DISCONNECTED

Social mobility and the creative industries

Edited by Ryan Shorthouse

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CREATIVITY CULTURE
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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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FOREWORD
BY ALAN MILBURN

The UK's creative industries are a great British success story. Be it film, music, art or media we lead the world in so many fields and these industries now employ more people than the financial services sector. So there is much to celebrate. But, as this thought-provoking and insightful series of essays demonstrates there is much to concern us too.

More than any other economic sector the creative industries rely on the talent of those working in them. Yet the pool of talent from which employers recruit seems to be socially limited. That impacts on prospects for social mobility in Britain. It also impacts directly on the ability of the creative industries to truly play an ambassadorial role for our country. If they are to act as a showcase for our intellect, innovation and initiative they need to better reflect the diversity of modern British society.

The chances of social mobility are greater if more people get the chance of a professional career. The huge growth in professional employment that took place after 1945 created unheard of opportunities for millions of men and women. In the decades after that first great wave of social mobility, birth not worth has become more and more a determinant of life chances in our country. That long-running decline may now have bottomed out. And a new expansion in professional jobs in sectors like the creative industries is creating the conditions for a second great wave of social mobility.

A more fluid society, however, will not just emerge by chance. It requires action by government, employers, schools, universities and communities. Making social mobility happen needs a national crusade if we are to break the default setting in too many professions, particularly at the top, which is to recruit from a narrow part of the social spectrum. A closed shop mentality in our

country means too many people, from middle income as well as low income families, encounter doors that are shut to their talents. Take internships. They tend to go to the few who have the right connections not the many who have potential. It is not just that such elitism is unjust socially; it can no longer work economically. The UK's future success in a globalised economy relies on using all of our country's talent not just some of it. Nowhere is this more true than in the creative industries.

It's not that many young people do not have aspirations. It is that they are blocked. It is not that they do not have talent. To coin a phrase, Britain's got talent – lots of it. It is not ability that is unevenly distributed in our society, it is opportunity. Of course there is no single lever that on its own can prize open the professions, and no single organisation can make it happen either. It is far too complex an issue for that. It's as much about family networks as it is careers advice, individual aspirations as school standards, university admission procedures as well as career development opportunities.

Action is needed on several fronts. The creative industries could take a lead, for example, on internships. They have become a new rung on the professional ladder but they need to be brought out of the informal economy where they are at present and made far more widely accessible. The industry could establish a new Code of Practice to make internships more transparent, a new website to openly advertise them and a kitemark to recognise best practice.

Making a professional career open to the widest pool of talent is not about social engineering or dumbing down. It is about making current access routes fairer and ensuring that those young people who succeed in gaining a top job do so based on talent and merit alone.

One thing is certain – modern Britain can't work if it harbours a closed shop mentality. Our society won't flourish unless people

feel that effort and endeavour are rewarded. Our economy won't prosper unless we harness the talent of all those who are able and aspire to make a contribution. Nowhere is this more true than in Britain's creative industries. I hope this collection of essays prompts those in this most innovative of industries to take a lead in acting as a catalyst for a more fundamental process of change in our country.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

With the financial sector forecasted to shrink over the coming years, Britain's prosperity needs to be driven by a greater diversity of industries. The Coalition Government have identified green technology, high-tech engineering and, in particular, the creative industries as playing a critical role in boosting future British economic growth.

Employment in the creative industries – which includes music production, fashion design and journalism – is highly sought after, offering high job satisfaction and high pay in the long-term.

But young people from lower socio-economic backgrounds are currently under-represented in the creative sector. There is a real risk that the creative jobs of the future will continue to be dominated by a disproportionate number of young people from more advantaged socio-economic backgrounds. As the creative industries grow, employing increasing numbers of people, they have the potential to become an engine of social mobility – but only if opportunities to access them are broadened.

This report, in part two, contains an edited collection of essays, with expert contributions diagnosing the reasons for poor social mobility in the UK's creative industries and offering solutions to improve the situation.

David Johnston, the Chief Executive of the Social Mobility Foundation, argues social immobility is primarily caused by the choices and achievements of young people when they are in school. He proposes that schools need to raise the quality of careers advice and focus on developing crucial soft skills.

Sir Win Bischoff, the Chairman of Career Academies UK, maintains that experiencing work can inspire young people and

equip them with vital skills. He highlights the individual successes of graduates from Career Academies across the country, particularly those who have experienced working in the creative industries.

Paul Collard, the Chief Executive of Creativity, Culture and Education, writes that the creative industries ought to be much more proactive in reaching out to talented young people. He discusses the merits of various different programmes which engage young people with the creative industries, particularly those from more deprived backgrounds, offering them the opportunity to gain the knowledge, contacts and mentors to thrive in the sector.

Stephen Overell, the Associate Director of the Work Foundation, explores the implications of the greater use of unpaid internships in the creative industries, typically as a route for young people to enter the sector. He examines the debate between *Shooting People*, an online membership organisation for those working in or aspiring to work in the independent film industry, and BECTU, the UK broadcasting union, on the advertising of unpaid work. He shows how their disagreement demonstrates differing attitudes to the meaning of work in the 21st century.

But the report begins with an analysis of the role of unpaid internships as an entry route into the creative industries using a new poll. Unpaid work is increasingly the way in which young people access the creative industries, but there are concerns over whether this restricts access for those from lower socio-economic backgrounds.

Three constraints are identified as posing problems for those from less affluent backgrounds accessing unpaid internships in the creative industries. First, **credit constraints** could prevent young people from lower socio-economic groups being able to afford to undertake unpaid internships. Second, **network constraints** could be preventing young people from lower socio-economic

groups acquiring the aspiration or having the contacts to be able to access unpaid internships. Third, **information constraints** could be preventing young people from lower socio-economic groups undertaking unpaid internships that would lead to sufficient return from the investment they make.

Polling of 16 to 25 year olds was undertaken to identify industries perceived by young people to require unpaid work experience in order to secure employment; to identify if any young people were put off from pursuing careers where unpaid work experience was necessary for access; and to examine if young people from lower socio-economic groups were more or less likely to have experienced unpaid internships compared to their peers from better-off backgrounds.

Analysis shows that out of all industries, it is the creative industries that are most commonly identified as the sector where doing unpaid work is important to gain access. However, the polling showed that a majority of young people, including those from lower socio-economic groups, are not put off from pursuing a career in a sector which requires unpaid internships to gain access.

Similarly, the polling suggests that a majority of young people, regardless of socio-economic status or region, have done, or know someone who has done, an unpaid internship to start a career. This suggests that it is not just those from affluent backgrounds who are undertaking internships. Rather, doing unpaid work is a common experience across all social groups.

Contrary to what might have been expected, evidence from the polling implies that these possible constraints do not appear to be deterring or preventing young people from lower socio-economic groups from participating in unpaid internships of some description. Particularly telling is the fact that the unpaid nature of the work does not appear to be a problem for these young

people. Importantly, this analysis says nothing about the type or quality of internships being undertaken by people from different backgrounds. Policymakers should therefore focus less on trying to phase out the unpaid nature of internships and more on ensuring that opportunities and information about accessing high quality internships is extended beyond the better off, to the widest possible range of young people.

Therefore a new National Internship Kitemark Scheme (NIKS) is proposed. NIKS would raise the fairness of internships, by ensuring all kitemarked internship schemes have a fair recruitment process, are advertised through a single gateway and last only for a limited period of time to avoid young people facing open-ended costs. The quality of internships would improve too, since kitemark internships would have to involve a performance review, a final-stage interview if appropriate, and a guaranteed reference letter.

NIKS would not be obligatory for organisations but it would lead to certain benefits: this report suggests that membership of a professional association should be conditional on having (if any) a kitemarked internship scheme; and any government financial support to those undertaking unpaid internships should be given only to those doing a kitemarked internship.

Ultimately, the introduction of NIKS would reduce the network and information constraints faced by those from more disadvantaged backgrounds, extending opportunity beyond those who are lucky enough to be born with it. The creative industries could then be in a stronger position to help rather than hinder a second wave of social mobility in the UK.

INTRODUCTION

This report explores the role policy should play in improving social mobility in the UK's creative industries.

Drawing on the thinking of experts on social mobility and the creative industries, the report examines the reasons for poor social representation in creative professions, focusing on why young people from lower socio-economic groups do not tend to enter the industry. These include poor educational choices, bad careers advice, a lack of social and cultural capital, insufficient work experience and the prevalence of unpaid work.

In particular, this report looks at what role unpaid internships might play in relation to fair access to the creative industries, investigating the perceptions and experience of unpaid internships among young people from different socio-economic groups through polling. Drawing on the implications of this polling, this paper suggests policy options to improve social mobility in the creative industries.

A NEW ECONOMY

As the UK slowly emerges from a recession triggered by the financial crisis of 2007-8, the Coalition Government has criticised the unbalanced growth of the past economic boom, which relied heavily on the performance of financial services.[1] Between 2000 and 2007, financial services added 15% to annual GDP growth[2] and roughly a quarter of all corporation tax receipts derived from financial industries at the peak of the boom.[3]

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1   David Cameron, Speech, 7 June 2010, "We must tackle Britain's massive deficit and growing debt", http://www.conservatives.com/News/Speeches/2010/06/David_Cameron_We_must_tackle_Britains_massive_deficit_and_growing_debt.aspx.

2   Martin Weale, "Commentary: growth prospects and financial services", (London: National Institute of Economic and Social Research, 2009) quoted in James Meadway and Juan Mateos-Garcia, *Demanding growth: Why the UK needs a recovery plan based on growth and innovation* (London: National Endowment for Science, Technology and the Arts, 2009), 5.

3   Cameron, Speech, "We must tackle Britain's massive deficit and growing debt".

However, in the years ahead, the financial services industry is forecast to shrink: Roger Bootle, the Managing Director of Capital Economics, predicts that the contribution of financial services to the UK economy will fall from 9% of GDP now to 5% of GDP by 2020.[4]

The Coalition Government has identified industries that it believes will be engines of growth for the British economy in the years ahead: not only financial services, but green technology, retail, pharmaceutical and advanced engineering, as well as the creative industries.[5] Despite committing to a severe programme of fiscal retrenchment, the Government in the Spending Review promised funding for these leading British sectors. In particular, the creative industries will be supported by an additional £530 million to assist the rollout of superfast broadband.[6]

The creative industries in particular have been identified as a growth sector because of their relative immunity from price competition and growing overseas demand for their output. In particular, they are heavily reliant on knowledge, which has been identified as key driver of economic growth in the 21st century because of growing consumer demand in developed economies for new technology. In 2006, the Work Foundation attributed the strength of the creative industries to "innovative and creative origination anticipating, responding to or shaping demand from this new class of consumers".[7] The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO), in 2006, said of creative industries: "During the 90s they grew exponentially, both

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4   Natalie Holt, "Financial services to shrink to 5% of GDP", www.fundstrategy.co.uk, September 20, 2010, http://www.fundstrategy.co.uk/markets/britain/financial-services-to-shrink-to-5-of-gdp-says-bootle/1018828.article.

5   David Cameron, Speech to the Confederation of British Industry, 25 October 2010, "Creating a new economic dynamism", http://www.conservatives.com/News/Speeches/2010/10/David_Cameron_Creating_a_new_economic_dynamism.aspx.

6   HM Treasury, *Spending Review 2010* (London: The Stationary Office, 2010), 23.

7   Will Hutton, *Staying ahead: the economic performance of the UK's creative industries* (London: The Work Foundation and the National Endowment for Science, Technology and the Arts , 2007), 17.

in terms of employment creation and contribution to GNP. Today, globalisation offers new challenges and opportunities for their development."[8] The UK Government too have recognised the strong contribution creative industries will and do play in boosting UK economic growth, by describing them as "those industries that have their origin in individual creativity, skill and talent and which have a potential for wealth and job creation through the generation and exploitation of intellectual property".[9]

THE UK CREATIVE ECONOMY

The Department for Culture, Media and Sport identifies the creative industries[10] as:

- Advertising
- Architecture
- Art and antiques
- Computer games
- Crafts
- Design

- Fashion
- Film and video
- Music
- Performing Arts
- Publishing
- Television and radio

Between 1997 and 2007, the UK's creative sector grew at an average of 5% per annum, compared to an average of 3% per annum across the economy as a whole. Total employment in the creative sector rose at an average of 2% a year between 1997 and 2008, compared to an average of 1% per year across the whole of the economy. In 1997, there were 112,900 businesses classified in the creative industries. By 2007, this had risen to 157,400,

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8   United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation, "25 questions on culture, trade and globalisation: what do we understand by 'cultural industries'?", http://portal.unesco.org/culture/en/ev.php-URL_ ID=18668&URL_DO=DO_TOPIC&URL_SECTION=201.html quoted in Mustafa Ozbilgin and Ahu Tatli, *Scoping of London based higher education institute work placement practices within the creative and cultural industries* (London: Queen Mary University of London Centre for Research in Equality and Diversity), 15-16.

9   British Council, http://www.britishcouncil.org/arts-creative-industriesdefinition.htm, quoted in Ozbilgin and Tatli, *Scoping of London based higher education institute work placement practices*, 14.

10   Department for Culture, Media and Sport, http://www.culture.gov.uk/what_we_do/creative_industries/default. aspx, quoted in Helen Alexander, Speech to the Stationers' Company, 8 March 2010, http://copyright-debate. co.uk/?p=489.

representing an impressive increase of 39% in the number of new organisations. [11]

The UK has a strong creative economy, the largest in Europe, providing roughly £60 billion a year to the economy and supporting 1.97 million jobs.[12] In 2007, the creative economy accounted for 7.3% of UK GDP, comparable to the contribution of financial services.[13] In London, more people are employed in the creative sector than financial services.[14]

The creative industries, according to NESTA, are expected to grow at 4% per annum between 2008 and 2013, providing 150,000 new jobs in the next three years.[15] Moreover, the creative industries are a popular career choice for many young people. Polling of 16-19 year olds conducted by YouGov for Creativity, Culture and Education (CCE) show that, when a large sample of creative careers are listed, 42% say they are interested in pursuing a career in the creative industries.[16] In fact, a substantially greater number of young people from deprived backgrounds than affluent backgrounds report wishing to work in the creative industries.

