THE 'STRANGER' IN THE WORKPLACE
A Sociological Analysis of the Agency Temporary Worker

A Thesis
submitted for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy
at the University of Leicester

by

Freda Donoghue B A (Moderatorship)
Department of Sociology

August 1991
THE 'STRANGER' IN THE WORKPLACE - A SOCIOLOGICAL ANALYSIS OF THE AGENCY TEMPORARY WORKER

FREDA DONOGHUE

ABSTRACT

Recent labour market studies have focussed on the increasing importance of non-standard forms of employment. This study on agency temps aims to contribute to this body of literature, but proposes an alternative perspective. Focussing on the temp's particular employment relationship rather than on the approach of the secondary labour market or the currently fashionable 'flexibility debate', this thesis suggests that the temp's three-way employment relationship is a determinant of the temp's working situation. Labour law literature has shown that the temp's employment status is open to conjecture because of what has been called this 'ambiguous' legal relationship. Using this approach, this thesis suggests that the temp has two 'social' employers, who must be recognised as important before categorising temps as either 'flexible' or part of the secondary labour market. Furthermore, the temp's situation is characterised by temporality and mobility which give rise to certain feelings of freedom. The temp's status as 'stranger' and the way in which this operates within the three-way employment relationship are therefore an important influence on the temp's experience of work.

This thesis suggests that the temp is a 'stranger'/outsider to the workplace. Temps occupy a position of mobility and temporality defined by their three-way employment relationship. Temps may therefore say that they feel 'free' because they have two social employers and they do not feel that they are employees of either. Temps may experience certain perceptions held by management and permanent co-workers about their ability to perform certain work tasks. Indeed, temps may find that the work they are given is boring and routine. This thesis argues that these conditions are influenced by the structure of the temps' three-way relationship within which temps are 'strangers'. It is not merely a case, then, that temps occupy a secondary labour market position, for example, but that this position must be recognised as including two nominal employers who may collude together in determining the temp's working situation.
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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I wish to thank my supervisors, Nick Jewson and David Mason, for all their help during the course of this thesis. Their advice and support were greatly appreciated. Professor Alan Neal of the Department of Law is thanked for his advice and help on legal issues and Nigel Meager of the Institute of Manpower Studies is thanked for his helpful comments in the initial stages of the research.

The co-operation of all the temps, user company and agency representatives in the fieldwork is gratefully acknowledged. Without their aid this project would never have been completed.
CHAPTER ONE - INTRODUCTION

1.1 INTRODUCTORY REMARKS

This thesis is about agency temporary workers - commonly known as temps. Estimates suggest that temps comprise about 6% of all temporary workers (Meager 1985:21). Recent research has indicated that temporary workers are increasing in number, like those in other forms of non-standard employment (Syrett 1983, 1985, Meager 1985, 1986, Atkinson and Meager 1986a, Hakim 1987b), although other interpretations have questioned whether this apparent increase is real (Casey 1987, Pollert 1988, Marsden and Thompson 1990, Walsh 1990). Lane (1989) points out that the available evidence on temporary working is ambiguous, but concludes that overall there has been a slight increase since 1980. It has also been suggested that the two fastest growing areas within temporary work have been that of agency temporary work and that of subcontracting (Hepple 1978). It should be noted, however, that agency temporary work is usually influenced by recession (Meager 1985, 1986), which indicates that the picture may be one of fluctuation rather than one of a straightforward increase.

Temps have a high public profile, with advertising on London's Underground, for example, and on hoardings in major British cities being quite common. One of their selling points appears to be the notion of temporal freedom and it is with this idea that my initial concern lay. Other writers on temps have also remarked on the relevance of freedom for temps (McNally 1979, Syrett 1983, Leighton and Syrett 1989), yet on investigation these suggestions were not accompanied by any systematic enquiry or explanation of what freedom meant. This point will be examined below. First, however, I wish to give some account of how and why I became interested in the issue of temps and freedom, and to give a description of what temps are.

1.2 REGISTERING AS A TEMP

The supply of temps via agency was relatively rare until the late 1950s. It is now an established feature of the labour market (Hepple 1978). Furthermore,
according to Schnorr (1978), this type of arrangement is apparently peculiar to temporary work. Temps are supplied by an agency to a user company. The user company pays a fee to the agency which, in turn, pays the temp a wage usually calculated at an hourly rate and paid according to the number of hours which a temp works in any given week. To receive payment, temps must complete a weekly timesheet giving details of the hours that they have worked in that particular week. This is usually authorised by user company management or supervisory staff and sent by the temp to the agency. Payment is generally received by the temp weekly in arrears. Some agencies may adopt a policy of paying temps' wages directly into bank accounts, or posting the wage cheque and timesheet to the temp. Others may set aside one day in the week (a Friday, for example) on which temps may submit, in person, their signed timesheets and collect their wages for the previous week and new timesheets for the following week.

When temps intend to register with an agency, they are interviewed and usually tested by the agency representative (sometimes called the temporary controller) for appropriate skills and training. Where the skills are such that no testing is possible, references with previous employers or from educational establishments are requested. On successfully completing this stage, temps are registered with the agency and, depending on the supply of work, they may be sent on assignments straight away. In this case, the agency representative contacts a user company representative (in personnel, management or supervisory positions) and gives the details over the phone. Temps will then be sent to the user company to commence the assignment. In the event that there are no assignments available on registration, temps will be asked to either contact the agency representative towards the end of that week, or to leave a phone number and to be available whenever the agency representative makes contact with them.

Within 13 weeks of their commencing work, the agency is required by law (Employment Agencies Act 1973) to send temps written details of their employment (Hepple and Napier 1978a). These terms and conditions set out the temps' hourly rate of pay and the hours that they are required to work. Temps are usually requested to work user company hours. These terms and conditions may state that the temp is contracted out on an hourly basis and the contract
may be terminated with an hour's notice on either side. The agency must also state whether the temp works under a contract of service (Hepple and Napier 1978a:92, Industrial Relations Services 1987). In some cases, this statement may be printed on the back of the timesheet. This may mean that temps are not aware of the existence of these terms and conditions. Leighton (1984) has said, furthermore, that even if temps are aware of their existence, they rarely have the facilities to check up on them. The statement does not constitute a contract of employment but provides a written record of the terms and conditions of employment (Hepple and Napier 1978a). This has resulted in confusion over the employee status of temps which the courts have usually resolved on the individual merits of each case (Hepple and Napier 1978a:97). This has meant that while some temps may be deemed employees of the user company, others may be judged to be self employed (see Chapter Two for further discussion on the legal aspects and Appendix A for sample Conditions of Employment).

