place. Housing still features in their social concerns. When asked why they wanted to move home 52.4% of potential movers stated they wanted to get a better house, whilst 25.2% wanted 'to get a nicer area socially'. The two reasons are, of course, linked. A third of those wishing to leave the Borough wished to move into the Chigwell area, which is a social step-up from Redbridge. In fact, as the result of detailed analysis of Jewish migration in the previous study, it was stated that 'the nature of the migrants coming into and leaving Redbridge would suggest that the Borough is a step-up in the socio-economic sense for many Jews in the London

Region, and just a step on the way out for others with a relatively high degree of social mobility'. Whatever the situation, whether newcomer or potential purchaser in Chigwell, given the high prices of London suburban property in the late 1970s and the unprecedented mortgage interest rate, the housing aspirations of this population could easily become a serious financial burden, particularly among younger households. Another result is the increasing female workforce participation. When women were asked why they went out to work, 43% said that it was purely for financial reasons and for a further 19%, finance featured as part of their motivation.

Self-employment is also an aspect of income maximization. This can be advantageous for taxation purposes, but it also lifts regulatory burdens or safeguards such as union limits on hours worked. A few instances of 'moonlighting' and the scale of the informal or 'black economy' came to light during the course of the survey, but such topics need much closer investigation than we could do if they are to be revealed. Nevertheless, there is little doubt that there is a tendency for Redbridge Jews to be 'income maximizers'. The wide variety of opportunities offered in a metropolitan area like Greater London, makes this possible.

A new element now appears to be evident in relation to jobs and income among this population.

This is 'risk aversion', which involves a tendency to 'cover one's bets' in the labour market. For example, in multi-earner households where the male was self-employed, a small businessman or in an unstable salary situation, such as a salesman dependent on commission, there was a tendency for the female to be employed in a secure post such as the public service or a large firm, where redundancies are rare and occupational pensions are provided. This leads to a discussion of the family business. In some cases, such as that of the taxi proprietor in Table 29, the family businessman can involve the younger generation. However, an apparently pessimistic assessment of the future of small firms combined with inter-generational social mobility means that not only is occupational inheritance rare, but so also is the hold of the family business on younger people. Thus, in only a handful of cases did a household report all its earners as Company Directors of the

same firm. Moreover, unpaid workers in a family business accounted for only 1.1% of economically active people. This is not a very reliable indicator for many reasons, but it does demonstrate the trend away from the family business.

The income of Redbridge Jews, apart from those in receipt of state benefits, is earned productively. For a largely commuting population into Central London, not only is there a marked under-representation in the finance sector of the City of London, but there is also no evidence of a rentier class. One gets the impression of a population with slightly above average per capita incomes and 'cash flow', but certainly not of a major group of wealth holders. This fact is significant as it is suggested that, on the basis of social class analysis, the characteristics of Redbridge Jews are typical of the overall structure of British Jewry.



# Chapter IX

## SPATIAL ASPECTS

### *The Spatial Distribution of Employment by Industry*

When examining communications in the previous demographic study it was reported that, despite the fact that the Redbridge Jews left the East End many years ago, this traditional settlement area of London Jewry has persisted as the most important place of work for them.<sup>1</sup> Moreover, Figure 9 shows that employment in the three most important sectors for Redbridge Jewish workers, Distribution and Services, Manufacturing and Utilities and Transport respectively, is also concentrated in this area, the E, EC & WC postal districts of London. Redbridge Borough itself is only the third most important place of work for Redbridge Jews, but it has the highest ratio of employment in the Distribution and Services to other sectors of any area. The work places of the remaining Redbridge Jewish workers (31.7%) are

scattered through the six other London postal districts and surrounding areas, with distant West London and neighbouring 'other Essex' the most important of these. Figure 9 shows that the majority of employment in all these areas falls within the dominant Distribution and Services sector and that the most geographically even spread is in the very small government service sector.