SOCIAL MOBILITY AND THE CREATIVE INDUSTRIES

Creative jobs are popular, booming and high-value, making the creative economy critical for the UK's industrial future. The Final Report of the Panel on Fair Access to the Professions, chaired by former Cabinet

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11   Department for Culture, Media and Sport, "Creative industries economic estimates – February 2010", http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/+/http://www.culture.gov.uk/reference_library/publications/6622.aspx.

12   Department for Culture, Media and Sport, *Creative Britain: new talents for the new economy* (London: Her Majesty's Stationery Office, 2008), 6; Hutton, Staying ahead, 16; Department for Culture, Media and Sport, "Creative industries economic estimates".

13   Hutton, *Staying ahead*, 16.

14   Hutton, Staying ahead, 16, quoted in Jen Lexmond and Shelagh Wright, *Making of me* (London: Demos, 2009), 4.

15   Meadway and Mateos-Garcia, Demanding growth, 9.

16   YouGov/Creativity, Culture and Education, Polling, February 5th-12th 2010, http://www.creativitycultureeducation.org/news/new-industries-at-risk-of-falling-into-age-old-habits,286,AR.html.

Minister Alan Milburn, claimed that long-term structural growth in the economy will lead to 7 million new professional jobs by 2020, including in the creative industries, with a clear "opportunity for a second wave of social mobility".[17] Nonetheless, there are concerns that access to current employment opportunities to the creative industries for young people from poorer social groups is highly inequitable.

Skillset, the Sector Skills Council for the Creative Industries, recently released an analysis which illustrated that the creative industries workforce is unrepresentative of society. 6% of the creative industry workforce is from a Black, Minority and Ethic (BME) background – who are typically from a lower socio-economic background – compared to 9% across the whole workforce.[18]

The Final Report of the Panel on Fair Access to the Professions analysed the make-up of different professions based on two cohort studies, for those born in 1958 and 1970. The average journalist born in 1958 came from families with an income 5.5% above the average. In contrast, those born in 1970 came from families with an income 42.4% above average.[19] The report found that journalists in the early part of the last decade were more likely to come from wealthy backgrounds than those in the late 1980s.

Similarly, the largest ever independent study of those entering the profession by the Journalism Training Forum in 2002 found only 3% of new entrants to the profession came from families headed by someone in a semi-skilled or unskilled job,[20] despite the 2001 Census showing that these types of households constitute 16.3% of all UK households.[21]

17   Alan Milburn, *Unleashing aspiration: The final report of the panel on fair access to the professions* (London: Her
      Majesty's Stationery Office, 2009), 5, 38.

18   Skillset, *Strategic skills assessment for the creative media industries in the UK: January 2010* (London: Skillset, 2010), 37.

19   Milburn, *Unleashing aspiration*, 19.

20   Journalism Training Forum, *Journalists at work: Their views on training, recruitment and conditions* (London,
      Publishing NTO and Skillset, 2002), 4.

21   Office for National Statistics, "All Household Reference Persons (HRPs): Census 2001, National Report for England
      and Wales - Part 2", http://www.statistics.gov.uk/STATBASE/ssdataset.asp?vlnk=7506.

Though more comprehensive evidence is needed on the composition of the creative industry workforce from lower socio-economic backgrounds in each creative industry, the evidence that does exist suggests that creative industries, especially journalism, are socially unrepresentative.

REASONS FOR POOR SOCIAL REPRESENTATION

There could be numerous factors for why there is poor social representation in the creative industries.

First, as the Panel of Fair Access to the Professions observed, it is increasingly the case that entry to professions is dependent on having at least a degree.[22] But those from lower socio-economic backgrounds are considerably less likely to have undertaken one. So insufficient qualifications may be impeding access. Similarly, poor careers advice – leading to poor subject choices – may also be damaging access to creative professions.

But prior educational attainment may not be the only factor leading to poor social representation. There are financial barriers for those from lower socio-economic backgrounds accessing the creative industries, such as unstable employment patterns. 34% of the creative workforce is freelance, and in some industries such as photography and radio production the majority of the workforce is freelance.[23] Similarly, short-term contracts and project-based work are common, with a study by the Institute of Employment Studies demonstrating that graduate unemployment is higher in creative industries compared to other industries.[24] This could lead to greater risk aversion for those considering a career in creative industries without a financial safety net.

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22   Milburn, *Unleashing aspiration*, 21-22.

23   Skillset, *Strategic skills assessment for the creative media industries*, 31-32.

24   Ivana La Valle, Siobhan O'Regan, Charles Jackson, "The art of getting started: graduate skills in a fragmented labour market", Institute for Employment Studies 364 (2000), http://www.employment-studies.co.uk/pubs/summary.php?id=364.

Likewise, lack of access to social networks may be the cause of poor social representation. Certain social networks may be more likely to nurture aspirations to work in the creative industries. Indeed, 56% of children from professional backgrounds say they want to be a professionals compared to 13% of children from semi-skilled households.[25] Also, some social networks may be more helpful in supporting young people access particular experiences. A 2009 survey found that 41% of recent graduates had been helped by a friend to get a job interview and 24% had got a job because of a contact.[26] A much higher proportion of adults from higher socio-economic households report that they would contact friends of colleague to help their children get on in creative industries than adults from lower socio-economic households.[27]

There are a multitude of possible explanations for why there is low social representation in the creative industries, and these are explored by expert contributors in part two of this report.

David Johnston, the Chief Executive of the Social Mobility Foundation, argues that the cause of social immobility can be found early on in a young person's life, in the decisions they make and the skills they acquire at school. Young people often take the wrong subjects and lack critical soft skills to succeed in certain professions. Schools, and in particular the careers advice they offer, should better equip young people to succeed in their working lives.

Sir Win Bischoff, the Chairman of Career Academies UK, believes that young people need quality experience of the world of work to raise knowledge of and aspirations for working in different sectors. Investment and energy from employers and schools into shaping effective work experience programmes is crucial.

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25 Cabinet Office, *Aspiration and attainment amongst young people in the UK* (London: Her Majesty's Stationery Office, 2008), quoted in Milburn, *Unleashing aspiration*, 51.

26 BBC News, "Graduates 'reap social benefit'", August 18 2009, http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/education/8207240.stm.

27 YouGov/Creativity, Culture and Education, Polling, February 5th-12th 2010.

Paul Collard, the Chief Executive of Creativity, Culture and Education, writes that the creative industries in particular suffer from poor social representation. The task is to dramatically improve the poor cultural capital and access to work experience among more disadvantaged young people. And the creative industries ought to be much more proactive in reaching out to talented young people.

Finally, Stephen Overell, the Associate Director of the Work Foundation, explores the implications of the use of unpaid internships as an entry route into the creative industries.

This last topic is also the primary focus of part one, which examines the role unpaid internships play as an entry route into the creative economy in helping or hindering social mobility. Not everyone takes unpaid internships to access jobs in the creative industries, but it is increasingly the gateway into the sector: nearly half of those in the creative workforce report having done an unpaid internship to gain entry into the profession.[28] It is important therefore to assess whether unpaid internships are acting as a barrier to entry for young people from poorer backgrounds. This is the focus of the next chapter.

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28   Skillset, *Strategic skills assessment for the creative media industries*, 39.

PART ONE

CHAPTER 1: UNPAID INTERNSHIPS

Unpaid internships are becoming more common across all sectors. The Chartered Institute for Personnel and Development (CIPD) reported that 20% of employers planned to hire interns in the summer of 2010 compared to 13% in the summer of 2009.[29] This is particularly the case in the creative industries. Between 2005 and 2008, the proportion of the creative economy workforce reporting having done unpaid work grew from 38% to 45%.[30] In film, 5% of the workforce reported undertaking unpaid work prior to getting their first paid job in the 1980s, compared to 45% for those entering in 2000 or later.[31]

The recession that began in 2008 also seems to have had an impact on increasing the number of internships: a survey conducted by the University of the Arts London found an increase in the number of unpaid internships being undertaken in the creative industries.[32]

There could be several reasons for why unpaid internships are common in creative industries. This could include high demand and stiff competition and that many creative industries are small businesses.[33]

A crucial question to ask is: is it fair that young people do unpaid work to access the career of their choice? There are two issues to consider in this regard: is it fair in principle that people should work for no pay;

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29 Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development, *Labour market outlook: Spring 2010* (London: CIPD, 2010) quoted in Kayte Lawton and Dom Potter, *Why interns need a fair wage* (London: Institute for Public Policy Research, 2010), 6.

30 Skillset, *2008 creative media workforce survey* (London: Skillset, 2009), 12.

31 Skillset, *Film workforce survey 2005* (London: Skillset, 2005), quoted in Kim Allen, Jocey Quinn, Sumi Hollingworth, Anthea Rose, *Work placements in the arts and cultural sector: diversity, equality and access* (London: Equality Challenge Unit, 2010), 17.

32 University of the Arts London, *Creative industries recession survey* (London: Creative Careers, University of the Arts London, 2009) quoted in Allen et al, *Work placements in the arts and cultural sector*, 17.

33 Lexmond and Wright, *Making of me*, 4.

and, if so, does the unpaid nature of the work mean that opportunities are distributed only to those from more affluent households?

THE VALUE OF UNPAID WORK

First, in regards to whether unpaid work is fair, some organisations have called for unpaid internships to be phased out.[34] They argue that internships are work which should be paid.

The National Minimum Wage (NMW) Act 1998 states that an individual must be paid if they are classified as a 'worker'; this is someone who has a contract of employment or any other contract that requires them to personally carry out work or services for another party. The CIPD says: "If an intern is contributing to an organisation, if they have a list of duties and if they are working set hours the technically they should be paid the NMW".[35] The Low Pay Commission reports: "there is systematic abuse of interns, with a growing number of people undertaking 'work' but excluded from the minimum wage".[36]

However, there are exemptions from the NMW for the following groups of people:

- Apprentices
- Students doing a sandwich job placement as part of their degree
- Volunteers employed by a charity, voluntary organisations or statutory body

Certainly, the National Minimum Wage Act should be adhered to. But government recognises that organisations do offer unpaid

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34   For instance, the Institute for Public Policy Research. See Lawton and Potter, *Why interns need a fair wage*, 4.

35   Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development, *Internships that work* (London: CIPD, 2009), 5.

36   Low Pay Commission, *National minimum wage* (London: LPC, 2010), 110.

internships. On the government's Gradate Talent Pool website, it says: "Employers may wish to offer unpaid internships … it will then be for graduates to decide whether the benefits of taking up the internship outweigh the fact that it is unpaid".[37]

For internships that do not fall within NMW legislation, there is no reason in principle why unpaid work experience should be banned. This is because young people personally choose to do unpaid work because it will ultimately lead to a career with higher satisfaction and reward. The experience is seen as an investment in their future. As the Panel of Fair Access to the Professions concluded: "While internships implied upfront costs, the payback – in terms of access to a professional career – ultimately represented good value for money, even if initially it involved people borrowing money".[38]

With four in five employers reporting they recruit former interns,[39] doing unpaid internships will increase a young person's chances of getting a good, well-paid job in the long-term. Evidence suggests that art and design graduates have better employment prospects if they have undertaken work experience prior to entering the labour market.[40] Additionally, the Graduate Employability Project found that work experience is critical for improving employability of black and minority ethnic (BME) students and students from deprived backgrounds.[41]

Generally therefore, young people are making a sound investment doing an unpaid internship. Arguably, as unpaid

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37 http://graduatetalentpool.direct.gov.uk, quoted in Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development, *Internships that work*, 5.

38 Milburn, *Unleashing aspiration*, 102.

39 Ibid., 56.

40 Lee Harvey and Alison Blackwell, *Destinations and reflections: careers of British art, craft and design graduates* (Birmingham: Birmingham City University, 1999) and Stephanie Taylor and Karen Littleton, *Creative careers and non-traditional trajectories* (London: National Arts Learning Network, 2008), quoted in Allen et al, *Work placements in the arts and cultural sector*, 12.

41 Jennifer Cooper and Julie Hills, *Enhancement of student employability through professional placements: the graduate employability project* (GEM) (London: London Metropolitan University, 2003), quoted in Allen et al, Work placements in the arts and cultural sector, 12.

internships have become more common, young people have little choice but to do them to gain access to their preferred career. But it is worth stressing that young people are exercising a choice between different careers when undertaking them, knowing it is a worthwhile long-term investment for success in their chosen career.

The question of fairness around unpaid internships therefore, is not one about whether they should be paid or not. Rather, it is about whether the lack of payment restricts opportunity to the better off.

EQUALITY OF ACCESS

Unpaid internships are generally a good investment for young people for those wanting to pursue a career in the creative industries. However, given evidence on the lack of diversity in creative industries, it seems likely that these internship opportunities – a crucial gateway to the creative industries – are not fairly distributed across the population.

For people with the appropriate educational background there are three possible constraints that prevent young people from being able to access unpaid internships that lead to employment in the creative industries:

1. **Credit constraints**, preventing young people from lower socio-economic groups being able to afford to undertake unpaid internships.
2. **Network constraints**, preventing young people from lower socio-economic groups acquiring the aspiration or having the contacts to be able to access unpaid internships.
3. **Information constraints**, preventing young people from lower socio-economic groups undertaking unpaid internships that will lead to sufficient return from the investment.

These three constraints affect the two ways that unpaid internships could be having a detrimental impact on social mobility in the creative industries:

a. **Participation in unpaid internships**. Young people from low socio-economic groups are simply not participating in unpaid internships.
b. **Type of unpaid internships**. Young people from low socio-economic backgrounds are participating in unpaid internships, but not ones that lead to employment in the creative industries.

But what evidence is there on how these three types of constraint damaging access to unpaid internships in the creative industries?