Temps do not usually receive holiday pay, sickness benefit nor pensions from the agency (Parker and Sirker 1976, Alfred Marks 1982, Syrett 1983, Mangum, Mayall and Nelson 1985, Meager 1985). In recent years, however, several major national agencies have begun to offer some of these benefits provided certain conditions are met, such as the length of continuous service (Syrett 1985, Income Data Services 1988).

1.3 WORKING AS A TEMP

My own personal experience as a temp dates back to when I worked as a secretary before I first went to university. Temping was also very useful during my summers as an undergraduate in order to save my fees, and a number of writers have noted how students have recourse to temping as a source of income (Parker and Sirker 1976, Federation of Personnel Services (FPS) 1975a, Alfred Marks 1982, for example). Prior to commencing postgraduate study I spent a year as a temp in London. This experience provided me with some questions which I intended to investigate and analyse in my research.
The freedom of the temp, noted by certain writers (McNally 1979, Syrett 1983, Leighton and Syrett 1989) and the oft-used slogan of certain agencies in their campaigns (The Guardian 1987, The Observer 1988), was my first concern. As a temp working for both a user company and an agency I had felt a certain freedom. This arose, I thought, from my having two employers to whom I did not feel fully committed. Indeed, as noted above, legal literature on temporary work has indicated the ambiguous employment status of temps (Hepple and Napier 1978a, Leighton and Syrett 1989, for example).

Certainly, I felt freer than my permanent colleagues precisely because I could deny some of my responsibility to one 'employer' (the user company) and claim that I did not belong to that 'employer but to my other 'employer' (the agency). So, for example, if I wanted to leave work early or take a long lunch break I could reason with my permanent co-workers that as I 'really' worked for the agency I was under no obligation to the user company to take only an hour. Similarly, I could argue that I was not obliged to stay with the user company but could go to another user company whenever I requested my agency to move me. In practice, of course, this latter scenario was harder to enact than the former, as I would have had to convince my agency that a) I wanted to move and had good reason for wishing to do so, and b) that my removal from the user company would not jeopardise the agency's relationship with the user company. Indeed, experience had shown me that the agency in such cases could prove quite deaf to my pleas demonstrating that, despite my claims to the contrary, my so-called freedom was at times quite curtailed precisely because its exercise threatened the agency's claim to provide 'reliable temps' to its client, the user company. Leighton (1984) has noted that temps in may cases can be "caught in the gap between the respective expectations of client and agency" (1984:100). Furthermore, she also suggested that the agency only rarely helped the temp with problems. Thus temps can feel some freedom and yet feel under some kind of double control.

This example serves to illuminate the kind of contradictory situation which I was experiencing. Yes, I felt free - free to take long lunch breaks, free to leave at any time - but, in reality, my freedom was dependent upon both the agency and the user company. If I wanted to be sent on other assignments with the agency I had to ensure that I did not threaten my relationship with the agency.
through annoying the user company. As a representative of the agency in the user company workplace, my freedom could be quite severely curtailed. On the other hand, the kind of freedom which I did feel arose from my situation as mobile; moving from the agency to the user company. My situation, therefore, appeared both to generate and take away my freedom. Furthermore, this contradictory situation was enacted in several different ways. The longer I stayed with the user company, the stronger my relationship with that organisation became. I began to feel more of an employee and, therefore, more subject to constraints which my permanent co-workers could experience, such as loyalty or increased commitment. This was offset, however, by my awareness of the agency in the background which could release me from my engagement with the user company and which, furthermore, made its presence felt on occasions (such as my weekly timesheet submissions, for example). This served to illustrate how my ties with the user company were weaker than the ties my permanent co-workers had. In other words, my relationship with the user company was mediated by the agency and my relationship with the agency was mediated by the user company.

So far, then, it can be seen that my sense of freedom was clearly bound up with my associations with both user company and agency. Other issues had arisen as well during my time as a temp, such as my temporality and how this was related to my feeling of freedom and also, at times, my failure to exercise it. For example, because I was not going to be too long in the user company I could endure doing mundane work rather than asking the agency to move me to another assignment. I was also aware of my self perception as an 'outsider'; not 'belonging' to the user company. Being an 'outsider', and/or the sense of not belonging, made me question what was the essence of being a temp. I, and other temps with whom I worked at the time, were aware of certain stereotypes surrounding the temp. These stereotypes included temps being flexible and adaptable, or temps being lazy and shirking work because they were on extended lunch breaks. At times, we deliberately confronted these stereotypes and were at pains to establish ourselves as different from them. At other times, we liked proving ourselves flexible, adaptable, or, indeed, non-committed. We also experienced the double bind of being labelled in certain ways by both agency and user company, on the one hand, and by the user company management and our permanent colleagues on the other. We sometimes felt
that this influenced decisions over the work which we were given to do, so that a feeling of being a victim of the collusion of both agency and user company could ensue. We felt, therefore, that we had a certain kind of freedom and control while, at the same time, we felt exploited by the double bind of the agency and user company who were both serving their own self interests.

These personal experiences as a temp helped me to crystallise the sociological problem which this thesis initially set out to address. That is, what are the structural bases of this apparent pattern of freedom and constraint. In order to analyse these issues, I first examined the available literature on temporary working and related issues. The following sections discuss the further problems I encountered there.

1.4 LITERATURE


One of the main problems with the general literature on temporary work was that of defining temporary work; a problem which has been attributed to the lack of a legal definition in Britain (Meager 1985, 1986, Lane 1989). This has resulted in the temp being included with other temporary workers which may sometimes serve to give the impression that all temporary workers are a homogenous mass. Indeed, this is a problem which has been cited in reference to what could be called non-standard workers in general (Walsh 1990), and
Lane (1989) has remarked that, although distinctions may be made in data collection between fixed-term contract workers and other kinds of temporary workers such as seasonal workers, in many cases the literature refers to both forms as temporary (Lane 1989:607). This situation has meant that temps have been defined as temporary (Income Data Services 1983, 1985) and casual (Dale and Bamford 1988, King 1988) and the specifics of their three-way employment relationship have not been fully recognised in the general literature. Legal literature which refers to temporary work, (Hepple 1978, Hepple and Napier 1978a,b, Camerlynck 1978, Blanpain 1978, Schnorr 1978, Veldkamp 1978, IDS 1982a,b, Leighton 1982, 1983a,b, 1984, 1986, Napier 1986, Deakin 1986), on the other hand, has indicated the importance of the temp's tripartite employment relationship. Much of the other literature on temporary work cited above, however, has not given this relationship the same priority, although a few writers have recognised its existence and its importance (Syrett 1983, 1985, Mangum, Mayall and Nelson 1985, Casey 1987, Leighton and Syrett, 1989). There has, also, been little systematic attempt to analyse this relationship. There is, thus, a significant gap in the literature.