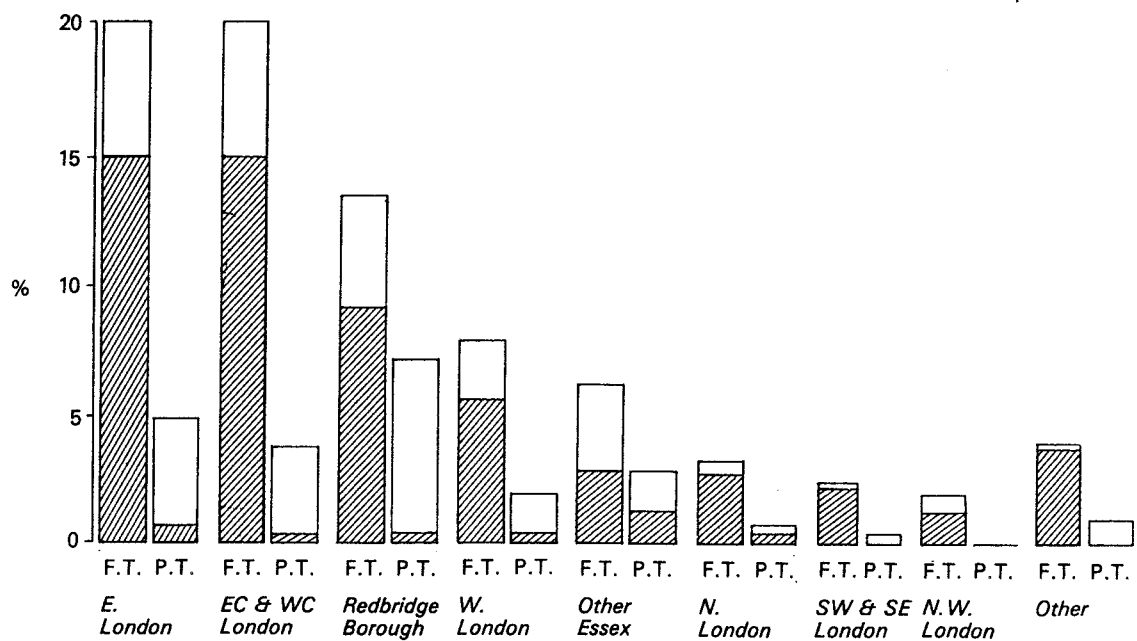
### *The Spatial Distribution of Full-time Work*



As could be inferred from the discussion above, the spatial pattern of full-time work coincides with the spatial distribution of all employment for Redbridge Jews. However, there are differences between the spatial patterns of male and female full-time workers. Not surprisingly, the highest concentration of male full-time workers occur, respectively, in the Central (EC and WC) and E. London postal districts. On the other hand, just over half the female

FIGURE 9

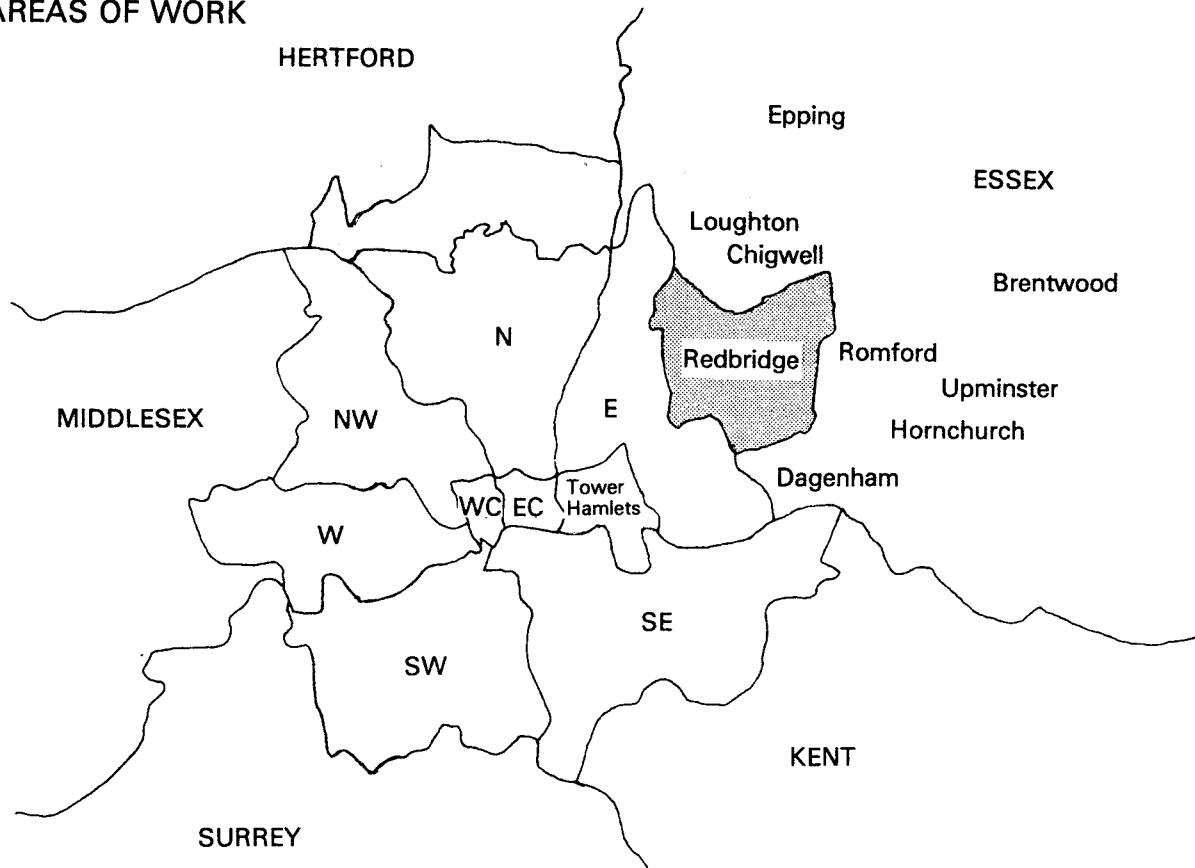
INDUSTRY AND EMPLOYMENT STATUS BY PLACE OF WORK<sup>2</sup> (n = 699)