Credit constraints

A small number of studies point towards a lack of credit deterring young people from lower socio-economic groups from participating in unpaid internships.

- A recent longitudinal study by Creative Graduates Creative Futures Higher Education partnership and the Institute for Employment Studies, tracking 3,500 recent graduates between 2008 and 2010, found evidence that those from poorer parental backgrounds were less able to afford unpaid internships.[42]
- A 2008 study by the Open University, *Creative careers and non-traditional trajectories*, which examined the career profiles of 46 arts and design graduates from non-traditional backgrounds, showed that many had to forego unpaid work to do paid work, which they believed was detrimental to their career prospects.[43]

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42   Linda Ball, Emma Pollard, Nick Stanley, Joy Oakley, *Creative career stories,* Brighton: Creative Graduates Creative Futures Higher Education partnership and the Institute for Employment Studies. 2010), 5.

43   Karen Littleton and Stephanie Taylor, *Creative careers and non-traditional trajectories.* (London: National Arts Learning Network, 2008), 50.

Network constraints

Young people from lower socio-economic groups have less diverse networks than those from higher socio-economic groups, meaning their reach into different potentially beneficial experiences is smaller.[44] Evidence points towards informal recruitment – through contacts and word of mouth – as being a particularly effective way of accessing creative industries, putting those who lack the right networks at a huge disadvantage.

- A recent longitudinal study by Creative Graduates Creative Futures Higher Education partnership and the Institute for Employment Studies, tracking 3,500 recent graduates between 2008 and 2010, found that securing employment was best achieved through contacts rather then direct response to advertisements.[45]
- The 2010 Skillset study of those working in creative industries found that more people report finding their first or current job through informal channels, such as word-of-mouth or contacts, than formal channels such as responding to an advertisement.[46]

Information constraints

Young people from lower socio-economic backgrounds may have fewer sources of advice about the creative industries and thus may face more information constraints on whether particular unpaid internships will lead to good returns in the long-run. This may make them less willing to undertake them or more likely to undertake ones that do not deliver substantial returns in the long-term.

- Nearly 1 in 4 parents from deprived backgrounds do not know how to help their children access creative industries. This compares to 1 in 5 parents from affluent backgrounds.[47]

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44   Quoted in Milburn, *Unleashing aspiration*, 30.

45   Ball et al, *Creative career stories*, 9.

46   Skillset, *Strategic skills assessment for the creative media industries*, 39.

47   YouGov/Creativity, Culture and Education, Polling, February 5th-12th 2010.

In the next chapter of this report, there will be an exploration through polling of which of these three constraints – credit, networks or information – most explains the connection between unpaid internships and poor social representation in the creative industries.

After exploring these constraints, young people's attitudes to unpaid internships and their prevalence, this first part of the report will conclude by suggesting policies to improve social representation in the creative industries.

CHAPTER 2: POLLING AND ANALYSIS

In the previous chapter, three possible reasons were identified for why young people from low-income groups might be under-represented among unpaid internships in the creative industries:

1. **Credit constraints** – Not being able to afford to work for free by having no or limited access to funds from which to borrow.
2. **Network constraints** – Not having the right personal contacts to raise aspirations and access unpaid internships in the creative industries.
3. **Information constraints** – Not having sufficient knowledge about whether an unpaid internship is a worthwhile investment for one's future career.

YouGov were commissioned to poll 16 to 25 year olds on their attitudes towards and experience of unpaid internships across different sectors. The aim was to identify industries perceived by young people to require unpaid work experience in order to secure employment; to identify if any young people were put off from pursuing careers where unpaid work experience was necessary for access; and to examine if young people from lower socio-economic groups were more or less likely to have experienced unpaid internships compared to their peers from better-off backgrounds.

METHODOLOGY

The first goal of the polling was to explore whether young people perceived the need to do unpaid work to access a career to be higher in the creative industries compared to other industries including IT, construction, manufacturing or engineering, law and accountancy, retail and customer service and medical and veterinary professions.

Therefore, respondents were asked: "In which, if any, of the following categories of industry do you think an unpaid internship or unpaid work experience is important to start a career? IT; construction, manufacturing or engineering, creative industries (e.g. music, fashion, journalism etc), law and accountancy, retail and customer service; medical and veterinary professions; none of these; don't know".

Next, the aim was to explore the perception of young people towards undertaking unpaid internships, and whether this affected their career choices. We wanted to find out the extent to which financial barriers to doing unpaid internships might deter young people from lower socio-economic groups accessing certain careers. Respondents were asked: "To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statement? Having to do unpaid work in an industry/sector I was interested in would deter me from pursuing a career in that area".

If access to the creative industries is perceived as more commonly requiring unpaid work compared to other industries, it may be the case that young people put off from a career where unpaid work is important would not even consider a career in the sector. This perception could therefore be causing a reduction in the number of capable young people pursuing a career in the creative industries.

The final goal was to explore the prevalence of having done unpaid work experience among young people from different socio-economic groups. In particular, we were keen to test whether:

a. Unpaid internships were more common among certain **social groups**, showing that those from lower socio-economic groups were less likely to be able to afford and access such experiences.
b. Unpaid internships were more common in certain **regions**, for instance London, thus excluding those from lower socio-

economic groups who could not afford to live independently or travel.

In order to get a broader insight into the penetration of unpaid internships among different socio-economic groups, respondents were asked about whether they or their family or friends had undertaken an unpaid internship. Social networks tend to be similar to an individual's socio-economic status, particularly for those from lower socio-economic groups; so asking about people's friends and families would get a wider snapshot of the engagement different socio-economic groups have with unpaid internships.

Respondents were therefore asked: "Thinking of you or your friends and family, have you or any of them done unpaid work experience or an internship to get into your or their chosen career?".

This polling was undertaken between the 10th and 13th September 2010. 712 16 to 25 year olds were asked questions as part of the YouGov omnibus survey.

RESULTS

1. The importance of undertaking unpaid work to access a career is perceived to be strongest for the creative industries compared to any other industry.

- 57% of all young people perceive that it is important to undertake unpaid work to access creative industries such as music, fashion and journalism.
- A substantially lower proportion of young people perceive unpaid work to be important in all other industries. (See figure 2.1.)
- 60% of those from low socio-economic groups perceive that is important to do unpaid work to access creative industries compared to 56% of young people in higher socio-economic groups.

- Nearly half of young people in every region believe it is important to do unpaid work to get into the creative industries. Nearly two thirds of young people in London and the South East believe it is important to do unpaid work to get into the creative industries.

Our analysis shows that out of all industries, it is the creative industries that are most commonly identified as the industry where doing unpaid work is important to gain access.

This means that the creative industries are in danger of restricting their recruitment pool even more than other industries if some young people are deterred from pursuing a career where unpaid work is important.

Figure 2.1. In which, if any, of the following categories of industry do you think an unpaid internship or unpaid work experience is important to start a career?
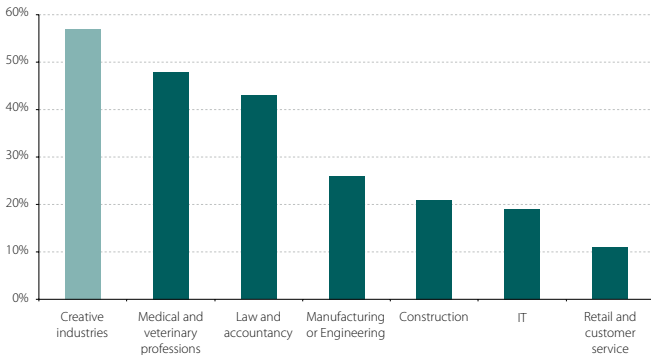
Sample size: 712.
Unweighted base size: 594.
Source: YouGov/CCE polling, September 2010.

2. A majority of young people appear to be willing to undertake unpaid work to pursue a particular career.

- 59% of all young people say they would not be put off from pursuing a particular career if accessing it involved unpaid work.
- 28% of young people say they would be put off from pursuing a particular career if it were dependent on doing unpaid work.

A majority of young people would not be put off from a career where unpaid internships are required to access it. (See figure 2.2.) This evidence implies a majority of young people would be willing to undertake unpaid work to access a career.

It is worth noting also that a significant minority are deterred from accessing careers if they are perceived to require unpaid internships. For the creative industries, where a majority of young people perceive it is important to do unpaid work to gain access, this poses serious challenges in regards to limiting the pool of available talent.

Figure 2.2. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statement? Having to do unpaid work in an industry/sector I was interested in would deter me from pursuing a career in that area?
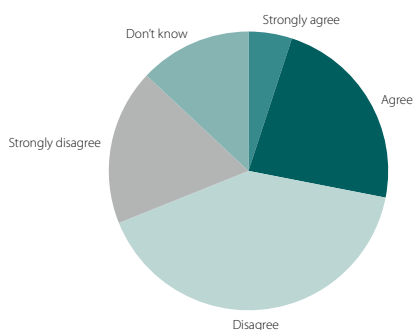

Sample size: 712..
Unweighted base size: 594.
Source: YouGov/CCE polling, September 2010.

3. Young people from lower socio-economic groups are no more likely to be put off from pursuing a career where unpaid internships are required to gain entry than young people from higher socio-economic groups.

- 57% of young people from a low socio-economic group report not being put off from a career that requires unpaid work to get into, compared to 59% of young people from a high socio-economic group. (See figure 2.3.)
- Nearly half of young people from all regions would not be deterred from pursuing a career if unpaid work was required to access it.

This evidence shows that a majority of young people from lower socio-economic groups and nearly all regions are not put off from pursuing a career in a sector which requires unpaid internships to gain access.

The responses also illustrate that young people from low socio-economic groups are no more likely to be put off a career requiring unpaid work than young people from higher socio-economic groups.

Figure 2.3. Young people responding that they disagree or strongly disagree that unpaid work would deter them from pursuing a career in a sector/industry they were interested in
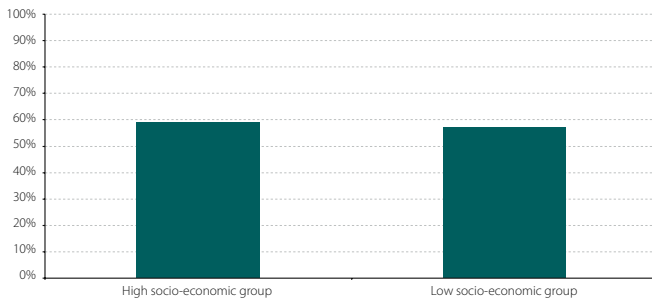
Sample size: 693.
Unweighted base size: 628.
Source: YouGov/CCE polling, September 2010.

4. A majority of young people from all social groups and regions have done or know someone who has done an unpaid internship to start their career. Unpaid internships are the norm across all socio-economic groups.

- 54% of all 16 to 25 year olds have done, or know someone who has done, an unpaid internship to start a career.
- 56% of young people from higher socio-economic groups have done, or know someone who has done, an unpaid internship compared to 51% of young people from lower socio-economic groups. (See figure 2.4.)
- In all regions in the UK, nearly half of young people have done, or know someone who has done, an unpaid internship. (See figure 2.5.)
- In London and Yorkshire & the Humber, over 60% of young people have done, or know someone who has done, an unpaid internship.

This polling suggests that unpaid internships are a common experience for young people wanting to entering a career, regardless of socio-economic status or region. This suggests that it is not just those from affluent backgrounds who are undertaking internships, as hypothesised. Rather, doing unpaid work is a common experience across all social groups.

Although more young people in London are likely to have done or know someone who has done an unpaid internship, most regions have over half of all young people reporting they have done an unpaid internship or know someone who has. This suggests that unpaid internships are a common experience for young people across the UK.

Since a majority of young people of low socio-economic status say they have done an unpaid internship, or know someone who has, to kick-start their career, this suggests that such people are not deterred from undertaking some kind of unpaid work for whatever reason.

Alongside the fact that a majority of those from low socio-economic groups are not deterred from pursuing a career where unpaid

internships are required to gain access, this implies that credit constraints in particular are not decisive in preventing most young people from low socio-economic groups undertaking unpaid internships. The majority, even among those from low income backgrounds, are clearly finding ways to be able to afford to do unpaid work.

Figure 2.4. Thinking of you or your friends and family, have you or any of them done unpaid work experience or an internship to get into your or their chosen career?
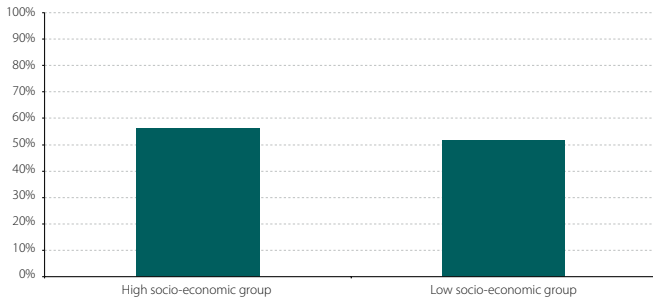
Sample size: 693.
Unweighted base size: 577.
Source: YouGov/CCE polling, September 2010.

Figure 2.5. Thinking of you or your friends and family, have you or any of them done unpaid work experience or an internship to get into your or their chosen career?
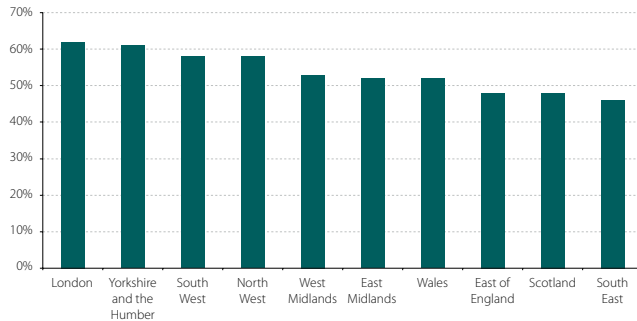
Sample size: 710.
Unweighted base size: 594.
Note: The bases for some of the regions were less than 50
Source: YouGov/CCE polling, September 2010.