There is some overlap between the literature on temporary work and issues raised in the literature on part-time work (Robertson and Briggs 1979, Jallade 1982, Ballard 1984, Robinson and Wallace 1984, Beechey and Perkins 1987, for example), self employment (Leighton 1983a,b,) and homeworking (Ewking 1982, Hakim 1984a,b, 1987a, for example). All represent forms of non-standard employment. They have often been seen as similar and have been related to debates such as those concerning dual labour market theory and the question of flexibility. McNally (1979), for example, related her work to theories on women in the secondary labour market (Doeringer and Piore 1971, Barker and Norris 1976, for example) and women and the reserve army of labour (Braverman 1974, Beechey 1977, 1982, Beechey and Perkins 1987). Meager (1985, 1986) situated his study quite firmly within the flexibility debate. It is therefore worthwhile to examine a number of aspects of the general labour market literature. My concern is to identify whether this literature provides a leverage on the question of freedom and the particularities of the temp's employment relationship.
1.5 CURRENT DEBATES ON THE LABOUR MARKET

Research on temps suggests that they display characteristics which echo themes which arise in a) dual or segmented labour market theory, b) the flexibility debate, c) the industrial reserve army of labour thesis and d) studies on managerial strategies and control.

1.5.1 Dual or Segmented Labour Market Theory

In the dual or segmented labour market, technological and industrial changes have resulted in the emergence of separate sectors, which are usually termed 'primary' and 'secondary' (Doeringer and Piore 1971, Loveridge and Mok 1979, Ryan 1981, Thompson 1989). Primary labour market employees are characterised by high wages, good working conditions, stability and security of employment and promotional opportunities (Doeringer and Piore 1971, Ryan 1981). The secondary labour market is subject to low wages and fringe benefits, poor working conditions, high labour turnover, unstable and insecure employment and little prospect of promotion (Doeringer and Piore 1971, Ryan 1981). Workers in the secondary labour market, therefore, have a greater turnover than those in the primary labour market, higher rates of lateness and absenteeism and poor training opportunities. Such workers do not have access to an internal labour market, which is usually seen as a characteristic of primary sector employment (Doeringer and Piore 1971) and which helps generate stability amongst the primary labour force (Thompson 1989). Primary employment can be converted into secondary employment through the use of temporary workers (Doeringer and Piore 1971) and it has been noted that in both France and the US the Temporary Help Services firm (or temporary employment agency) has emerged as an institution aiding this process (Berger and Piore 1980). Other writers have also noted the importance of outworking (through the use of temporary employment agencies, for example) in the spread of secondary employment (Rubery and Wilkinson 1981).

Temping has been seen as unstable and insecure (Parker and Sirker 1976, McNally 1979, Alfred Marks 1982, Syrett 1983), and temps have been shown to miss out on training provision (McNally 1979, Alfred Marks 1982, Meager 1985)

What must be taken into account when attributing temps to the secondary labour market, however, is the position of both user company and agency. First of all, the employment status of the temp is ambiguous (see Chapter Two) and to call either one of these organisations the temp's employer requires clarification. Secondly, although attention has been drawn to the non-possession of employment contracts among several secondary labour market workers (Rubery and Wilkinson 1981), the particular situation of the temp must be recognised.

The role of the agency in the UK and the Temporary Help Services firm in the US in labour turnover has been noted (Jones 1972, Mangum, Mayall and Nelson 1985, Bull, Ornati and Tedeschi 1987). To adopt a secondary labour market perspective, however, it is necessary to clarify the roles of both 'employers', that is, the agency and the user company, particularly as one (the agency) appears to be helping the other (the user company) in gaining greater flexibilisation (Berger and Piore 1980). The crucial questions for the purposes of this thesis are, then, what is the position of the temp vis-a-vis both organisations and how can the temp be characterised as a secondary labour market worker when there may be two 'employers' to take into consideration? If temps move between both organisations, how does this mobility interrelate with the characteristics of the secondary labour market? Furthermore, if internal labour markets exclude certain groups of workers, it may be necessary to consider the specifics of the temp's particular position in relation

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to internal labour markets. These points will be made clearer in the next section on the flexibility debate which can be critiqued for similar reasons.

1.5.2 The 'Flexible Firm' Debate

An influential recent debate, the 'flexible firm' model makes a distinction between core and periphery workers (Atkinson 1984a,b, 1985, Atkinson and Meager 1986a,b,c). Similar in ways to dual labour market theory (Thompson 1989), core workers are characterised by job security, promotional prospects, firm-specific training and are functionally flexible, that is, they may be deployed between different work responsibilities. Peripheral workers, on the other hand, are numerically flexible. As and when management requires, peripheral workers are taken on to fulfill either routine or very specific tasks. They require little or no training, and are disposable. Increases in forms of non-standard employment such as part-time work (Clark 1982, Hakim 1987b), homeworking (Hakim 1987b, 1990) and temporary work (Hakim 1987b) have been seen as indicative of an organisation's search for flexibility. According to this model, temps are part of the peripheral workforce, called 'externals' (Atkinson 1984a,b, 1985).


Criticism has been levelled at the concept of 'flexibility', however (Casey 1987, Pollert 1987, 1988, for example). Its value in explaining the size of the peripheral labour force has been questioned (Dale and Bamford 1988, Pollert 1988) as has its application to temps (Casey 1987, Walsh 1990, for example).
For the purposes of this thesis the 'flexibility' debate, like dual labour market theory, is not fully adequate; mainly because of the particular employment status of the temp. This becomes clear when the definition of temps as 'externals' (Atkinson 1984a,b, 1985, Meager 1985, 1986, Atkinson and Meager 1986a,b,c, for example) is examined. This definition has been formulated from the perspective of the user company only (referred to by Meager (1985, 1986) as the employer). As has already been shown, temps have an employment relationship involving two employers. This generates very specific situations such as the temp's feeling free or feeling 'doubly' exploited. Using the definition 'external', also raises the issue of boundaries for it implies a boundary of some kind. The temp, as seen earlier, moves from an agency to a user company. It may well be the case, therefore, that the temp could be defined as 'external' to both organisations. So, if temps are perceived to display 'peripheral' characteristics in relation to the user company (the usual reference point as 'employer'), it might be useful then to assess the position of temps in relation to the agency.