Industry (%)									
Manufacturing	6.2	4.5	2.3	2.0	1.9	1.7	0.7	—	0.6
Construction	—	—	0.4	0.5	0.1	—	—	—	—
Utilities & Transport	1.6	5.4	0.7	0.9	0.3	0.3	0.3	—	0.7
Distribution & Services	15.3	12.1	16.0	5.8	6.3	1.7	1.2	1.7	3.6
Government	0.7	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.5	0.2	0.3	—	—
Other	1.0	0.3	1.2	0.1	—	—	—	—	—
<b>Total</b>	<b>24.8</b>	<b>22.6</b>	<b>20.9</b>	<b>9.6</b>	<b>9.1</b>	<b>3.9</b>	<b>2.5</b>	<b>1.7</b>	<b>4.9</b>



LEGEND F.T. Full-time Male   
P.T. Part-time Female 

**MAP 2  
AREAS OF WORK**



full-time labour force work in locations closer to home, with E. London and Redbridge Borough accounting for the two highest concentrations, respectively. While the Borough provides employment for the third highest proportion of male full-time workers, the Central area is the place of work of the third highest proportion of female full-time workers.

This trend would suggest two factors. Firstly, that job opportunities for women are available in and around Redbridge Borough. Secondly, that historically, being more recent entrants to the labour force, women who work full-time are probably less tied to the traditional industries than their male counterparts, and have more freedom to choose work places closer to their homes. Their known bias towards office or white-collar work bears this out.

### *The Spatial Distribution of Part-time Work*

As has been discussed in previous chapters, the majority of part-time workers among Redbridge Jews, 84.3%, are women, most of them married and patterning their involvement in the workforce according to the changing demands of their family's life cycle. Almost half of them, 47%, are concentrated in the Distribution and Services sector. As could be expected, part-time working mothers would seek employment as close to their homes as

possible, and Figure 9 shows that this is the case. The highest concentrations of part-time workers occur in Redbridge Borough, E. London and Central London, constituting 7.1%, 4.7% and 3.5% respectively of the EAP. While neighbouring areas of Essex is the fourth most important place of work for women working part-time, it is the most important for part-time male workers. E. London is the second most important place of work for male part-timers, and discussion in previous chapters would indicate that most of the men working part-time in these two areas are over the age of retirement.

### *Labour Mobility*

The fact that workers in manufacturing are located in small firms in the inner city rather than large concerns in 'greenfields sites' in Thameside, Essex or suburban areas, is a further indication of the traditional nature of Jewish employment in this sector. Evidence of business closures and the preferences of young people suggests that manufacturing in Central London is likely to decline as a source of employment. In fact, the overall much higher Jewish level of commuting, particularly to inner areas of London (60%) compared with the Borough norm (32%), may also have long term structural disadvantages. However, this willingness to travel distances to work and their large scale access

to motor vehicles, does make them mobile within the London region.