DISCUSSION

The results provide three crucial insights:

1. Young people perceive it is more important to do unpaid work to gain access to the creative industries than any other.
2. But a majority of young people from all social backgrounds are not deterred from accessing a career where one has to do unpaid work to gain entry to it.
3. Most importantly, young people from low socio-economic groups are as likely to have done or know someone who has done an unpaid internship as their more affluent counterparts.

It is also worth highlighting two limitations of these results. First the poll asked people in lower-paid jobs and households if they or anyone they knew had undertake unpaid internships to access careers. It could be the case that many of these people were saying yes for people they knew, rather than their own experiences, and that these people they knew were from more affluent backgrounds. However, evidence does suggest that an individual's social network, particularly for those from low-income backgrounds, is very similar to their own socio-economic characteristics.[48] Second, the polling asked people who are currently regarded as in a lower-paid job or household. This could include low-paid young people from affluent backgrounds living independently. Nonetheless, it seems unlikely that this would substantially affect the results.

Respondents' answers do not suggest that credit constraints, or indeed any other constraint, is deterring or preventing young people from lower socio-economic groups from **participating** in unpaid internships. It may well be the case of young people are

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48   Quoted in Milburn, *Unleashing aspiration*, 30.

passionate about pursuing a particular career, they are somehow finding ways to be able to find unpaid work.[49]

This implies that policymaking should not fixate solely on trying to address the credit constraints for young people from low socio-economic groups in helping them to access unpaid internships.

However, it is worth noting that the polling did not identify the **types** of unpaid internship those from lower socio-economic backgrounds are undertaking. Given the evidence of poor social representation in the creative industries, it seems likely that those from lower socio-economic backgrounds are not accessing unpaid internships in this sector, or internships that lead to secure employment in the creative industries. This may also be true of other industries.

Despite the apparent message that financial barriers are less important than might have been thought, it may be that financial barriers to the best internship opportunities remain. The geographical location of unpaid internships, in the creative industries in particular, may restrict opportunities to those who can afford to move away from home to undertake unpaid internships. Some 70% of advertising industry internships,[50] for example, are based in London. Clearly, more evidence is required about the experiences of those from low socio-economic groups in unpaid internships in certain regions and sectors.

Either way, these results imply that financial barriers are less significant than might have been thought. It seems likely that young people from low socio-economic groups are not taking the

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49   *Destinations and reflections: British art, craft and design graduates – The national survey* shows that many of those trying to secure employment in the period after graduation support themselves through what they might call unrewarding salaried work whilst trying to get started. See Linda Ball, "Future directions for employability research in the creative industries" (A working paper researched by Linda Ball, The Council for Higher Education in Art and Design), http://www.adm.heacademy.ac.uk/resources/resources-by-topic/employability/future-directions-for-employability-research-in-the-creative-industries.

50   Milburn, *Unleashing aspiration*, 103.

right types of internship because they lack the social networks and access to good information available to better-off young people.

As access to the sector is dominated by informal recruitment, young people from deprived backgrounds may lack the aspiration or contacts to access unpaid internships in the creative industries.

Additionally, these young people could be deterred from pursuing unpaid internships in the sector because they had little information about potential returns beforehand. Or they could indeed be undertaking internships in the creative industries, but ones that deliver few returns, again because of information constraints. Information constraints are slightly connected to the differing networks young people have access to. Those who are better connected to those in creative industries may have more sufficient information.

Policymakers should therefore focus efforts on trying the address these two constraints to improve social mobility in the creative industries. Policy responses should focus on boosting aspiration, equalising opportunities for access and improving information to young people about the value of the unpaid work they are undertaking. Possible solutions are explored in the next chapter and expert contributors suggest further ideas in part two of this book.

CHAPTER 3: POLICY SUGGESTIONS

A. A new national study on the type of unpaid internships undertaken by young people from low socio-economic backgrounds

The polling in the last chapter illustrated that although young people from poorer backgrounds are as likely to have undertaken an unpaid internship as their wealthier peers, it was not possible to determine the type of unpaid internship they were doing.

In regards to the creative industries, many poorer young people may simply not be accessing certain types of unpaid internship. This could be due to network or information constraints that prevent them from having the aspirations to pursue such a career or from finding out about relevant opportunities. Or indeed, despite their apparent unimportance, credit constraints could still be playing a role in limiting access to some types of internship, such as those in expensive parts of the country like London. There is also insufficient information about the average length of internships, or how many are typically undertaken by any one person before they succeed in gaining paid employment in the creative industries. It could be the case that the duration and multiplicity of unpaid internships to get into the creative sector exacerbates credit constraints for those from low socio-economic backgrounds.

So while the polling suggests that unpaid internships are undertaken as much by young people from lower as from higher socio-economic groups, there is no robust evidence about what types of internship each group are doing. If there is to be clarity about the distribution of these important opportunities, an extensive study is needed on participation in unpaid internships. A national study, backed by government and industries, should include:

• Young people's participation in unpaid internships by each economic sector.

- The location of these unpaid internships.
- The length of unpaid internships.
- The average number of unpaid internships being undertaken to gain access to different sectors.
- The source of explicit financial support and assistance 'in kind' being drawn upon by unpaid interns.
- Typical destination (type of employment vs. unemployment) of those undertaking unpaid internships in each sector.

All these findings should be broken down by socio-economic background and other significant demographic details, so that policymakers have a better understanding of the role internships play in promoting or frustrating equality of opportunity.

B. A new National Internship Kitemark Scheme (NIKS)

The polling results suggested that, contrary to expectations, financial constraints do not appear to have any greater deterrent effect for young people from lower socio-economic groups as for their better off peers. If good internship opportunities are unequally distributed, it therefore seems likely that the quality of social networks and information available to those from higher socio-economic backgrounds could be the reason.

This dependency on networks for success, and the lack of information whether doing an unpaid internship is worthwhile, could be mitigated by a new government-backed National Internship Kitemark Scheme (NIKS) – based on, for instance, the kitemark scheme developed by Internocracy, called I.SIP. NIKS could create greater transparency in recruitment and more reassurance to young people that unpaid internships are a worthwhile investment.

A NIKS award would only be awarded to organisations offering unpaid internships with the following characteristics:

- **Opportunities advertised openly with a fair recruitment process**. Informal recruitment is commonplace for entry into the creative industries. To equalise opportunities, companies running internships should advertise them openly and do a fair recruitment process. A kitemark should only be awarded where recruitment practices are fair and open.

- **Single gateway**. Since social networks offer an important source of information for young people from higher socio-economic groups, extending the network to less privileged young people through a single online gateway would be desirable. All kitemarked internship opportunities should therefore appear on the existing Graduate Talent Pool website.

- **Time-limited**. Open-ended, or long internships, are unfair because they exacerbate credit and information constraints. Short internships limit the cost of participating, while time-limiting them prevents interns from investing any further time and money in what may turn out to be a fruitless activity. To gain the kitemark therefore, internships for graduates or school-leavers should last no longer than three months.

- **Induction and performance review**. Young people are unsure, when taking an internship, of whether it will be regarded by other employers as having been a worthwhile investment. By standardising the elements of an effective internship – a structured opportunity with feedback from the employer – it is possible to improve the value of the experience to the individual.

- **Final stage interview and a guaranteed reference letter.** A further way in which information problems can be resolved is if interns are guaranteed, at the end of a three-month internship, an opportunity to have an interview to gain employment where appropriate, and if not, a guaranteed reference letter from the organisation.

This government-backed national kitemark scheme should not be obligatory for organisations to join. And indeed it would be

impossible to enforce. However, it is likely that talented young people will be drawn to organisations offering high-quality kitemarked internships. Nevertheless, government could encourage its adoption by businesses by only providing the financial support currently available to interns to those involved in a kitemarked scheme.

NIKS would raise the quality and fairness of unpaid internships, ultimately to the benefit of all young people, but especially those from more deprived backgrounds. It will incentivise organisations to shift their internships from the informal to the formal economy, enabling recruitment to be less dependent on prior networks and information, and more on merit.

C. Continuation of government support for unpaid internships for those from low-income backgrounds

After the publication of the *Final Report to the Panel on Fair Access to the Professions*, the Labour Government introduced new support for those from more deprived backgrounds to access unpaid internships.

- The National Internship Service introduced in January 2010, which gave young people from low-income backgrounds bursary funding for doing internships.[51]
- A bonus to graduates of £100 per week for skilled internships with Federation of Small Business members.[52]
- A training allowance for new interns undertaking a 13-week internship who were previously on Job Seekers Allowance for six months.[53]

The polling reported here suggests that access to some form of internship is no different for those from lower socio-economic groups. Nevertheless, financial support may have an impact on

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51   HM Government, *Unleashing aspiration: The government response to the final report of the panel on fair access to the professions* (London: The Stationery Office, 2010), 38.

52   Low Pay Commission, *National minimum wage*, 108.

53   Ibid., 108.

the type of internships those young people can access, due to the geographical location of the prime opportunities, for example. Consequently, existing financial support mechanisms should be maintained.

Additionally, if lack of credit is a problem, other ways of financially supporting those from non-traditional backgrounds to afford unpaid internships in the creative industries should be considered. Using the Student Loans Company, those from deprived backgrounds should be able to access loans to support maintenance costs whilst undertaking unpaid internships. Access to SLC loans should be cost-neutral to the exchequer. The loan would only be available to those taking internships under NIKS. In this way, it offers the borrower reassurance that the experience is a worthwhile investment and the loan can be repaid.

PART TWO

CHAPTER 4: STARTING EARLY
BY DAVID JOHNSTON

INTRODUCTION

The Social Mobility Foundation's approach to improving social mobility involves trying to support high-achieving young people from low-income backgrounds into the top universities and professions by replicating the network of support a more privileged student might have. We begin working with students in their first year of sixth form and each one is given a mentor from the profession they aspire to enter, skills development (focusing particularly on 'soft skills'), short-work taster internships and support with the university application process, including visits to universities and workshops on the personal statement, interviews and aptitude tests. Support continues while the students are at university to help ensure they take advantage of the opportunities offered, and that they make competitive applications for penultimate year internships and graduate jobs.

Our work underlines that the key institutions charged with improving matters for less-privileged young people – employers, universities and schools – tend to pass responsibility for the problem elsewhere, usually downwards. So employers complain that the graduates they interview are ill-prepared for the working world. They claim that they employ such a narrow range of because those from less-privileged backgrounds are not at the 'right' universities. These universities say they would love to accept a greater number of students from more modest backgrounds but the quality of education such students receive from school prohibits this. Secondary schools say that by the time they receive their pupils from primary schools, it is too late, and they have to play catch up. Primary schools say they are already doing all they can and ask us to look at the families their pupils come from. In fact, there is a collective responsibility on all of these institutions – along

with government – to improve the current state of affairs.

THE ROLE OF SCHOOLS

If we accept that some children will be born into families where, for whatever reason, there is very little prospect of them being socially mobile without assistance, that assistance must in the first instance be provided by the schools they attend. If we think of social mobility as being a journey an individual is making for the first time, school must be the place where they build the vehicle by which they will travel. It is not up to the school to manufacture all of the components required for that vehicle in-house, but it must provide good access to the suppliers the student needs, such as employers and universities who, in addition to offering greater assistance to schools with this process, need to ensure the roads they operate are free from obstructions.

It is clear to me in comparing schools that we currently have some students leaving formal education with the equivalent of a sports car that, driven carefully, will get them to their chosen destinations quicker and more smoothly than almost anyone else. Unfortunately, we have some students who leave with much less sophisticated vehicles – which may immediately require an MOT as it is touch and go whether they can in fact get to where they want to – whilst others have no vehicle at all.

THE FOCUS ON FIVE GCSES

Many schools structure their operations around GCSE league tables. This means that instead of school being a place that prepares its pupils for all aspects of adult life, it is a place that prepares them to take their exams in English, Maths and three other subjects. Too many pupils are not taking subjects that prepare them for the next stage of their life: their GCSEs and A-Levels are often in subjects that they believe will be easier and wrongly think will be relevant

for their future career, the classic example being media studies. As research in 2008 revealed, 93% of A-Level entries for media studies were from students in non-selective state schools,[54] yet those working in the media say it is about the worst thing you can do if you want to work in the media. Where they get the opportunity, they encourage students to focus on more traditional subjects, and to gain a degree from a more traditional university. In 2007-8, Oxford University accepted more students with one A-Level – Further Mathematics (711 students) – than it did students with one of 15 other A-Levels combined (494 students), including Media Studies, Film Studies, Music Technology, Art & Design and Design & Technology.[55] Such statistics are rarely given to students.

CAREERS ADVICE

The fact that so many students in certain schools take subjects they wrongly hope will aid their career aspiration underlines another problem in such schools: the lack of effective careers advice. In some schools there is very little preparation for students wanting to enter university, other than a cursory 'HE information evening'. This contributes to the difficulties less advantaged students face: as research by the Sutton Trust highlighted, just 8% of entrants to the top 12 universities come from the poorest third of postcodes.[56] This is not just the fault of the schools, but the advice offered in many schools needs to be radically improved.

Careers advice is seen as almost universally inadequate in schools. Since 2001 the Connexions service has been responsible for providing careers advice. As a recent study for the Department of Education highlighted, the service has not been effective: "Advice from Connexions has a negligible impact both on short-

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54 Anna Fazackerley and Julian Chant, *The hard truth about 'soft' subjects*, (London: Policy Exchange, 2008), 1.

55 Ibid., 3.

56 The Sutton Trust, *The educational backgrounds of leading lawyers, journalists, vice chancellors, politicians, medics and chief executives*, (London: 2009), 16.

term opinions and on eventual choices".[57] Even alumni of some of the top independent schools complain that they did not receive good careers advice. However, at such schools, this problem is mitigated by the professional network of parents, who can visit the school to talk about their own career and often arrange meetings or work experience for their children at their friends' places of work. In contrast, students at disadvantaged schools do not have parents who can provide such connections.