Temps receive their weekly pay from the agency, but are not under the agency's supervision (see Leighton and Syrett 1989:71 for a diagrammatic description of this relationship). They are not guaranteed security of employment (a characteristic of core workers). As legal cases have shown (Wickens v. Champion Employment 1984, cited in Leighton (1986), Industrial Relations Services (1987) and IDS (1988), for example), the agency is not under any obligation to provide the temp with work, nor is the temp obliged to accept such work if offered it. This means that one of the means of assessing employment status, namely that of the mutuality of obligations is not fulfilled (see Leighton (1986), Napier (1986) and following chapter for discussion of the legal situation).

It appears, then, that the temp may also be defined as 'external' to the agency. This example clearly shows how the temp's employment relationship with both the agency and the user company must be taken into consideration. Furthermore, according to the 'flexibility' model, companies use temps in order to avoid commitment to them (Syrett 1983, Meager 1985). One way in which this commitment is avoided in the case of temps is through sharing the employment responsibilities with another organisation, namely the agency. Writers on
temps using the 'flexible firm' model should therefore be aware of the function that the agency has in providing 'flexibility' for the user company. It is quite clear that it is the agency's role in providing temps at a moment's notice to its clients that aids the user company in acquiring such 'flexibility' (a point noted in relation to the secondary labour market by Berger and Piore (1980) and in relation to labour turnover by Bull, Ornati and Tedeschi (1987)).

This situation can be further highlighted by taking an example of a recent study on temporary workers conducted by Meager (1985, 1986). The use of temps and other kinds of temporary workers was clearly related to the user organisation's search for flexibility. Furthermore, Meager concluded that temps comprised a growing proportion of temporary workers and were changing in kind from the 'traditional' female clerical worker to the 'newer' male professional (Meager 1985:29).

Meager has also said that although temps are on the periphery of the user company, they may be included in the core staff of the agency as, increasingly, agencies are providing holiday and sick pay, and agencies also recognised trade union agreements. This statement implies the need to include in the analysis the agency, as well as the user company, as an 'employing' party (a point not noted by Meager). Membership of the core also entails security of employment and training opportunities. As shown above, security is not guaranteed to the temp by either user company or agency, and the literature has noted that temping is insecure (Parker and Sirker 1976, McNally 1979, Alfred Marks 1982, Syrett 1983). Increasingly, however, agencies are providing some training facilities (Syrett 1985, IDS 1988), although not all agencies train their temps and, in many cases, such training may be minimal (Syrett 1985).

What this indicates is that in some ways temps may straddle the boundary between the core and the periphery. They may occupy an ambiguous position because they have two 'employing' parties. It is therefore clear that there may be two interrelating 'flexible firms' to take into consideration. Temps may not perform the same function in both organisations because in one they are the 'product' being sold, while in the other they may be used in order to enhance
productivity. Their position as 'employees', however, must be assessed in terms of both organisations.

A further feature of the temp's relationship must also be noted here. Temps are not only involved with two 'employing' organisations, they move between them as well. Temps are mobile, therefore, and, in crossing boundaries between the user company and the agency, they may be 'external' (Meager 1985, 1986) to both organisations. As such, they may be perceived and defined as 'outsiders', and this may have important implications for the ways in which they experience work.

1.5.3 The Reserve Army of Labour Thesis

McNally (1979) related her study of temps to the industrial reserve army of labour (see Marx 1954, Braverman 1974, Beechey 1979, 1982, Beechey and Perkins 1987, for example), and suggested that both as women and temps they are subject to being pushed in and pulled out of the labour market as capital demands. Again, like other studies of temps, one of the oversights of her work was the failure to recognise the importance of the agency which provides temps to user companies. This point will be made clearer in the following section.

1.5.4 Managerial Strategies and Control

McNally (1979) argued that many female temps were attempting to avoid patriarchal control and efforts to deskill clerical work (Davies 1974, Brown 1976, Gamsey 1978, De Kadt 1979, Glenn and Feldberg 1979, Downing 1980, Barker and Downing 1980, Crompton and Reid 1982, West 1982, Crompton and Jones 1984, Garnsey 1984). This argument can also be related to other work on managerial strategies, control and deskilling (Braverman 1974, Friedman 1977, Edwards 1979, Hill 1981, Elger 1982, Wood and Kelly 1982, Littler 1982a,b, Armstrong 1984, Friedman 1986, Thompson 1989, for example). Within the flexible firm debate, too, the use of temps has been referred to as a managerial
strategy (Atkinson and Meager 1984a,b), although later work referred to it as more of an 'ad hoc' development (Atkinson and Meager 1986b).

The question that must then be posed is, is the use of temps merely part of an overall managerial strategy and, as such, does this undermine the temp's claim to feel free, and does it explain how the temp may feel exploited? What such an approach may preclude, however, is recognition of the agency's role in helping management in certain strategies. As has been stated above, the role of agencies as labour market intermediaries has been noted in relation to both the US (Mangum, Mayall and Nelson 1985, Bull, Ornati and Tedeschi 1987) and the UK (Jones 1972). This, once more, brings us back to the temp's relationship and position as 'outsider', for if such managerial strategies do exist they could be influenced or aided by the temp's status as an 'outsider' - that is, the temp's 'belonging' somewhere else outside the user organisation could provide a rationale for their hiring and firing. This, of course, implies the agency's involvement in the whole process.

It may well be that temping for women workers is a way of evading control in the workplace, as McNally (1979) suggested. Nevertheless, the role of the agency in this process cannot be underestimated. (Although not a specific theme of this thesis, the question of gender is raised in Chapter Nine on stereotyping of the temp and it will be taken up as an issue for future research in Chapter Twelve).