On the other hand, the Jewish population is residentially stable. 87% were born within a 25-mile radius of Central London and 84% of households have close relatives in the vicinity. Thus, there is little desire to move out of the area and certainly, careers and jobs play a relatively unimportant role in the decision to move among this population,<sup>3</sup> accounting for only 7.2% of the 'pull factor'. This could be expected from a population which avoids work in large organisations such as banks or the civil service, where job transfers are common. In fact, in a tight labour market and an economy where the informal sector is growing, the benefits of close

family support and access to local social networks is probably an effective strategy. It is very unlikely that large scale movement to any other region of Britain could benefit many Redbridge Jews, given their socio-economic characteristics, and their bias towards involvement in the Distribution and Services sector, the national focus of which is the London area.

*Notes*

1. *The Social Demography of Redbridge Jewry*, p.29.
2. Sampling problems for this particular cross-tabulation, mean that there are slight differences between the distribution of industrially classified employment here and that given in Chapter 5.
3. *The Social Demography*, p.27.

## Chapter X CAREERS FOR YOUNG PEOPLE

The extent to which the existing pattern of occupation and employment will extend into the future is, of course, linked to the career choices of young people. We have already noted that on average, the generation of people under 25 years is very much better educated than the rest of the population. We have also noted that the attention given to and the investment in education of young males is disproportionate, especially when one considers the growing number of female workers among this population.

In order to ascertain future trends, questions relating to careers for their children were included in the survey questionnaire and directed to the parents of children under 16 years. One of the stereotypes about Jewish families is that parents exert enormous pressures and have high expectations of their children, particularly as regards careers, material and/or academic success. This stereotype, 'my son the doctor' syndrome, is largely the creation of North American Jewish writers. The general level of education among British Jews suggest that many American ideas do not apply very accurately to Britain, and Table 30 also seems to bear this out.

Table 30

### WHAT CAREERS WOULD YOU LIKE YOUR CHILDREN TO FOLLOW? (PERCENTAGE)

	Sons (n = 161)	Daughters (n = 159)
Artistic	1	1
Scientific	1	1
Professional	27	13
Skilled trade	2	3
Business	0	3
Named career	31	21
Whatever they want	64	71
Don't know	5	8

We can see that there is much more parental pressure on boys than girls, and that girls are given a greater variety of choice. However, surprisingly the general answer seems to be a qualitative and non-material one: 'Whatever they want' can be equated with whatever makes them happy. Moreover, it is obvious that despite being a largely bourgeois commercial population, Redbridge Jews do not want to push their sons to enter industry or commerce. This bears out the earlier comments on the unattractiveness of the family business. This may also relate to their assessment of the various rewards associated with different types of work. The fact that most parents who answered these questions were in their 30s and 40s, and their working lives had mainly been spent in a period of inflation and perceived economic decline since 1973, may be of particular importance. Certainly there appears to be a concern with the quality of life of their children.

Of course, it might be argued that, among the parents here, are many with very young children who cannot be expected to have formulated ideas on the

subject of children's careers. However, when one separates out the parents of teenagers, those with children aged 13-16, who are one-third of the sample, the situation is only confirmed. Only 40% of these parents named a career for their teenaged son and only 33% for their daughter.

Another section of our questionnaire was directed to teenagers in the household. 80.2% of our sample were students and 19.8% were working. They were asked, 'Have you decided what career you want to go into?' The answers were 'Yes' 64.2% and 'No' 35.8%. If we allow for the working teenagers who have presumably made a choice, we find that only 55% of student teenagers have made a career choice. This lack of decision and direction, considering the early choice of academic subjects in British schools, is quite disturbing. Moreover, the lack of parental direction indicated in Table 30 is borne out by the teenagers' evidence in Table 31. This is also borne out by the findings of a 1977 survey of 40 senior members of the Barkingside Jewish Youth Centre. It was found that 'parents . . . do not seem to take much interest in their children's careers, neither do the teachers . . .'.<sup>1</sup>

Table 31

### WHO HAS GIVEN YOU (A TEENAGER) MOST HELP IN CHOOSING YOUR CAREER? (n = 94)

	%
Parents	48
Self	27
Close relative	3
Teacher	13
Youth worker	0
Job Centre	1
Nobody	8