When I was the Director of Future, a charity which is the sponsor of Pimlico Academy, I led consultations with students at the then Pimlico School as to what they wanted to improve about their school experience. A lot of their comments focussed on careers advice. They told me that the school had no careers advisor. It turns out the school did in fact have a careers advisor, but it underlined how peripheral the role of that person was. One student said that pupils neither had external speakers come and visit the school to talk about their career, nor did they make visits to employers. Another student said that being at school was like being "in a dead-end job without the pay". One shouldn't make too much of one example, but their comments confirmed what I had already heard from students at other schools around the country.

Similar sentiments are expressed by the students we work with at the Social Mobility Foundation. Over 90% of our participants say they would not have got the short, work-taster internships we arrange for them without our assistance.[58] In fact, over 60% of students say they hadn't even heard of the organisation they were placed at before their internship,[59] despite the fact that we work with some of the most prestigious names in the professions we target.

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57   Cheti Nicoletti and Richard Berthoud, *The role of information, advice and guidance in young people's education and employment choices* (University of Essex: Institute for Social and Economic Research 2010), 9.

58   Social Mobility Foundation, Unpublished Report, *Student internship evaluation* (London: 2010).

59   Ibid.

LACK OF AWARENESS

The lack of contact with the outside world in so many schools has a significant impact on the aspirations of students. I have never agreed with those who say that aspirations in poor-performing schools are universally low, and the workshops I have run with students at schools across the country underlines this is not the case. Many students and their families have high aspirations – perhaps for the legal or medical professions – but do not have a clear idea of how to get to where they want to as no one in the family has worked in a professional occupation. According to research by Universities UK in 2007, 56% of children whose parents have a professional career want a professional career themselves, compared with only 13% of children whose parents are in semi-skilled occupations.[60]

Some students do have low aspirations: perhaps to work in any role at the nearby shopping centre or airport, not because they've decided it's the ideal job for them, but because that's what everyone else they know does. What unites these different types of students is that they have been influenced by what they see, either on television or in their local areas. A significant number of young people want to be forensic scientists due to programmes that make the role look exciting, or nurses because their mothers are nurses.

Both are very important jobs, but young people should choose careers after having been presented with a range of options, not because they've only had exposure to one or two careers. There is a wide array of roles within the creative industries, but too many students only know of the front-line ones – the designer, the actor, the journalist – not the many other people who also support

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60   Universities UK, Research Report 2007, quoted in: Department for Children, Schools and Families, *Quality, choice and aspiration – A strategy for young people's information, advice and guidance*, (London: DCSF, 2009), http://publications.education.gov.uk/eOrderingDownload/IAG-Report-v2.pdf

the product being created. When families are unable to provide exposure to a range of careers, it is doubly important that schools do so.

WHAT DO EMPLOYERS LOOK FOR? THE IMPORTANCE OF SOFT SKILLS

The first thing schools should do is alter their perspective, shifting from the goal of every pupil getting five good GCSEs, to equipping each pupil with what employers and universities look for. The best schools already approach their students in this way, and their students are the most sought after by both employers and universities. For those that don't already do so, we need government to change the way in which it judges schools and, as the Final Report of the Panel to Fair Access to the Professions concluded, develop measures for assessing the destinations of students after they've left school. A focus on destinations will still require students to have achieved a certain standard in English and Maths, but as part of a more holistic development of pupils, rather than as the end in itself. As part of this holistic approach, schools will focus on honing important soft skills such as a positive attitude, resilience and basic interpersonal skills such as good eye contact and a firm handshake.

I've had the privilege to visit some of the most successful charter schools which serve pupils from deprived urban areas in the U.S. At these schools there is a very deliberate focus on such skills. There are 'no excuses' as to why students from very deprived backgrounds cannot achieve as well as students from more privileged backgrounds. The people behind the schools know that such skills are a key component of how individuals are judged. Indeed, students at such schools attend summer schools before term starts to train them in everything from dinner table manners and listening attentively to greeting adult visitors warmly. They are trained to "sweat the small stuff" (pay attention to details), and such

"stuff" is a key component of what employers say they value and is of course integral to many positions within the creative industries, not least those involving the management of relationships with external clients.

THE RESPONSIBILITIES OF SCHOOL STAFF

In addition to the general soft skills that employers look for, there are of course a host of specific requirements for particular roles, be it within the creative industries or elsewhere. We therefore need a more developed system of careers advice in which schools familiarise themselves with the entry routes and requirements for particular jobs or professions. It is unrealistic to expect that one person in a school (the careers advisor) can hold the information required to advise students about all careers, but if the responsibility was spread around the school, so that every member of staff was familiar with the entry routes for just one profession (and/or university), pupils would be a lot better prepared than they currently are.

Such an approach would require a new honesty with pupils. At the moment, pupils are often told they can be anything they want to be – whether a computer game designer or an architect – but given no guidance on how they might achieve this. They are sometimes told they should go to university because it will help them get the job they want to, but they are rarely told that certain employers only recruit graduates with particular degrees or from certain universities, and that those universities will look for certain GCSE/A-Level subjects. This is vital information they ought to receive before they make decisions that might rule them out of jobs later in life. If all schools learn the entry requirements for different professions and universities, it will be of huge benefit to their students, who often have their progress limited not by their ability, but by poor guidance.

OUTSIDE EXPERT ADVICE

Another way for students to receive the right information, as well as have their aspirations raised, is to invite a range of people from a variety of roles to the school to talk to pupils. In the first term at Pimlico Academy, we had over 30 people from a range of professions come into the school to talk about their careers. This proved hugely popular within all year groups, and led to pupils harassing their teachers to find out when they could next go to a talk. Such sessions enable young people to hear about jobs they have never heard of and to ask questions about what they'd need to do to get such a job.

Pimlico Academy is of course in central London and it is undoubtedly easier to secure speakers in a big city than it would be in, say, a rural area. However, there is a surprising amount of goodwill amongst professionals to speak in schools when they are asked to, and the increasing sophistication of school technology means that there are web-based approaches which can help students hear from professionals if it is really implausible for them to be visited.

Nonetheless, I have too often spoken to firms that have tried to initiate schemes and given up, as they have felt the school was uninterested or failed to respond to information requests. This can be because the whole structure of extra-curricular opportunities – be they employer or university related – is the responsibility of just one person in the school. When this person leaves the school, the whole network of opportunities disappears, as it was not given the priority it should have been and embedded into the roles of a number of staff. The re-ordering of a school's priorities would see more staff given responsibility for such activities, and not just when short-term pots of money are made available. Indeed, at Pimlico Academy, there are now members of staff to work solely on such aspiration-raising activities.

WORK EXPERIENCE

We also need a more thoughtful approach to finding work experience or internship opportunities for young people. At the moment, unless a student picks a course which has 'work-related learning' built in, the opportunities for experiencing the workplace are confined to the Year 10 work experience. Due to the fact that schools are seeking work experience at the same time and they tend to either ask students to find their own work experience, or rely on the local authority's employer connections (rather than having their own), this is a largely unfulfilling experience. If there is only one architectural practice that the local authority has a relationship with, but 25 students at its schools who want their work experience to be with an architect, it is inevitable that a number of students are going to be disappointed, and their one opportunity to gain an insight into their chosen world will be lost. Given the increasing importance of work experience and internships when applying for jobs, such opportunities should be provided more regularly than for two weeks within a five year period of secondary education. This requires schools to prioritise their own relationships with employers.

In the Cristo Rey schools in the US, students from the age of 14 spend one day a week of paid work in a clerical-level position in prestigious firms to help fund their tuition, expose them to positive role models and develop their employability skills. This has yielded great results in higher education progression rates for the pupils attending the schools. Nearly 6,000 students have been served by the 24 schools so far; 95% of these students are from ethnic minorities and the average household income of pupils is $35,662.[61] Whilst the progression routes for such students can often be less than 50%, 96% of the students graduating from the Cristo

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61   Cristo Rey Network, *Cristo Rey network annual report 2009* (London: 2009) http://www.cristoreynetwork.org/documents/CRNAR_09_low.pdf.

Rey schools have gone onto either a two or four year course at a college/university thus far.[62]

I have seen the same picture at the sixth-form college at which I am a governor where, through a programme providing talks and work experience in finance-related firms, student progress has improved such that 95% of the students involved go on to higher education, compared to 75% across the college as a whole.[63] Crucially, the students involved in both examples are not the top-achievers who would do well anyway: they are the average students for their schools and local areas.

RELATIONSHIPS WITH UNIVERSITIES

Schools should give the same priority to relationships with universities, by arranging more frequent visits by undergraduate students and tutors, and more regular trips for their students to experience university first-hand. Again, this is very often confined to one period in the school calendar, but the knowledge of the university process is invaluable to making the applications of students effective. Much as universities might encourage the view that all of the information is in the prospectus or on the website, the schools with the most impressive higher education success rates know this isn't the case, and have built up a knowledge base through relationships with universities which involve regular conversations with tutors – who sometimes sit on the governing bodies of their schools – on what makes their candidates stand out in personal statements, references and interviews.

BEYOND SCHOOL

Schools cannot do it all by themselves. For starters, they need employers and universities to be more forthcoming, and for them

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62   Ibid.

63   Pimlico City Academy, unpublished report to the governors (London: 2010).

to engage with schools on a more sustained basis, rather than just with one day events that make good photo opportunities. Again, there are lots of little pockets of good practice in this area but not yet enough, as such work is not properly prioritised. Too often both the universities and professions which are oversubscribed are complacent in their approach to schools, knowing they will fill their places each year whatever happens.

There is then the even bigger issue of how people can actually secure admission to certain institutions if they do apply. The aspiring student from a disadvantaged background finds themselves faced with opaque admissions information, expensive qualifications and unfamiliar aptitude tests. They are thrown into competition against candidates coached in interviews and assessment techniques, who have often discussed their applications with those on the admissions side and experienced both universities and the professions already with the help of family connections.

The response to the under-representation of certain groups within universities or professions is often to provide bursaries. While these can be very important, they are an unimaginative response to the problem. Employers and universities need to look at the recruitment information they provide and the channels through which they distribute it: does everyone get equal access to the same information, or are only certain institutions targeted? Is the information on the website comprehensive, or are you at an advantage if you know someone within the institution? We need more honesty about the factors that can work against a candidate, whether they relate to subject choice, university choice or simply the way the candidate interacts with the assessors. If there are aptitude tests and they require practise, candidates should be told; at the moment the official line of universities that use them is that aptitude tests measure aptitude and so little can be gained with extensive preparation, and yet one of the country's top independent schools begins its preparation for one of the tests

nearly nine months in advance of it being taken. Would it do this if it was not important to do so? The school happens to have one of the best success rates for entry into the universities that use the test.

In addition, access to internships and work experience has to be widened. The Social Mobility Foundation has been told by certain employers that work experience is reserved solely for the relatives of their existing employees and clients; this cannot be right when the same organisation will look for evidence of work experience when assessing candidates for full-time jobs.

Neither employers nor universities should be allowed to excuse the flaws in their admissions procedures by saying everything would be fine if the schools were improved, or if young people received 'early intervention'. They should be able to determine the best and brightest now, rather than simply the best trained. There are young people with the right qualifications for entry now who still can't gain admission, and we cannot place all of the blame for this on schools. However, by changing the focus of schools onto what employers and universities really look for, the latter institutions will no longer be able to excuse their own shortcomings.

CHAPTER 5: EXPERIENCING WORK
SIR WIN BISCHOFF

INTRODUCTION

It is in all of our interests and the future prosperity of the UK that our professions and skilled jobs are open to the widest range of talent available.

The Panel on Fair Access to the Professions, chaired by former Labour Cabinet Minister Alan Milburn, found that for those from less affluent backgrounds, accessing many professions is more challenging now than a generation ago. It also found that in many professions, not least the creative industries, access was largely limited to the children of professional parents.[64]

These young people, through their parents, had access to a range of formal and informal networks which provided them with the contacts, work experience and internships that are now at a time of increasing competition virtually a requirement for access to many professions, training courses and universities. Against this background, the children of less prosperous or non-professional parents are at a distinct disadvantage.

Critically, we not only need to provide opportunities for those who have already set their sights on a career path, but to raise the aspirations of those who have the ability to succeed so they apply themselves to professional careers and skilled employment.

BOOSTING SOCIAL MOBILITY

Here there is clearly a role for both educators and employers. Schools and colleges can provide young people with the knowledge and

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64   Milburn, *Unleashing aspiration,* 20.

many of the skills required for a range of professions, including the creative industries, but they cannot provide them with the real hands-on experience and, in many cases, the key social skills required to succeed in many of today's jobs. We need schools and colleges to engage with employers in all sectors giving those schools access to the sort of practical experience and support which only employers can provide.

We need to provide experiences in a meaningful and structured way. Making programmes effective requires clear benefits for students and their schools. Many careers rely as much on presentation and attitude as on simple academic ability. Employers have a social responsibility to help provide and facilitate such experience.

Crucially, experiences also need to be easy to administer and be cost effective for employers. This is particularly the case in the creative industries where many smaller employers have limited resources and cannot always commit to taking an apprentice, or an intern, but still have expertise to offer to those young people seeking guidance on their career path.

CAREER ACADEMIES

A model which I believe has much to offer is the Career Academy movement, a business-led educational charity, which I have chaired for the past nine years.

Set up by the business community in 2002, Career Academies UK is a registered charity that leads and supports a movement of employers, schools and colleges, working together to raise the aspirations of middle achieving 16 to 19 year olds. Independently recognised for outstanding business and education brokerage, it was the first national organisation to receive the Award for Education Business Excellence awarded in 2009 by the IEBE.

Over 110 UK schools and colleges, 98% of which are in urban areas, predominantly in deprived areas, are involved in the Career Academy movement. Career Academy students follow a rigorous two-year programme and a curriculum equivalent to at least three A-levels which enables them to explore an area of interest while being exposed to a wide range of education and career possibilities.