The above discussions have shown how the temp's relationship with both user company and agency is important for understanding the temp's situation. This indicates that some method of analysing this distinctive relationship is required. Before moving onto an examination of that, I wish to bring this discussion back to freedom which was my initial concern. The dual labour market theory, flexibility debate, reserve army of labour thesis and managerial strategies approach appear not to provide an answer to my question of what freedom means for temps. Indeed, the answer which exists would seem to be that freedom is illusory. This may well be the case, but how can such an analysis of freedom proceed?

1.14
1.6 THE TEMP'S WORK EXPERIENCE

McNally (1979) asserts that one of the ways in which temps feel in control is through a certain freedom from commitment to the user organisation. This raises the issues of orientations to and attitudes about work (Lockwood 1958, Goldthorpe et al. 1968, Wedderburn and Crompton 1972, Blackburn and Mann 1979, Brown et al. 1983, Martin and Roberts 1984, for example) and it could well be asked if an approach from this perspective could provide a model for surveying temps.

One of the ways of measuring orientations to work is to examine the nature of involvement with the employing organisation (Goldthorpe et al. 1968, Blackburn and Mann 1979, Brown et al. 1983). Again, where the temp's employee status is ambiguously defined (Hepple and Napier 1978a), this approach may run into difficulty. Temps may be quite involved with both 'employing' organisations depending on the length of time in each. Alternatively, temps may be more involved with one organisation than the other; for example, more involved with the user company than the agency.

Socialisation at work and the internalisation of workplace values and expectations are frequently seen as important to the experience of work (Brown et al. 1983). Temps, however, may be both 'outsiders' and 'strangers' (Simmel 1971) in one or both organisations. 'Strangers' are generally characterised by their mobility and by the fact that they do not have roots in the location which they inhabit (Simmel 1971). Temps, as 'strangers', are mobile (having roots outside of the user company workplace) and they may occupy several different user company workplaces in their work experiences. This means that in order to understand and analyse the temp's experience of work it is necessary to examine it not only from the perspective of the temp's particular relationship with the user organisation and the agency, but also to see how this 'stranger' status is generated and maintained within this relationship and by mobility over time.

Work is typically seen as an important source of status and self identity (Brown et al. 1983). If this is so, what can be said about the temp's occupational identity. Are freedom, and the mobility of the 'stranger', part of this identity?
Barron and Norris (1976) argue, in relation to women workers, that there is a danger that properties of jobs may become closely associated with the alleged characteristics of individuals. This implies that if the temp is seen as a "free spirit" (The Observer 1988), it is perhaps the employment relationship which generates this and that therefore, rather than being part of an occupational identity, it could be better described as a trait of the temp stereotype, which, in turn, has structural roots. This freedom may be curtailed, however, if both 'employers' are involved in supporting the other's aims. (This position is outlined in Chapter Five and discussed in Chapter Six).

I would suggest, therefore, that not only are temps involved in a three-way employment relationship, but that they occupy a specific status as 'strangers' within this relationship because a) they move from one employer to the other, b) they cross boundaries between these two organisations, and c) in so doing they are perceived as 'outsiders' and thus different and they may be treated as such. It is as 'strangers' involved in this three-way relationship that temps may feel free. Temps move from the agency to the user company workplace and back again. Their crossing and re-crossing of boundaries between the two result in the establishment of other boundaries, for example, between 'us' who do not belong and 'them' who do within the user company organisation. Both involvement in (Goldthorpe et al. 1968, Blackburn and Mann 1979, Brown et al. 1983) and orientation to work are thus influenced by this situation.

1.7 TEMPORALITY

It has been noted that, as 'strangers', temps are 'outsiders', and this has been shown in relation to the way in which temps are defined as 'externals' (Meager 1985, 1986). Temps, however, are 'outsiders' of a certain kind. Doeringer and Piore (1971) have suggested that there are certain queues operating in the labour market, and Ryan (1981) has referred to occupation of the secondary labour market as influenced by "...the time of arrival in the queue, or even simply the misfortune of not being in the right place at the right time." (Ryan 1981:16-17). Indeed, it is how time matters to temps and what time means for them that must next be considered. How are temps temporary? What is their relationship to time? Is their freedom or their mobility temporal in any way?
Elias and Scotson (1965) have shown not only how time is a constituent of all social relationship but that lateness in time is a very important factor. 'Outsiders' are sociological newcomers, they arrive later in time than insiders. In relation to permanent workers (with whom temps are compared as 'externals' in the literature, for example) temps are 'outsiders' - they arrive later in time to the user company workplace. This later arrival in time not only means, as Ryan (1981) has said, "not being in the right place at the right time" (1981:16-17) like other secondary labour market workers, but it may have consequences for the way in which temps are perceived and defined. In short, it may have consequences for social relations within the workplace.

1.8 CONCLUSION

The perspective of this thesis will be as follows. Focussing on the three-way relationship, the temp's particular status as an 'outsider' and as a 'stranger' is assessed. This is then related to issues which are of importance in examining how temps experience work. I suggest that not only is temping unstable because it lies in the secondary labour market, but that the three-way relationship itself can generate instability. It is not that temps are unstable as workers but that the characteristics of their triadic relationship have become associated with them as individuals (following Barron and Norris's argument on women workers, 1976). I would also suggest that once the temp's particular three-way relationship has been analysed then it may be possible to re-incorporate aspects of other theories such as dual labour market theory or the flexible firm model.

The specific aim of this thesis is to provide an alternative perspective from which to examine the temp's situation within the context of the distinctive three-way employment relationship. Chapter Two discusses problems of definition. Chapter Three examines the methods used in the collation of data. Chapter Four gives a profile of temps in the research using quantitative data. Chapter Five provides the theoretical framework of the thesis, and the basis for the presentation of the qualitative data. Chapters Six and Seven examine the temp's three-way relationship. Chapter Eight addresses the temporal nature of
Chapter Nine discusses several different stereotypes of the temp. Chapter Ten contains illustrative case histories of three temps. Chapter Eleven examines the issue of freedom, and Chapter Twelve gives a concluding synthesis and suggestions for further research.
CHAPTER TWO - PROBLEMS IN DEFINING TEMPORARY WORKERS

2.1 INTRODUCTION

As has already been noted in Chapter One above, there is a problem in defining what the temporary worker is (Hepple and Napier 1978a, b, Camerlynck 1978, McNally 1978, Syrett 1985, Meager 1985, Dale and Bamford 1988, for example). This problem is generally perceived to revolve around several issues such as a) the different kinds of temporary worker and the overlaps with part-time workers (Parker and Sirker 1976, McNally 1979, Meager 1985, Syrett 1985, Hakim 1987b, Dale and Bamford 1988), b) the lack of a legal definition (Hepple and Napier 1978a, b, Syrett 1983, 1985, Meager 1985, Casey 1987, Dale and Bamford 1988, IDS 1988), and c) whether or not a temporary worker is an employee or is self-employed (Blanpain 1978, Leighton 1982, 1983a, b, IDS 1983, Leighton 1984, 1986, Casey 1987, Labour Research Department 1987, Dale and Bamford 1988, IDS 1988).