The mechanism for the maintenance of traditional forms of employment is clear. 51% of teenagers are mainly advised by their close family, who one would expect to have only partial knowledge of the contemporary job market and career opportunities. Only 14% have been decisively influenced by the official bodies established for the purpose — the careers teacher or the Job Centre. It is interesting to note that in 1976, the Redbridge Careers Service placed a quarter of local school leavers in their first job. However, the Barkingside Youth Centre suggested that unique social pressures meant that 'young Jewish people face a dichotomy which makes theirs a particular problem and one that cannot always be understood by a non-Jewish careers officer.'<sup>2</sup>

The overall situation for teenagers 13-16 years who appear in both tables, is as follows. When parents had some idea of a career for their son, then 64% of boys had made a career decision. When parents gave no direction, then only 43% of the boys had decided on a career. On the other hand, the girls were apparently more decisive and in tune with their parents. When parents had a career in mind, then

81% of their teenage daughters had also made a decision. If the parents were undecided or undirecting, then half the girls had also not made up their minds. However, it must be emphasized that 'many parents of girls do not give encouragement for further education as a career, thinking that marriage and children will be enough.'<sup>3</sup>

The parents attitudes to their children's careers were correlated with a large number of factors to see if any significant patterns occurred. For sons, a skilled trade was the choice of mothers who were housewives with no educational qualifications of their own. The professional status for their sons was the particular choice of mothers who were self-employed and office workers, and especially those who worked part-time. Here their own financial circumstances may have impinged on their outlook.

Only fathers who were themselves professionals were especially likely to want professional sons. On the other hand, fathers in the highest socio-economic group, those in SEG 1, were unanimous for letting their sons do 'whatever they want.' Here the easier financial circumstances compared with those of the part-time working mother may be important. In all cases the professional category was composed overwhelmingly of doctors, lawyers and accountants.

Educational background was not a significant factor in propelling people to choose a career for their sons, except for the women who had received tertiary education outside the universities. There was a concomitant bias to choice of the professions of women with 'O' and 'A' levels. On the other hand, fathers with this same qualifications were biased to the 'whatever they want' answer. This latter answer was also much more common in the larger households (5+).

Whereas the named careers for sons were equally likely to be given by a mother or father, in three-quarters of the cases, a distinct choice for a daughter was given by a mother. However, among the 'Don't know' and 'Whatever' there was no gender bias.

Fathers suggested business careers for their daughters and only mothers mentioned artistic careers. Mothers with an only child who was a daughter, had strong career views, as did female graduates and those with tertiary education. Career choice for daughters was definitely correlated with the highest level of education for mothers, but not for fathers. It is perhaps also significant that all the 'Don't know' mothers were housewives, while the decisive ones were the better educated, working mothers.

When all parents were asked if they wanted their children to attend a Jewish Secondary School, only 19% of respondents were affirmative.<sup>4</sup> They were also asked 'in principle would you like to see the introduction of vocational training in Jewish schools where one could learn a particular skill or trade?' To this 73% replied in the affirmative to the principle. 25% signified that they had children for whom they 'would want such vocational training.' This apparent increased interest in Jewish education, if combined with a practical employment benefit, suggests a general unease about the economic position of Redbridge Jewry in relation to future employment

prospects. The model here, of course, is the successful schools operated by ORT,<sup>5</sup> mainly in Israel, France and South America. This 25% response rate is a more positive response than one might expect, because one has to allow for those who have already named a professional career for their children, and those who were unwilling to contemplate changing schools.

A vocational education for their offspring was very attractive to older fathers (over 50) and those who had grammar and secondary modern schools as their highest level of education. Those with only elementary education were opposed to the idea. On the other hand, as a whole, those fathers with no academic qualifications were the strongest supporters. Those with 'A' levels were the only group to be divided on the issue.

Mothers lightly favoured vocational training more than fathers (74:72%). The strongest supporters were again the oldest group, those over 45 years. Among women, those with elementary education supported the idea. The strongest opponents were the younger mothers under 25 years. Those with grammar and tertiary education, and those holding 'O' levels had the most reservations.