The model is flexible enough to enable schools and colleges to respond to the particular needs of their local community. Career Academies UK's significant expertise lies in training schools and colleges to forge their own relationships with employers and manage their own Career Academy programme. The approach, akin to a franchise, requires schools and colleges to invest significantly more hard work and commitment than traditional education business partnerships. The impact, on students, teachers and employers alike, is however worth it. Employers favour the flexibility and low-risk element of the programme. They choose to give as much or as little time as they wish, to support the programme and at no financial cost to their organisation. Volunteers will also benefit from ongoing support and training from Career Academies UK staff at a local and national level.

Within this framework, the exact content of the programme of study is decided locally, in consultation with Career Academies UK staff. It can include vocational qualifications such as BTECs or A-levels, or a combination of these. Importantly, these all feature in the National Qualifications Framework and so are recognised for entrance to university or employment. Examples of Career Academy pathways include business and finance, information technology, marketing and communications, law, engineering and creative and media.

REAL WORLD SUPPORT

What distinguishes the Career Academy programme is that it mainstreams business support for education in young people's

coursework, something few education–business link activities succeed in doing.

3,000 company volunteers from 900 employers around the UK contribute time and skills to a Career Academy[65] – as guest speakers in the classroom, one-to-one mentors, or by hosting workplace visits or summer internships. Wider support and preparation for internships and university applications is provided by the student's "Partner in Business". They range from recent graduates to managing directors, in both the private and public sectors.

Each Partner in Business plays an important role in the Career Academy experience, acting as a role model, critical friend and advisor. Regular meetings – about ten over 18 months – give the mentor an opportunity to help the student.

Some time-constrained executives offer just an hour or so a year, but make a big impact as Guru Lecturers – delivering a specialist part of the curriculum to a Career Academy year group in their classroom. Some companies host Career Academy groups in the workplace – for tours, presentations or business simulations. Other business volunteers mentor a student, one-to-one, meeting regularly to discuss life skills and coursework over an 18-month period. Some senior managers join a Local Advisory Board, steering and championing individual Career Academies within their own communities. Employer supporters range from SMEs to multinationals and cover both the private and public sector.

The 'jewel in the crown' of the Career Academy model is the summer internship. Students spend six weeks in a supporting company (paid at a little above the minimum wage) putting into practice the skills they have been developing. Crucially, it helps students to understand their options and opportunities and raise their aspirations.

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65   Career Academies UK, *Career Academies UK annual review 2009-2010,* (London: Career Academies UK 2010).

SUCCESS OF CAREER ACADEMIES

Nearly 2,000 students have graduated from Career Academies to date and over 2,000 are currently on the programme. Nearly 90% of Career Academy students progress to university (often the first in their family) or into employment.[66] For some students it gives them the confidence to follow the career path they have always wanted to follow, for others it allows them to recognise that the path they thought they wanted to follow isn't actually for them. For some it confirms an intention to go on to further study, for others it makes the goal of university appear attainable rather than something 'not for them'.

Also, as is increasingly the case, it makes some students, in areas as diverse as financial services and advertising, realise that they can better realise their goals through employment and on the job training, which will enhance their position over that of their contemporaries who do go to university.

> *Career Academies UK has instilled not just a desire in my students to succeed, but a self-belief; an expectation that higher education and the corporate world are both destinations open to them.*
>
> Ian Williams, Thomas Tallis School

And it's not just the students who benefit. Employers tell us that engaging with a Career Academy enhances staff development and approaches to employee diversity – and helps bring their corporate and social responsibility policies to life. As one employer said, "I'd never seen the team all go to a coffee shop rather than the pub on a Friday evening. Welcoming a young Muslim woman into the team for six weeks really made them think."

BOURNVILLE COLLEGE, BIRMINGHAM

There are now several creative and media Career Academies.

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66   Ibid.

At Bournville College in Birmingham, a successful media Career Academy has been running since 2008 and the first cohort of students graduated in 2010. All bar one of these first graduates has gone on to university. Philip Blake, the Career Academy co-ordinator, has worked with a wide range of employers to create a comprehensive offer to students. Supporters and members of the Local Advisory Board include the BBC, Screen West Midlands, Maverick (which produces a number of popular television programmes), Fullrange Media and Birmingham City Council Marketing and PR Department. Between them these employers have provided Partners in Business, Guru Lectures, visits to companies and paid internships.

The mentor of one student is the producer of a major TV series and has been able to arrange visits to the set. Full Range Media were able to provide an internship in editing and as a result of their work one student received a credit on a feature film and a short film. These opportunities would be highly prized by graduate students. To 17 year old students considering a career in media they offer unrivalled experience which sets them apart from their peers.

Perhaps the greatest success so far is of a young woman asylum seeker who completed an internship with the BBC and was invited back for further work experience. Indeed every student who has completed a paid internship at Bournville College has been offered further work experience.

As Philip Blake says, "we can offer the students the skills, but the opportunities and experiences provided by the Career Academy count for far more, they get contacts and confidence they can't get anywhere else."

HAVERSTOCK SCHOOL, NORTH LONDON

At Haverstock School in north London, the Media Career Academy has achieved some remarkable successes. The Local Advisory Board

here includes representatives from employers as diverse as NBC Universal, Starcom MediaVest, Santander, BBC Worldwide and a number of SMEs, with support from Olswang and Sony.

Kay Ali, the Career Academy coordinator, has been heartened by the extent to which creative and media professionals have opened their contact books and helped students network at the highest levels of the industry, which has transformed the aspirations of students. As supporters have moved within the industry they have taken their commitment to the programme with them. They have also given students opportunities which few 17 year olds receive. One student has a mentor from the BBC who works in current affairs and was recently able to visit the editing suite while an episode of Panorama was being put together. As Zac, a year 13 student says, "the key thing I have learnt is that it is all about networking. In media it's about who you know and the challenge is to get a foot in door. That is what the Career Academy has allowed me to do."

Gaining this type of experience helps young people make good career choices. As Mahmood, a year 13 student who completed an internship with Santander over the summer of 2010 says, "I studied media at college because it was something I thought I would like, but I wasn't sure what I wanted to do." Santander was able to give him a range of experiences from spending a week in their CSR department to a week in their marketing agency and several days video editing with their internal advertising provider in Soho. As a result he is applying to Bournemouth University and intending to pursue a career in editing.

The transformation has been particularly striking with one female student. As Kay explained, "She is a white working class student who lacked confidence when she started the course and believed university was beyond her. Following her internship at NBC Universal, she now believes she could work for a large company. Her mentor, from London Business School has encouraged her to look at universities and she's been attending open days. That is real progress!"

But it is not only students but employers who benefit from this approach, by gaining valuable insights from young people who often form their customer base. Agon, another year 13 student, also completed an internship at NBC Universal. He was given a discrete project on comparing the web presence of NBC Universal against other large media players, which his internship supervisor said would otherwise have required a consultant. Another student, Zac, worked at Starcom Mediavest, and worked in advertising for films, looking at product placement, while another student worked at Sony devising marketing ideas for their new console.

CONCLUSION

I believe that it is in all our interests to give students opportunities. Schools and colleges have a vital role in helping young people, particularly those from less affluent backgrounds, by providing experiences of employment and helping students develop the networks without which it is increasingly difficult to break into a career in the creative industries.

But there is also an onus on employers who have to invest time and resources if they want to ensure that they develop and attract the best available talent to their business. I strongly believe that paid internships are vital in giving students from less affluent backgrounds the opportunities to gain real experience of work, which as 97% of Career Academy graduates tell us, is vital in raising aspirations.[67]

The Career Academy movement provides a framework which allows this approach to succeed. 99% of schools and colleges we work with tell us that the programme raises the aspirations of students.[68] This approach is not easy, and involves commitment from schools and employers. But if we want to develop talent, it's worth it.

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67   FreshMinds, *Raising aspirations: Independent research into the impact of Career Academies UK*, (London: Career Academies 2010).

68   Ibid.

CHAPTER 6: CHALLENGES FOR THE CREATIVE INDUSTRIES
PAUL COLLARD

In the last two decades employment in the creative sector has grown at double the rate of the economy as a whole.[69] The UK's creative sector is the largest in the European Union – currently representing an estimated 6.2% of the economy.[70] Growing faster than any other sector, it is currently comparable in size to the financial services industry and, according to research published in February 2009 by the National Endowment for Science, Technology and the Arts (NESTA) it is likely to employ more people than the financial sector by 2013.[71]

However, despite celebrating the potential of the creative industries to make a substantial contribution to economic growth and expressing a deep commitment to increasing social mobility, the Government has so far been sweeping away the very programmes that help young people from disadvantaged backgrounds to access employment in the creative sector.

Politically, the significance of this sector has been acknowledged by the Prime Minister, who highlighted the creative industries as an important growth area in rebalancing the economy in his first speech on supporting economic growth.[72] The Prime Minister also previously recognised the role of culture and creativity in Britain's global reputation – writing in *The Sun* that:

69   Department of Culture, Media and Sport Website, Entry on creative industries, http://www.culture.gov.uk/what_we_do/creative_industries/default.aspx.

70   Ibid.

71   Meadway and Mateos-Garcia, *Demanding growth.*

72   David Cameron, "Transforming the British economy: coalition strategy for economic growth", May 28, 2010, http://www.number10.gov.uk/news/speeches-and-transcripts/2010/05/transforming-the-british-economy-coalition-strategy-for-economic-growth-51132.

One of the biggest success stories of the past decade – the iPod – was designed by a Brit. Just imagine what British brains will give the world in the decade to come. Our culture is second to none, too. We swept the board at last year's Oscars, with Slumdog Millionaire taking home the biggest prize. A British writer, J.K. Rowling, is the biggest-selling author of the decade. Britain rules the airwaves abroad, with huge BBC exports like Spooks and Doctor Who.[73]

The role of the creative industries as a driver of economic recovery has additional significance. According to the charity New Deal of the Mind, after two decades of expansion, the UK is moving from *having* a strong creative sector to *becoming* "a creative economy", one that depends for its future wellbeing on the ingenuity and innovation of its entrepreneurs and workforce.[74]

THE CHALLENGE OF SOCIAL MOBILITY IN THE CREATIVE INDUSTRIES

However, despite the growth in the creative and cultural sector overall, it is clear that access to these jobs and opportunities are not equal to all young people and for many these opportunities remain out of reach.

In support of the need for developing a skilled workforce in this growing sector, the Corporation for British Industry (CBI) highlighted the need for increasing the diversity of talent as part of their 2008 report on how government should support the challenges facing the creative industries.[75] The Creative & Cultural Skills Council recently reported that the industry remains one of the

73   Tom Newton- Dunn, "It's the land of hope and glory", *The Sun*, January 2, 2010, http://www.thesun.co.uk/sol/homepage/news/2791299/Conservative-leader-David-Cameron-gives-an-optimistic-message-to-Sun-readers.html.

74   Barbara Gunnell and Martin Bright, "Creative survival in hard times – a new deal of the mind", in Arts Council Britain, *A new deal of the mind*, (London: Arts Council, 2010) 5.

75   Confederation of British Industry, *Creating growth – A blueprint for the creative industries*, (London: CBI, 2008).

most impenetrable, with 93% of the workforce being white, more than one in two employees being educated to degree level and over 50% of graduates working in museums and galleries having a masters degree or PhD.[76]

If the opportunities in the sector are to be open to all, then more needs to be done to ensure that clearer, more equitable, routes to careers in the creative industries are made. The reasons for the existence of inequality are rather complex. To make a start policy makers must first understand the barriers for young people in accessing this growing sector.

INTERNSHIPS AND CONNECTIONS ARE NEEDED TO GET AHEAD

One of the key challenges to access is the way in which young people are able to get a foothold into working in the creative industries. The recent publication *Creative survival in hard times* discusses the "herculean" struggle to find jobs within industries where only a tiny fraction of jobs are advertised, whilst many are determined by patronage and often unpaid internships.[77] One student organisation identified in the report said that its members believed as many as 80% of jobs in the sector were filled as a result of networking, while a survey for Skillset found that fewer than a quarter of those employed in creative media had taken their jobs through a formal application process.[78]

The recently announced spending cuts in the arts and cultural sector are likely to increase the use of unpaid work experience or internships. The reliance on unpaid internships could leave behind

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76   Creative and Cultural Skills, *Young people need better information*, Creative and Cultural Skills Website http://www. ccskills.org.uk/Aboutus/Pressoffice/Youngpeopleneedbetterinformation/tabid/694/Default.aspx.

77   Gunnell and Bright, *Creative survival in hard times.*

78   Skillset, *2008 Creative media workforce survey*, (London: Skillset, 2009), 50.

those from lower income households and those not living in areas like London where there may be more access to such opportunities, as highlighted by the recent report by the Institute for Public Policy Research *Why interns need a fair wage*.[79]

Recent research commissioned by CCE has also provided an insight into the difficulties parents face in helping their children break into the creative and cultural industries.[80] The research found that although the vast majority of parents of children aged 19 or under are supportive of their children entering a career in the sector only around a third (34%) would be able to investigate internships or contact friends or family who work in the sector (35%) to help their children get a foot on the career ladder. The findings highlight that more affluent families are able to use their connections, through contacting friends and family working in the industry to help their child gain a job placement, or use their connections to organise an internship.

Poorer households were more likely to look to government schemes to help their children break into these industries. The shortage of the sort of government schemes to help their children break into the creative industries at present poses the challenge of how we can increase the opportunities available to young people from such backgrounds.

LACK OF KNOWLEDGE AND INFORMATION

Lack of knowledge and information about opportunities in the creative industries remains a key challenge with CCE research showing that less than half (49%) of secondary school pupils saying that they knew even "a fair amount" about the range of careers open to them in the creative and cultural industries.[81]

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79   Lawton and Potter, *Why interns need a fair wage,* 7.