This may lead to differing interpretations of the data on temporary workers (Dale and Bamford 1988) and it may be that the available data are therefore ambiguous (Lane 1989). This chapter will examine this problem of definition, taking into account the main issues highlighted above. It will be seen that although a number of writers have included temps in different categories of temporary worker, the literature on labour law indicates that the problem lies more in the lack of a legal definition and the employment status of temps. The legal literature also provides a description of the temp's tripartite employment relationship.

2.2 DEFINITIONS IN THE LITERATURE

The temp, as has been stated in Chapter One, is an agency temporary worker whose services are supplied by an agency to a user company. As a temporary worker, the temp is only one of a heterogeneous group ranging from self-employed freelance workers, casual workers, seasonal workers, sub-contracted workers to fixed-term contract workers. In the literature temps have been
included under the following categories: 'casual, seasonal and temporary' (OPCS 1985, MSC 1985, 1986, Employment Gazette 1988, King 1988, Dale and Bamford 1988), 'non-employees' (Meager 1985, 1986), and 'temporary workers' (IDS 1983, 1988). Temps have also been referred to as 'flexible' workers (Atkinson 1984a,b, Hakim 1987b, for example). In the legal literature, temps have been included with 'marginal' workers (Leighton 1986, Napier 1986, Deakin 1986) and 'outworkers' (Leighton 1983a). This range of categories provides some indication of the problem of definition and this may result in difficulties in interpreting data for any kind of temporary worker (Lane 1989). Indeed it has been noted that problems with the definition of temporary workers, in general, led to confusion amongst respondents over the differences between part-time and temporary work (Newton and Parker 1975, Parker and Sirker 1976). Furthermore, respondents in surveys may be guided by their own self definitions because of the lack of a precise set of rules (Dale and Bamford 1988).

Apart from the legal literature, what most other definitions appear to have in common is the assumption of a particular set of employer-employee relations, that is, that there is a type of bipartite employer-employee relationship in operation. The temp has been unproblematically included in this, based on misrecognition of the temp's specific situation. It is quite clear from the literature on labour law that temps have a very distinctive employment relationship. Indeed, as that literature has made clear, this employment relationship has itself led to ambiguities in court cases on the temp's employee status.

2.3 LEGAL DEFINITIONS

2.3.1 Legislation on Temps

There have been recent attempts within the European Community to make employment conditions for temporary workers similar to those of permanent workers and to ensure against their exploitation (Commission of the European Community 1982). An amendment to this proposed directive also aims at making more flexible the instances where temporary working can be used (European Industrial Relations Review 1984). While recognition is made of the
temp's relationship with an agency and a user company, the agency is referred to as the temp's employer (IDS 1983). This raises a problem, for in Britain, as will be seen, this supplying body may not necessarily be legally deemed to be the employer, nor, indeed, may the user company.

The temp is covered in British law by the Employment Agencies Act 1973, which came into effect in November 1976. This legislation, however, deals ambiguously with the notion of employee (Hepple and Napier 1978a). A temp is "...in the employment of the person carrying on the business to act for, and under the control of, other persons in any capacity." (Hepple and Napier 1978a:85). The temp's employee status is open to speculation, for although there appears to be some kind of contractual relationship between the temp and the agency, the relationship between the temp and the user company is ambiguous ((Syrett 1983:86, Leighton and Syrett 1989:71). There is potential danger of the temp's relationship with the user organisation falling outside the scope of labour legislation because it could be deemed 'sui generis' (Hepple and Napier 1978a:97).

Although the temp works on the user company's premises, this is not sufficient, therefore, to deem the temp an employee of the user company. Similarly, court cases have found that, despite the agency-supplied worker being classed as an 'employed earner' for whom the agency pays National Insurance contributions under the Social Security Act of 1975, "...agencies have frequently been held not to be the employers of the workers they hire out on the basis that, as agencies, they have insufficient control over them." (Syrett 1983:86). To confuse the issue even further, there have been cases of tribunals maintaining that temps are agency employees because the agencies have the right of dismissal and they pay salaries (IDS 1988).

From the above it is quite clear that temps appear to have an ambiguous employee status. Furthermore, it does not seem that there is any party willing to take responsibility as the temp's employer. The Employment Agencies Act 1973 is supplemented by the Code of Practice of the Federation of Recruitment and Employment Services (FRES) which claims to represent the majority of private employment agencies (FRES 1989). FRES has parliamentary influence, and was one of the bodies behind the passing of the Employment Agencies Act 2.3
along with one of the oldest and largest High Street agencies in Britain (Syrett 1985). FRES is, apparently, quite content with the ambiguous legal situation of the temp's employment status and has furthermore allowed its "...members the flexibility to take whichever market stance most appropriate to their circumstances" (Syrett 1985:34), which does not help to clarify matters in any way.

2.3.2 Employment Status and the Contract of Employment

The contract of employment has become increasingly important in Britain in deciding employment status in this century (Napier 1986). It could be reasonably asked, therefore, whether this would help in defining the temp's employment status. As an issue, however, this has not been adequately dealt with, either, under the Employment Agencies Act 1973. Within 13 weeks of commencing work with an agency, temps must be issued with written terms and conditions of employment (Hepple and Napier 1978a, Leighton 1986), but this does not constitute a contract of employment (Hepple and Napier 1978a, Deakin 1986). Furthermore, when the three main characteristics of a 'normal' contract of employment (Leighton 1986) are examined, it can be seen how temps do not satisfy the requirements.

First, continuity and regularity of employment such as fixed hours and workplace are usually seen as a characteristic of a 'normal' contract of employment (Leighton 1986). The hours which temps work may be fixed, however their workplace may change every few weeks. In an Alfred Marks study, for example, temps did not have long assignments; 16% stayed less than one week, 28% stayed one to two weeks, 20% stayed three to four weeks and 13% stayed for one to two months (Alfred Marks 1982:31).