Whereas parents' gender was not a factor in the choice of their children's career, occupation, like age and educational background was. Professional men were equally divided in the issue as were skilled workers (SEG 9). Yet SEG 1 fathers were as much in favour as were the self-employed. Household size operated differently for the two sexes. Fathers with only one child and mothers with larger families were keener than average. Among mothers, the housewives were slightly keener than working women.

Whereas the small minority of foreign-born respondents (7%) were completely in favour, there were reservations among both males and females born in East London and men born in the Provinces. For men, the latter equate with the professionals and the former group contain the most skilled workers who obviously wish their children to be more upwardly mobile.

The overall response to the question on vocational education suggests that careers guidance and outside assistance in the matter of their children's future would be welcomed. The whole discussion brings up the place of values. How does one interpret the lack of specific parental direction of the children's careers and the obviously indecisive nature of young people's answers? Is it that the fathers especially just want their children to fulfil themselves, or are they just too busy or disinterested to give the subject any thought? Are their attitudes due to ignorance, general unease and confusion about the economic future, or the beginning of a rejection of materialism. Do they wish their children to have more satisfying lives and to avoid 'the keeping up with the Cohens' lifestyle of which they are part? One indicator of youthful idealism is that 25% of teenagers would contemplate going to live in Israel. All these potential *olim* are students, and they are definitely not materialistically motivated since 'a better future' was the least important of Israel's attractions.

The one value to which Redbridge Jewish parents

do subscribe is the importance of education, especially for their sons. However, this emphasis in academic qualifications does not seem to be linked to specific careers and employment for their children. The Barkingside Youth Centre Report reached similar conclusions: 'There also seems to be a lack of planning over C.S.E.'s and 'O' levels, and many unrelated exams are being taken at 'A' level.'<sup>6</sup> Obviously academic success still pays dividends in Britain, since the unemployed are overwhelmingly composed of unskilled workers without academic qualifications. This is in contrast to countries such as Italy, and the U.S.A. where graduate unemployment is widespread. Since this change in the labour market is a possible future trend for Britain as well, this emphasis on education *per se* could make Redbridge

Jewish youth vulnerable. The dangers of the present complacent approach to careers guidance and planning for Jewish youngsters are obvious.

*Notes*

1. A. Tamkins, *Do we need to develop careers guidance in the Barkingside area, and if so, how?* Unpublished paper presented to the West Central Jewish Community Development Seminar, July 1977.
2. *Ibid.*
3. *Ibid.*
4. This is a hypothetical question since there is no Jewish secondary school in the Local Education Authority Area. The topic of Jewish education will be dealt with in detail in a later report.
5. ORT was founded in St. Petersburg in 1880. For details see L. Shapiro, *The History of ORT: A Jewish Movement for Social Change*, New York, Schocken, 1980.
6. A. Tamkins, p.2.

## Chapter XI VOLUNTARY WORK

The discussion so far has centred around economic activity and work as it is traditionally defined by economists. That is a 'non-pleasurable' activity which attracts a monetary compensation. However, for a Jewish community especially, voluntary work is an activity of considerable importance. Judaism's essential concern with human interdependence and historical experience of autonomous social existence, has led Jews 'to look after their own' and made them particularly community conscious. This in turn has led to a plethora, and some would say, an excess of religious, communal, educational and especially welfare organisations, within Jewish communities. It has also meant that professionalisation has had less impact. All of these organisations and bodies have to raise money and this requires committees of voluntary workers to do secretarial and administrative work. Most of these committees run events and activities, visit or advise people or provide transport or other services to deserving or disadvantaged groups, which in turn involves more volunteers.

The Redbridge Jewish survey itself was an exercise in volunteering and a co-operative effort by a number of voluntary bodies, all of which are funded on a voluntary basis by membership dues and donations from among the Jewish population. Aside from political or communal organisations, such as the Board of Deputies itself, the majority of the survey sponsors were social service agencies: the Jewish Welfare Board, Jewish Blind Society, Norwood, (families and children) Home for Aged Jews, Jewish Home and Hospital at Tottenham, and the Association for Jewish Youth. It is not intended here to go into the relationship of these various agencies to statutory bodies or the local authority. It is sufficient to state that much of their activities can be defined as voluntary in that they are carried out by people who do the work unpaid. This can be as varied as ferrying old people to and from the Day Centre for the Elderly, to acting as a Manager at the Youth Centre, running a charity shop, or relieving Christian staff at a local hospital on Christmas Day.