80   YouGov Poll commissioned by CCE, "Access to the creative industries", (London: 2010).

81   IPSOS MORI, "Baseline quantitative findings from ten Find Your Talent pathfinder programmes", (London: 2009), 66.

This is of particular importance given that early engagement and understanding of opportunities in the sector is also key. Recent research conducted by Reading University using data from the British Household Panel Survey showed that early choices, educational attainment and parental occupational background were all associated with occupational outcomes.[82] People were more likely to achieve desirable occupational outcomes if they had chosen them at 15, if they had achieved good GCSE results and if their parents had such occupations.

Leaving aside the obvious concerns about the impact of links to parental occupation reinforcing divides of opportunity – the importance of supporting early and ambitious choices and supporting educational success to help break down social divides is clear.

Former Secretary of State Alan Milburn's Commission into *Fair Access to the Professions* highlighted this issue, explaining that "There is strong evidence that children who are exposed to the arts early in life are more actively engage with them when they become adults. And yet, middle- and low-income parents wishing their children to participate in a range of cultural activities often find there is no structure to support them in doing so."[83]

Creative and Cultural Skills, the sector's skills council, launched two initiatives to help address the issue of widening access for young people looking for a career in the industry:

- **Creative apprenticeships** – designed to provide a fair and accessible route into the sector for all young people, the apprenticeships give young people the opportunity to learn

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82   Paul Croll, *Occupational choice, socio-economic status and educational attainment: a study of the occupational choices and destinations of young people in the British Household Panel Survey,* (Reading: University of Reading, 2008).

83   Milburn, *Unleashing aspiration.*

valuable skills 'on the job' and gain a qualification. It has been designed to break the 'no experience no job' cycle in the industry.

- **Creative Choices** – this online tool kit provides all the tools, knowledge and networks that young people need to get into the creative industries. The website includes job profiles, an online CV and career development workshop, and a blog packed with advice from industry experts.

But these initiatives need to go further into schools and start younger if we are to ensure that children from all backgrounds are aware of the opportunities available and have the skills and confidence to engage with activities which will support them to be successful within the creative industries.

WAYS TO WIDEN THE DEMOGRAPHICS OF YOUNG PEOPLE ENTERING THE INDUSTRIES

1. More specialist careers advice

There should be more specialist support with bodies like Skillset working with IAG providers to develop specialist support and guidance for Connexions services on careers in the creative industries. This problem could also be addressed by the Department for Culture, Media and Sport working with the Department for Education to provide information for IAG's nationally coupled with better local connections with employers and opportunities available.

2. Better education and employer partnerships

A study from the Education Employers Taskforce has shown that increased engagement by employers at school can help address issues of low aspiration and social mobility.[84] The important role

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[84] Neil Puffett, "Involving employers in schools can encourage social mobility", *Children and Young People Now,* October 8, 2010, http://www.cypnow.co.uk/bulletins/Daily-Bulletin/news/1033738/?DCMP=EMC-DailyBulletin.

played by partnerships between education and employers has never been more crucial. This is because it can help give young people access to new information, encouragement, practical experience and networks and introduce connections between school life, further study and adult work in a way which breaks out from the experiences they and their parents have had.

However, one of the challenges in making this a reality for the creative industries will be how to take into account some of the peculiarities of the sector. This includes how best to engage smaller employers and the reality that for many a career in the creative industries will mean becoming a freelancer.

Kate Oakley's report on work in the creative industries points out that the classic picture of the cultural sector is of a few, very large, employers 'at the top,' and a mass of small firms and freelancers below.[85] Just over half of cultural and creative sectors workers in London for example are self employed, compared with 12% across all UK industries according to Creative and Cultural Skills.[86] This is particularly the case in the media sectors. It is estimated that 41% of people working in the creative sector are self-employed, and Arts Council research shows that more than 70% of those working in its regularly funded organisations (RFOs) are employed on a freelance basis.[87]

The challenges of gaining work experience in smaller enterprises was outlined by a 2003 study investigating the employment practices of 33 small enterprises undertaken by a team from Leeds Metropolitan University, for the Joseph Rowntree Foundation, which discovered: "Smaller employers, family businesses and

85   Kate Oakley, *'Art Works' - Cultural labour markets: a literature review,* (London: Creativity, Culture and Education, 2009), http://www.creativitycultureeducation.org/data/files/cce-lit-review-8-a5-web-130.pdf

86   Creative and Cultural Skills, *Creative and cultural skills creative blueprint London: a regional plan for the creative and cultural industries,* (London: 2009), 4.

87   Gunnell and Bright, *Creative survival in hard times.*

infrequent recruiters of young people tend to mention 'personal recommendation', 'word of mouth' or similar phrases relating to informal recruitment methods".[88]

A survey of 1,700 small businesses by the Federation of Small Businesses showed that many are not driven by any commercial or monetary benefits from engaging with social and environmental issues but consider these activities to be good and responsible business practice.[89] It highlighted that making a strong case about the value of work with schools – particularly through creative industry bodies such as Skillset and PACT, the trade association for independent media companies may be helpful in encouraging awareness of the issue nationally.

3. Supporting the making of links on a local basis

The new **Local Enterprise Partnerships** being developed as partnerships of councils and businesses replacing England's Regional Development Agencies offer an opportunity for building stronger links between the creative industries and local communities.

However, engaging the mass of freelancers and self-employed workers within the creative professions to engage with children and young people in schools may be better achieved through educational programmes such as Creative Partnerships, or work with the Arts Council's portfolio of RFOs which can encourage individual links with schools or projects. It could also be done through a more individual offer such as participating in a mentoring scheme. Currently those creative professionals who may work in schools supporting young people are an untapped resource. Mentors can be used to provide role models as well as

88   Steve Johnson and Tom Burden, *Young people, employability and the induction process,* (York: Joseph Rowntree Foundation, 2003), 23.

89   Federation of Small Businesses, *Social and environmental responsibility and the small business owner,* (Blackpool: 2007), 79.

practical advice and support on how to secure a career within the sector.

There are various ways in which this could be encouraged and work in practice. The government should incentivise partnerships with existing national organisations that promote employer and education links to work with creative industries. Local Enterprise Partnerships could help link schools to local employers in the creative industries. Local and national mentoring schemes should also be introduced to recruit from the creative industries.

4. Opening up routes through work experience and internships

Opening up routes to the creative industries through work experience and internships will be vital if we are to change the face of young people attracted to and able to access opportunites within the creative industries.

This must include moving away from seeing internships primarily as unpaid labour to ensure that they provide a better learning and development opportunity for young people. Internships also tend to be prevalent at a graduate or post-graduate level. One of the keys will be to extend opportunities to learn in a workplace setting further down the age range before career choices are finalised, for example through work experience offers for schools.

London charity A New Direction runs an innovative project with private sector publishing company IPC Media and local secondary schools. It has developed a 10 week after school graphic design and media course for pupils, followed by a week's work simulation, and then a week's work placement with the company. Its success has culminated in the London College of Communication joining the partnership. Excellent initiatives like these should be encouraged and coupled with the development of more high quality and

supported work experience opportunities which are genuine partnerships between the private, public and third sector.

5. Better support for creative industry activities out of schools?

Outside of the school environment the Real Ideas Organisation (RIO) have developed a groundbreaking programme building job opportunities for young people not in education, employment or training (NEETs) – through **Xtravert**, a burgeoning carpentry social enterprise which provides top quality woodwork for customers, while training NEET young people in carpentry and business skills which can then lead on to further education or job opportunities.

Similarly, the "**Create Your Future**" programme – part of the social enterprise's Building Job Opportunities for young people at risk of becoming NEETs – uses the creative industries as a launch pad for out of work adults to build confidence, develop transferrable skills and kick start their careers. Create Your Future's unique one-to-one mentoring approach allows the team to really get to know each individual and address their needs, linking them into relevant networks and hooking them up with the best professionals, creative businesses and experts to help them realise their ambitions and move forward.

6. Supporting self-employment

Given the large proportion of the creative and cultural sector that are self-employed, policy must be developed to support young people interested in careers in this sector to gain the knowledge and skills to successfully manage portfolio careers. They must also be made aware of some of the challenges and opportunities of self employment. Such creative professionals should be encouraged to work with schools help inspire and inform young people with their practical knowledge and experience.

One such example of this is the organisation **Boomsatsuma**, a network of youth arts co-ops where young people manage their own creative facilities and develop programmes for their peers. It offers young people the support and guidance to develop their practice and offers them an opportunity to expand their portfolio while working with other young artists, cultural practitioners and organisations.

TIME FOR ACTION NOT JUST WORDS

The Coalition Agreement recognises social mobility as a fundamental tenet, saying: "We both want a Britain where social mobility is unlocked; where everyone, regardless of background, has the chance to rise as high as their talents and ambition allow them".[90]

However there have as yet been little plans about how to deliver this in practice. For the creative industries as a whole, a more strategic approach is vital if the jobs and opportunities which an economic recovery will bring are to be genuinely open to a larger and greater cross section of young people.

As illustrated, there are plenty of existing initiatives which are successfully working to bring creative professionals into school and educational settings. Such schemes not only help young people to aspire to work in this growing sector, but also allow creative professionals to pass on their experience and advice to ensure they have the best candidates for future jobs, with the relevant skills and experience to excel.

Many initiatives – which are proven to be successful and address the very issues that the government is concerned about – have had their funding withdrawn in this autumn's Spending

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90   HM Government, *The coalition: our programme for government* (London: Her Majesty's Stationery Office, 2010), 7.

Review. Despite such severe cuts to children and young people's budgets, there is no indication from the Government or the Arts Council of any plans for alternative provision which can provide the same level of quality and results. Organisations with a remit to deliver skills for young people such as the Sector Skills Council must also take responsibility for ensuring they have a strategic approach to schemes which promote social mobility.

Without these very mechanisms of change, there is a significant risk that although there may be more jobs emerging in the creative industries as the economy begins to grow, they will be filled by young people who are connected or knowledgeable enough to access these.

If the Government is serious about addressing the issue of fairness, they must work with the industry to help bring about the changes needed. This will help to ensure that as the Prime Minister has stated, the UK remains a country with a global reputation as leaders in the creative and cultural sector.

CHAPTER 7: THE ROLE OF INTERNSHIPS
STEPHEN OVERELL

Anyone who goes looking for case studies in the great cultural fault-lines of the 21st century world of work could do worse than consider a seemingly esoteric row between the UK broadcasting union BECTU and the spiritual home of the independent film industry, the Shooting People website. Esoteric it may be, but the protagonists are excellent guides to the arguments surrounding the future of unpaid internships. Their tale takes a little telling.

Shooting People is an anti-organisation organisation – a means of co-ordinating effort without the bureaucratic paraphernalia that is traditionally involved in employing someone. What it does is bring together the makers of films and all those needed to make them happen – the cast, the crew, the make-up artists, runners, camera operators and so on – via a network, the kind of employment model some might call crowd-sourcing. The site boasts 38,000 members who post their details, those of their projects and showreels for other members to respond to. The enterprise rests on technology. Cheap digital film-making equipment has liberated a furious expansion of creative endeavour; the network serves it and holds it together by offering the space to interact. At its best, ideas, finance, kit and crew come together and wind down on completion at great speed. The model is sometimes fantasised about as a technologically enabled vision of the future of work. But there are few successful demonstrations of it in practice. Shooting People is one.

Some indie productions make the (relative) big time – *Supersize Me* or *Gone Fishing*, say. But while almost all film-makers dream of having a hit on their hands, the reality of the "lo-no budget" film business is that love, creativity and competitiveness are important motivations, too. The jobs attached to projects are therefore sometimes unpaid or expenses-only, or else undertaken

on the basis that, should the film prove popular, the royalties will be distributed to all contributors. These roles have become unexceptional. Access to this world is an incentive in itself. Contacts, experience, the possibility of sharpening skills, and the sheer thrill of being part of all-consuming projects are sufficient inducements for the young and keen in a sector over-supplied with graduates. Less nobly, of course, such a system is open to exploitation. Those making downright dodgy films can recruit unpaid labour on the vague promise of advancement.

Shooting People does vet notices on its site, but does not want to be censorious. The view of the site's founder, Jess Search, is that she is strongly in favour of compliance with health and safety law and with the *national* minimum wage (she backs the London living wage). It is an instrument of *national* policy, after all, rather than a wage that varies by region or sector. But she defends passionately the principle that people should be able to work for free if they want to. This is very much in the hi-energy, can-do, risk-all ethos of indie films. Many innovative productions would not happen if people had to be paid. What about collaborations started by film fanatics who rope in their friends and friends of friends? These would become impossible. The site is thus poised delicately between treating film-making as an occupation and a hobby.

A survey commissioned by Shooting People found that 81% of its members wanted to see postings for unpaid jobs. Some 86% were prepared to work unpaid and 78% said they objected to being told they cannot choose to work for nothing. In the private sector the minimum wage regulations recognise no concept of "volunteering" to work without remuneration – and film-making would normally count as a private sector activity even with its anti-corporate culture. But there are a handful of exemptions among other tiny groups of workers – apprentices, prisoners, charity volunteers, those doing placements as part of a full-time education course, the members of religious communities, and

"share fishermen" – boat crews that go out to sea not knowing the size of the day's catch but who agree to divide it up in a certain way amongst themselves.[91] Ms Search argues a fisherman-style exemption could be made in the film sector; no one knows how an audience will react to a film in advance.

However, not all indie films are run as a benign digital commonwealth. Dictatorship is more accurate. It takes determination to make a film, let alone a successful one. That often comes down to the inspiration, guile and leadership of one or two controlling minds – a director/producer team, perhaps. Such leaders, entirely honourable as they may be, could recruit a team, make their film, and then, should it prove a hit, find themselves without an agreed system for allotting royalties and torn between rewarding the loyalty of their collaborators and the inward sense that the film was, in truth, their brainchild. These situations are not unheard of among filmmakers. What is most fair? Equal shares in the profits of a film because all shared in the risk? Or due dessert based on unequal investment of time, brainpower, motivation and (possibly) distribution of talent? Logical cases can be made for both. But the example illustrates the practical limits of casual relationships in work, or work-like, situations.