A second characteristic of a 'normal' contract of employment is mutuality and security (Leighton 1986), which usually means that the employer expects the employee to work when required. If the relationship between the agency and the temp is examined, there is no obligation on the agency's part to supply work, nor is there is any obligation on the part of the temp to accept an assignment from an agency (see Appendix A, Sample Conditions of
Employment). The decision made in Wickens v. Champion Employment 1984 (IDS 1985, Leighton 1986), supported the view that because of this lack of obligation there was no contract of employment between the temp and the agency in question. "It would now appear that for there to be a contract of employment, there must be some continuing obligation on the employer to supply work, and a corresponding obligation on the worker to do it." (Napier 1986:336-7).

The third characteristic of a 'normal' contract of employment is the payment of fringe benefits, which, although outside of enforceable legislation, can "effectively cement an employment relationship" (Leighton 1986:504). It has been noted in the literature that in many cases temps may not receive any fringe benefits from the agency (Parker and Sirker 1976, Alfred Marks 1982, Syrett 1985, Meager 1985).

Legal writers, for these reasons, have defined temps as 'marginal' workers (Leighton 1984, 1986, Deakin 1986, Napier 1986) because they are isolated from legal rights which 'normal' employees are seen to have. Leighton (1982), for example, found that temps were 'employed' with agencies on a week-to-week basis which meant that temps were not fulfilling regulations to qualify for redundancy, maternity and other employment benefits (IDS 1982a,b, Leighton 1982, 1986). Furthermore, Deakin (1986) has claimed that legislation which focusses on continuity was 'marginalising' workers like temps. Leighton (1986) argues for legal recognition of the employment relationship between agency, user company and temp, which would enable devolved care and control to lie in the hands of the user company and not the agency.

2.3.3 The Tripartite Employment Relationship

Hepple and Napier (1978a) divide all temporary workers into two categories, those in bipartite employment relationships (travail temporaire) and those in tripartite employment relationships (travail interimaire). The temp as a worker whose services are supplied by the agency to the user company is involved in this latter kind of employment relationship. Within this relationship the agency performs a financial role, whereas the user company
holds a supervisory function. As has been noted above, it appears that this relationship is legally ambiguous. Sociologically, however, this relationship is not ambiguous. The associations between the three parties are quite clear. Even though, legally, an employer may be difficult to decipher, socially it can be seen that there are two employers, both providing different functions. Although, not ambiguous, however, the three-way structure does generate ambiguity, precisely because it is three way. Employer duties may be divided between both social employers, but there may be areas where there is uncertainty over where certain responsibilities lie. Furthermore, there may be areas where there is also a denial of responsibilities because one employer can claim that those are the other employer's duties, and vice versa.

It is due to this relationship that the temp may be defined as a 'non-employee' (Meager 1985) or a 'marginal' worker (Leighton 1986), for the presence of two social employers may mean that the temp is not defined as a full employee of either, and may be perceived as marginal to both organisations. The three-way structure of this relationship determines the way in which temps are perceived and defined. It is also clear that when this relationship is recognised, problems with definition can also be clarified. As has already been mentioned in Chapter One, there is a significant gap in the literature because of the lack of consideration of the importance of this three-way relationship. Furthermore, it has been pointed out by other writers that when interpreting data attention must be paid to whether the particular survey was based on the responses of the temps themselves, or on the responses of those who have been called 'employers', that is, user companies (Dale and Bamford 1988). It is quite clear that recognition of this relationship would allow future surveys to consider the position of both 'employers', and this fact alone has implications not only for the data, but also for the way in which such data can be interpreted.

2.4 CONCLUDING REMARKS

This chapter has argued that changing the focus of defining temps may help to clear up certain problems. Recognising the temp's three-way employment relationship enables the discussion to move from defining temps as 2.6
'non-employees' or 'marginal' to the ways in which they may be so. Whereas some of the previous literature has been concerned with the definition of temporary workers and with definitions of temporaryness, the focus of this study shifts to an analysis of the temp's three-way relationship, and therefore, for example, to the way in which temporaryness occurs.

The following chapter will examine the methods used in collating data for this research, now that the matter of defining the temp has been clarified. Before dealing with the methodology, however, some mention must be made of the use of the terms 'temp' and 'agency' in this study. Leighton and Syrett (1989) use 'temp' to mean staff supplied by an employment agency, and they note that 'agency' is often erroneously used instead of employment business (1989:15). A number of other writers have also referred to the supplying organisation as an 'employment business' (Hepple and Napier 1978a,b, Hepple 1978, Commission of the European Community 1982, Meager 1985, 1986, Casey 1987, for example). The use of 'agency' in this study, however, corresponds with that found in Schnorr (1978:401), that is, a supplier of labour power to a user company.
CHAPTER THREE - METHODS

3.1 THE SAMPLE

The aim of this study was to explore the work experience of temps. Having established that the temp is involved in a tripartite employment relationship which includes an agency and a user company, the decision was made to survey all three parties. Previous literature has shown that many agencies are to be found in the south-east of Britain, particularly in the Greater London area (Parker and Sirker 1976, Casey 1987). London was therefore chosen as the first fieldwork area. The West Midlands was chosen as a second back-up area.

As shown in Chapter One, temps deal with an agency manager or Temporary Controller when they register with an agency. In turn, this agency representative liaises with a representative of the user company, usually a member of the user company’s personnel department. It was decided that for the purposes of this research the three parties who were going to be surveyed would be the temp, the agency representative and the user company’s personnel officer.

Several kinds of agencies were targeted so that the resulting sample would be composed of different kinds of temps. This was done in order to include a number of 'professional' temps, or those whom Meager (1985) has called 'new' temps. Such 'professional' temps were outnumbered by secretarial and clerical temps (see Chapter Four), as has also been found in previous surveys. The aim in this study was not, however, to quantify numbers of different kinds of temps, but to investigate their three-way employment relationship. As all temps with agencies are involved in this relationship, a broad range of respondents would provide richer data on the relationship's dynamics.

In general, large user companies were targeted for inclusion in the research as the literature had shown that such kinds of organisations were more likely to use temps (Meager 1985). Different kinds of user organisations were contacted in order to provide some continuity between the agencies participating in the study and the types of organisations which they serviced.
In other words, if agency representatives mentioned a particular field of employment or specialist area (such as advertising companies, media, public relations, for example), an effort was made to establish some contact with user organisations in that field. In this way I hoped to interview a temp who was working with both an agency and a user company also participating in the research, so that a particular three-way employment relationship could be investigated more fully.