Charitable or good works, and this includes volunteering, are something people are proud of, so any questions relating to it in a survey must allow for some exaggeration in the answers. Nevertheless, when asked 'Does anyone in this household do voluntary work?' 23% of adults over 16 years replied in the affirmative. No clear cut definition of voluntary work was given, but the enumerators were all well-versed in the type of activities it involves and were reminded that informal help for friends and relatives should not be accepted.

This figure of 23% who reported doing some voluntary work can be compared with a national survey in 1976, when 15% of the adult population claimed to have done some voluntary work in the past year.<sup>1</sup> For people who know the Jewish community, a 50% greater involvement should not come as a surprise. 38% of households contained somebody who did voluntary work, and the average was 1.5 volunteers per home. 67% of volunteers worked solely in the Jewish community, 15% worked solely for the general community, and the remaining

18% did work for organisations in both the Jewish and wider communities.

The national survey found that only social class was a factor differentiating voluntary workers from the rest of the population. Age and sex was apparently unimportant. Nationally Social Class I had a volunteer rate of 29.4%, more than three times that of Social Classes IV and V. The Redbridge Jewish Survey provided much greater detail in the characteristics of volunteers and found many more significant factors.

A gender bias was present in Redbridge. 58.8% of voluntary workers were women. This equated well with our experience with the volunteer survey team where 60% of the enumerators were women.<sup>2</sup> Table 32 indicates that age was also a major variable both within and between the sexes for volunteers in the Redbridge Jewish population.

Table 32

### PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION OF VOLUNTARY WORKERS BY AGE AND SEX

Age	Males	Females	Total
15-19	1.9	2.7	4.6
20-24	1.9	3.5	5.4
25-29	3.5	5.4	8.9
30-34	1.2	5.8	7.0
35-39	3.9	4.7	8.6
40-44	3.9	5.8	9.7
45-49	3.9	5.1	9.0
50-54	7.0	10.2	17.2
55-59	6.6	4.3	10.9
60-64	4.3	5.1	9.4
65+	3.1	6.2	9.3
Total	41.2	58.8	100.0

The lack of young people is surprising. Again it was borne out by the poor response to our own recruiting activities among this age group. Only 4% of our enumerators were under 20 years of age. This low level of volunteering is a national trend as well. However, while nationally teenagers have half the volunteer rate, among Redbridge Jews, their rate is as low as one-fifth. This would indicate that the type of voluntary activity involved is an important factor. For example, only 5% of the survey enumerators were aged over 60, a far lower rate than the 18.7% of Redbridge volunteers generally. Obviously, a new activity requiring certain academic skills and physical mobility played a part in the kind of people who volunteered to help on the survey.

In the general Jewish population a large number of people over 50 years was found in the voluntary workforce. 47% were over 50, and 9.3% were aged over 65. This has a lot to do with the family and economic cycle and one's experience of *machers*, the proverbial Jewish committee members, suggesting that this age group is generally over-represented in communal activities. The increased proportion of males aged 25-29 is probably linked to their involvement in Charity Aid Committees at this age.<sup>3</sup>

This involvement quickly declines as marriage and fatherhood occurs in their early 30s. As children grow up, fathers are brought much more into voluntary communal activities in the synagogue or youth club, and in fund raising. On the other hand women are more involved in voluntary work of a practical nature with welfare agencies.<sup>4</sup> The fact that the elderly are more likely to be voluntary workers than the under-30s might be thought surprising, since in contemporary Britain they are more commonly thought of as recipients of help. However, Jewish culture is an important factor here, since respect for elders has traditionally involved encouraging their full participation in communal and family life for as long as they are able.

Apart from age and sex, education was also found to be an influence. The participation rate of graduates (34%) and those with 'A' levels, etc. (30%) was significantly higher than for the less educated. Of course, there is a tendency for organisations to recruit such people just because their background provides skills and knowledge which are valuable, such as an accountant to act as honorary auditor.

The Jewish community's reliance on voluntary workers for its organisational viability makes it essential to know the profile of voluntary workers. It is commonly thought that people with time on their hands, and who are under no financial pressures, can afford to devote themselves to charitable and communal work. In fact, nearly 5% of women gave their involvement in voluntary work as the reason they were not employed in the paid workforce. Among men the expected pattern did not occur. Full-time workers were over-represented as voluntary workers at the expense of the unemployed and retired, and to a lesser extent, students. Only part-timers provided the expected rate of male voluntary workers.