BECTU's position is that while it wants independent films to thrive, Shooting People cannot step back from its responsibilities towards people who work in the film industry. The word matters. If film is an *industry*, a *career*, a group of *professions*, rather than a hobby or enthusiasm, film-makers need to demonstrate their seriousness by recognising their legal responsibilities. Martin Spence, the union's assistant general secretary, does not want to be seen as anti-art. He also recognises a distinction between collaborations and cynical commercial productions. In an example of the latter

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91   For a list of exemptions, see Business Link website at http://www.businesslink.gov.uk/bdotg/action/detail?itemId=
      1074403806&type=RESOURCES.

from the website, he cites an advert for a driver with a high-spec car to work on an expenses-only basis ferrying around "the talent". In acting as a conduit for projects that it does not know the nature of, the site is, in effect, encouraging "free labour" and industry-wide bad practice. Clarity matters. Creative collaborations done between friends need to be set up as "leisure" operations – non-commercial, unincorporated entities, like a club or association – which can then insure themselves against accidents on set, but can avoid the legal obligations attached to employment. Commercial productions, on the other hand, must abide by employment law.

The technical distinction safeguards wider principles. Anyone prepared to work without pay must have another source of income. For some, this will be parents prepared to bankroll the investment of an internship in order to access certain sectors. For others, a loan or another job can subsidise involvement with a film they care about. The egalitarian instincts of all trade unionists – and many others besides – must blanch at this: the system favours the relatively well-off and well-connected who can afford to do such things. Positions advertised as expenses-only or as internships are often in practice unpaid work and militate against social mobility, he argues. And Mr Spence contends there is a risk of undercutting experienced film industry workers. Established professionals may not get the jobs someone else is willing to do for free. Or they may find their pay rates coming under downward pressure as filmmakers capitalise on a reserve army of low cost or free labour. The focus on an individual's right to decide how they use their time distorts the fundamental issue, he says. The individual decision affects the employment circumstances of others in the sector and licenses the off-hand indifference to decent employment practices the film and TV business has become known for. Work is a collective act; individual decisions invariably have norm-creating ramifications.

The law appears to be on Mr Spence's side. In November 2009, BECTU supported the employment tribunal case of Nicola Vetta. Ms

Vetta was an art department assistant (the job was not advertised as an internship) engaged on an expenses-only basis by London Dreams Motion Pictures for an urban rom-com called *Coulda, Woulda, Shoulda*. The tribunal ruled in Ms Vetta's favour and told London Dreams to pay her £2,600 (the case was complicated by the fact that she was hired via a third party production designer rather than directly). In doing so it set an important precedent for the creative industries: even where individuals respond to adverts offering expenses-only positions, they cannot be denied statutory rights. Afterwards Nikki Vetta said: "I hope it will bring greater fairness to work in the media. There is a need for genuine work experience but it is wrong for employers to exploit the aspirations of young people as a source of zero cost labour. Working for free is becoming accepted as a necessary investment to securing a paid job. I hope that publicising this case will help to reverse that trend."[92] Other unions are certainly trying. The National Union of Journalists is attempting to contact people who have done media internships noting they should receive at least the minimum wage, whatever basis they agreed to take the position.[93]

Both sides have tried to avoid the dispute becoming polarised. But the confrontation, like an epic film, has been years in the making.

Shooting People feels persecuted by BECTU. The friends behind the site are hardly entertainment industry sharks. They are mostly in their twenties and thirties united by a desire to make original films happen. With little experience of trade unionism, they feel bewildered by the conservatism and attachment to regulation and standardisation they see in BECTU's approach. Set up to deal with large bureaucracies paying wages, they think unions do not fully understand the freelance, fee-based, inter-

92   Broadcasting, Entertainment, Cinematograph and Theatre Union, "Expenses only engagements are illegal, say employment tribunals", November 25, 2009, http://www.bectu.org.uk/news/548.

93   National Union of Journalists, "Cashback for interns", http://www.londonfreelance.org/fl/1010inte.html.

connected media culture in which film-making operates. BECTU, for its part, sees not an explosion of creativity, but a naivity that feeds creeping de-professionalisation across small independent productions and large media corporations alike. "Working for free" in an profit-seeking environment is anathema to trade unionism (though entirely understandable among charities). Any threat to their members' livelihoods, whether hailing from corporate media elephants or free agent fleas, is still a threat. And perhaps there is a little traditional union eye-rolling at the counter-cultural pretensions of the indie-film-making community involved, too. It sees an institutional disrespect for hard-won employment rights.

Faultline is my word for this dispute. But in what sense is there a cultural faultline here?

Allowing for a little licence, what the dispute represents is a clash about the meaning of work in the 21st century in a vanguard sector of the economy among two groups that in different ways would see themselves as offering some challenge to the conventional social order. The collectivist and rights-based traditions of trade unionism – a fair day's work for a fair day's pay - confront an alien working culture that is governed by radically different assumptions about what is fair and normal. In this environment, self-expression, individualism and autonomy are held to be higher virtues than rights, regulation and equal opportunities. In its way, Shooting People stands for a vision of meaningful work – of a group of people committed to making their passion pay. Its ethic is to do your own thing. Work is the consumption of experiences not the accumulation of rights. If the condition of access to this attractive, dynamic world is to spend some time investing in a future in it, so be it.

BECTU embodies a different set of ethical attachments. "Doing your own thing" presumes pre-existing labour market power. And by blurring the distinctions between leisure and work, for-profit and not-for-profit, firms and free-form associations, they ultimately

undermine other workers. Minimum employment standards are exactly that – a consensus about the least that is socially legitimate. So upholding minimal rights is of capital importance; and, after all, by international standards employment protection rights in the UK are modest, as the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development has noted.[94] But this once blindingly obvious principle is under pressure from many forces – and not just neo-liberalism and globalisation. The swelling of the graduate labour pool, the casualisation of the media industry and the trend towards flexible working brought about by technology have all had a cultural effect on the norms of working life. Unions thrived in what the sociologist Zygmunt Bauman has dubbed the "producer societies" of the 19th and 20th centuries. In the "consumer societies" of advanced modernity, the needs of consumers appear to trump the needs of producers in many walks of life.[95] Tastes matter with a new intensity. Individual choice-making is held up as the unassailable value, irrespective of its wider consequences. Exported into the workplace, consumerism and individualism eat away at solidaristic principles.

Yet in challenging their dominance on ethical grounds, unions find themselves in the invidious position of assuming the mantle of the defenders of grey corporate bureaucracy, a nay-saying initiative police. Unintentionally, the role of unions has become to insist on rigid demarcations between "work" and "not work" in an age that, thanks to technology and flexible working patterns, is increasingly coming to doubt these distinctions and giving rise to nascent organisational forms in the process. In this quixotic bubble of the labour market, the "right to work for nothing" arouses just as extreme emotions as the "right to work" once did.

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94   anielle Venn, Legislation, Collective Bargaining and Enforcement: Updating the OECD Employment Protection Indicators, (Paris: Organisation for Economic Co-Operation and Development, 2009), http://www.oecd.org/dataoecd/36/9/43116624.pdf , 7.

95   Zygmunt Bauman, "Work, consumerism and the new poor".

How does this particular dispute illuminate the general issues of creative industry internships?

Start with the legal status of "unpaid internships". Just as with the Shooting People dispute, acute sensitivity and controversy attaches to how activity is categorised. Internships have no formal legal definition and tend to fall between better-understood categories of volunteering, apprenticeship, work experience, training, and, of course, employment. The grey-area status is manifested even on government-backed advice on internships. The Graduate Talent Pool website, which aims to help graduates find work, says: "In some circumstances, employers may wish to offer unpaid internships. Before you decide to offer an unpaid opportunity, make sure you have taken account of the guidance on minimum wages. It will then be for graduates to decide whether the benefits of taking up an internship outweigh the fact that it is unpaid."[96]

Arguably, however, the alleged confusion owes much more to a failure of enforcement than of law. Since the Vetta case, the law is increasingly certain – at least in the private sector. Irrespective of the basis on which a position is accepted, if a situation resembles work under the NMW's "worker test" – for example, by having established duties and working hours – then it is almost certainly work and needs to be paid as such. This would suggest that many unpaid internships are not compliant. However, the culture of work in the creative sector has evolved at some remove from the law – even in opposition to it, as we have seen. Employers continue to offer them because the uncertainty of the law is widely over-stated and because internships are low down the priorities of enforcement agencies. For understandable reasons, Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs, which enforces the NMW, concentrates its efforts on sectors known to employ large numbers of low-paid, vulnerable groups of workers. The situation in charities, voluntary organisations and statutory bodies is admittedly less clear-

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96   CIPD, *Internships that work*, 5.

cut because an exemption for "voluntary workers" exists (think tanks are often set up as charities, while the widespread use of interns in parliamentary offices is well-known).[97] The "good cause" exemption was drawn up with old-style charity volunteers in mind. But the Shooting People case touches on the tendency in the creative sector to stretch understandings of good causes, and blur demarcations between leisure and business. The notion of a Big Society taps into comparable make-it-happen inclinations and a concern that labour market rigidities deter socially useful activity.

However, even these internships may not withstand sustained scrutiny. Enforcement practice may change in the future. The government has asked the Low Pay Commission to examine the position of interns in its 2011 report.[98] In the meantime, unions are increasingly agitated and guidelines proliferate. If enforcement was more active unpaid internships would probably begin to wither.

If the legal position is more established than is sometimes imagined, the arguments around ensuring fairness while safeguarding innovation are more interesting. The Panel on Fair Access to the Professions noted internships were "an essential part of the career ladder in many professions … Yet by and large, they operate as part of an informal economy in which securing an internship all too often depends on who you know and not on what you know."[99] The panel's exposition of the arguments was more nuanced than in the Shooting People case, but the substance was exactly the same. Its report balanced concern to nurture internships as an increasingly important vehicle for entering the professions with concern for inequality and with encouraging better practice. Yet despite noting there should "in general be fair recognition of

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97   Lawton and Potter, *Why interns need a fair wage, 11.*

98   Department for Business, Innovation and Skills, "Government sets new Low Pay Commission remit", June 21, 2010, http://nds.coi.gov.uk/content/Detail.aspx?ReleaseID=413968&NewsAreaID=2.

99   Milburn, *Unleashing aspiration,* 99.

the value an intern brings to the organisation in remuneration levels",[100] it avoided recommending the phasing out of unpaid internships. Indeed, its report appeared to accept the investment argument, outlined above, preferring to emphasise levelling the playing field by professional recruitment and by bursaries and loan schemes to enable more people to take opportunities.

The contrast with the advice of Skillset, the Creative Industry Sector Skills Council, is sharp. Its best practice guide declares most internships to be work positions and notes the NMW is significantly less than a typical starting salary. Clive Jones, the chairman of GMTV, has spoken of "stamping out" unpaid internships.[101]

Finally, the issues of internship arise not just because of an oversupply of willing graduates desperate to enter influential sectors, but also because of evolution in the culture of work, of which the Shooting People case is a novel demonstration. Internships serve a need. This is particularly true in the creative industries. Without recognised career structures or qualifications systems, loose, ultra-flexible "learning-by-doing" type interactions enable employers to try new people out and graduates to internalise the behaviour that tends to be prized more highly than mere skills. Internships may often operate at the margins of the law, but they are now indispensible routes into work. In my judgement, their position is secure enough to mean fairness is best served by ensuring they move gradually into the formal economy. Internships are work. They should be paid as such. Even the most frontier-crashing organisational forms should be able to tolerate some modest national standards.

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100 Ibid., 105.

101 Skillset, "Guidelines for employers offering work placement schemes in the creative industries", (London: Skillset, 2009), 6, http://www.skillset.org/uploads/pdf/asset_14734.pdf?1; See also, Skillset, "TV leading light unveils code of practice plans for media interns", (London: Skillset, 2009) http://www.skillset.org/skillset/press/2009/article_7496_1.asp.

CONCLUSION

After the financial crisis in 2008, future sources of economic growth in the UK economy will be broader-based. New jobs in hi-tech engineering, green industries and, in particular, the creative economy could provide greater opportunity for those from less privileged backgrounds to climb the social ladder. Just as we had a boom in social mobility in the post-war period, these new sectors could provide the second great wave of social mobility.

But growing industries will only support social mobility if opportunities to access them are fairly distributed. Worryingly, there is evidence that the creative industries are currently socially unrepresentative, hindering rather then helping social mobility. There could be numerous reasons for this, as explored in many of the contributions to this book. Clearly, low educational attainment of many young people from lower socio-economic groups is a problem. But poor careers advice leading to poor subject choices, and lack of exposure to and experience of working in creative industries are also restricting opportunity. In addition, a lack of social or cultural capital for many young people may be key to the apparent lack of diversity, particularly given the growing importance of unpaid work as critical for gaining access to the creative industries.

The primary focus of this report has been the role unpaid internships play in fairly distributing access to lucrative and rewarding careers in the creative industries. The evidence here suggests that while young people from less privileged backgrounds appear to undertake internships as much as their better-off peers. However, what remains unclear is what types of unpaid experiences they are having.

This report has suggested a wide range of cheap interventions, on the part of employers in the creative industries as well as for

policymakers, that would help to widen access to the creative industries and other high-quality employment. The success of this agenda is crucial if the changing British economy is to be a catalyst for, rather than a drag on social mobility in this country.

The creative industries are a key driver of Britain's economic growth. But currently the creative workforce suffers from poor social representation.

A range of experts – Alan Milburn, Sir Win Bischoff, Stephen Overell, David Johnston and Paul Collard – offer their thoughts on why social mobility is so low in the creative industries, and how policymakers and the industry can improve it.

Particular focus is given to the role of unpaid internships. Through polling, this report illustrates that policymakers should focus less on trying to phase out the unpaid nature of internships and more on ensuring that those opportunities are extended beyond the better off, to the widest possible range of young people.

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