Among women a different pattern emerged. Part-time workers were over-represented at the expense of both full-timers, housewives and students. Only retired women had engaged in the expected rate of voluntary work. Considering that women are the most important source of volunteers, these findings are important. Housewives in this population are mostly mothers of young children, and, on the basis of the demographic evidence they can be expected to remain a relatively stable proportion of the population. On the other hand, anything which

caused a rapid increase in the movement from part-time to full-time work among Jewish women, such as increased male unemployment, would have a serious impact on the voluntary sector, since part-timers are 11 points more likely to be voluntary workers than the norm. Moreover, they provide twice as many workers in real terms than do full-time working women. Given the bias towards volunteering among the more highly educated and part-time female workers, it is perhaps not surprising to find that despite the fact that she is the mother of four children, a woman working part-time in a professional career still felt able to do several hours a week of voluntary work.

Involvement in voluntary work can mean a lot of different things. Therefore the best measure is time expended in it. Table 33 provides an indication of the relationship between the different types of economic activity or employment status and the amount of time spent on voluntary work. The categories are only a rough guide and, of course, the two middle ones merge. Nevertheless, a pattern does emerge. In terms of voluntary work, it is the weekly involvement which matters, and this appears to cover 45% of the volunteers. The involvement of housewives is shown again to be surprisingly marginal. The largest single group of volunteers are full-time male workers, followed by part-time female workers. In terms of intensity of effort, the students and the sick have the poorest records. On the other hand the retired, especially women pensioners are very heavily involved. In fact, 21% of the retired voluntary workers are involved for over 10 hours a week, which is more than twice the rate of any other group. Their intensity of effort means that their voluntary work contribution outweighs that of housewives. This involvement of retired people also has to be seen in the context of the high number of economically active people over retirement age. 37% of men and 17% of women were found to be working beyond the normal retirement age. If we add the economically active elderly to these voluntary workers, we can obtain the following result. 49% of males over 65 and 40% of women over 60 are working in one capacity or another. When allowance is made for the infirmed and frail, this is a remarkably high level of participation.

We can see that the Jewish community's demand for voluntary workers is not only economically

Table 33

TIME IN VOLUNTARY WORK BY EMPLOYMENT STATUS (PERCENTAGE) (n = 267)

	<i>Working Full-time</i>	<i>Working Part-time</i>	<i>Unemployed</i>	<i>Housewife</i>	<i>Student</i>	<i>Retired</i>	<i>Sick/ Disabled</i>	<i>Total</i>
1-10 hrs a year	8.3	2.7	0	2.3	1.2	2.0	0.8	17.3
1-10 hrs a month	20.7	8.6	0	4.3	2.0	2.0	0.3	37.9
1-10 hrs a week	15.2	9.8	0	6.3	1.5	5.0	0	37.8
10+ hrs a week	1.9	2.0	0	0.8	0	2.3	0	7.0
	46.1	23.1	0	13.7	4.7	11.3	1.1	100.0
Overall Adult EAP	48.6	14.8	1.0	13.8	6.0	14.7	1.1	100.0



necessary for the viability of its institutions by replacing the need for paid workers, but that it also provides an important social role and leisure time activity for many groups of people. This high level of altruistic endeavour undoubtedly adds to the quality of Jewish life in Redbridge. Voluntary work's potential for providing sociability and enjoyment as well as group solidarity at the communal and local level, could account for people's willingness to be generous with their time. It is an index of the overall importance of the ideology of work among this population and its potential for positive action and self-help.

*Notes*

1. S. Hatch, *Voluntary Work: A Report of a Survey*, Berkhamsted, The Volunteer Centre, 1978.
2. Full details concerning the recruitment, background and performance of the volunteer fieldforce are to be found in D. De Lange and B. A. Kosmin, *Community Resources for a Community Survey*, London, Board of Deputies, 1979, pp.15-23, 26-7.
3. For an assessment of the role and importance of such Committees see Young Idea, *Jewish Chronicle*, 12.ix. 1980, p.18.
4. One example of practical fund raising by women is that £11,616 was raised during 1979, by the Ilford Aid Society, for the Jewish Blind Society, mainly from running second-hand clothes stalls.