3.2 METHODS

Both quantitative and qualitative research methods are important and may be used to complement each other. Becker (1970) has said that quantitative data are useful in deciphering the prevalence of certain attitudes, but that qualitative research can investigate the nature of these attitudes. Qualitative data are also useful in providing individuals' perceptions and the workings of social relationships (Elias and Scotson 1965). As the original aim of the research was based on a wish to investigate the notion of the temp's freedom and the way in which this related to the particularities of the temp's employment relationship, I decided that the main thrust of the study would be the collection of qualitative data. Asking for evidence of and examples from the interviewees' own experiences of particular instances would give more insight into certain issues. Qualitative research would also make use of my own previous experience as a temp, and would enable me to elicit fuller data by ensuring that interviewees were aware of my own knowledge of the area (Bailey 1978).

This method, nevertheless, was preceded by some quantitative analysis. In order to establish contact with temps, I had decided that the agency, as the supplier of temps, was a better source than a user company. It was therefore necessary to choose a survey method which would minimise the agency's participation. As the agency's compliance was being sought on two fronts (the agency representative and gaining access to temps), I wanted to ensure that the agency's co-operation would seem as trouble free as possible. I also wished to use methods which would not dissuade the agency from participating. A postal questionnaire survey was conducted (see Appendix B) with temps of
agencies which had agreed to co-operate. The aid of the agency representative was requested in distributing questionnaires with temps' weekly timesheets and wages. The questionnaires were sent directly back to me, however, in order to ensure that the agency's participation was minimal.

The questionnaire was mainly used, therefore, as a vehicle through which to contact temps for interview. The questionnaire was preceded by a short pilot test to see how temps responded. The final version of the questionnaire varied little from the pilot study. The questionnaires were analysed using the SPSSx package (Klecka et al. 1975, SPSS 1984). The initial results were then used to design the interview schedule. The questionnaire provided a profile of the temps in the survey, and, in general, tended to support results found in the literature (see Chapter Four). Issues were raised which were then subsequently probed in interview. The questionnaire used structured and fixed-ended questions so that areas of interest could be easily detected. The interview schedules followed up these main issues (see Appendix B), in order to further investigate their nature. Temps who were willing to participate further in the research were asked to include their names and phone numbers on the questionnaires. They were then contacted and interviewed accordingly.

The interviews comprised a mixture of semi-structured and open-ended questions, with greater emphasis on the latter so that several areas could be investigated in depth. This was also done so that unanticipated responses (Bailey 1978) could be elicited. All the interviews were tape recorded and lasted between 55 minutes and one-and-a-half hours. I chose a tape recorder so that note-taking would not inhibit my questioning nor the flow of the interview. There were two respondents who objected to the use of the tape recorder and notes were taken instead in these cases.

The user company and agency interviews were conducted on both organisations' premises during working hours. For interviewing temps, however, a variety of locations was chosen. It was necessary to make the interviewing time as accessible as possible to temps in order not to limit the temps' time at work because temps are only paid for the hours that they actually work (see Chapter One). In most cases, therefore, temps were interviewed at home in the evening after work. Several were interviewed in
cafes and pubs during lunch hours. Four interviews were held on the premises of the user company, two during the lunch break and two after work in the evening. In each of these four cases the temps had been with their user companies on long assignments and felt secure and confident enough of their positions within the organisations to enable the interviews to take place on the premises. A private room was provided for these interviews.

The fieldwork commenced in July 1987 with the distribution of questionnaires and the interviewing of agency representatives. This first stage was completed with the interviewing of temps in the autumn of 1987. The second stage of the research occurred between February and May 1988 and, like the first stage, involved questionnaire distribution to temps and interviews of both agency representatives and temps. User company representatives were interviewed during both the first and second stage. The third stage of the research involved questionnaire distribution to temps and the interview of agency representatives only. This stage, unlike the first two, involved moving away from London to agencies in the West Midlands, and it occurred in February 1989. As stated earlier, this stage was conducted in order to provide some supporting data for quantitative analysis.

In total 760 questionnaires were distributed through 14 agencies. 212 questionnaires were returned (28% response rate to questionnaire survey) of whom 47 (22%) were interviewed. 20 agency representatives were interviewed. 15 user company representatives were interviewed.

The main weakness of the research centered on the questionnaire survey, which was not representative. Previous literature has already noted that agencies operate in a highly competitive field (Jones 1972, McNally 1979, Syrett 1985, IDS 1988). I therefore anticipated and encountered resistance to what was seen as interference in the agencies' operations (both Jones (1972) and McNally (1979) reported similar reactions). This meant that there was a low response rate where agency representatives did not send out the required number of questionnaires. Similarly, agency representatives could, and several did, decide to withdraw from the survey after initially indicating their co-operation and receiving questionnaires for distribution. Again, this had an effect on the response rate. In any case, there is a problem with relying on
self-answering postal questionnaires (Marsh 1982), and in my case, this was compounded by the agency representatives’ reaction. The decision to emphasise the qualitative side of the research had been made with such an anticipated response in mind. Furthermore, such an emphasis meant that there was less pressure on me to pester the agency representatives any more than I did. Their co-operation was gratefully received and was very useful.

The following chapter provides a profile of temps in this research. Giving the results from the quantitative survey, it highlights areas of importance and raises issues which will be dealt with later in the thesis. It also draws a comparison between the quantitative data in this study and those from previous research.
CHAPTER FOUR - PROFILE OF TEMPS: A CLARIFICATION OF CERTAIN ISSUES

4.1 INTRODUCTION


The data presented in this chapter serve to provide a background profile to the research. Issues arising in the quantitative survey will be fully investigated and placed within the theoretical model of this thesis in later chapters. This chapter, therefore, serves to introduce several topics of interest and to illustrate the relationship between the quantitative data collected from my questionnaire survey and previous literature.

4.2 BACKGROUND AND PROFILE OF SAMPLE

It has been found in the literature that temps tend to be female rather than male (FPS 1975a, Parker and Sirker 1976, McNally 1979, Alfred Marks 1982, Syrett 1985, Wood and Smith 1989), and that they are found in a narrow occupational range (Casey 1987, King 1988). Female temps tend to be concentrated in secretarial and clerical work, nursing, catering and domestic...
jobs (FPS 1975a, Parker and Sirker 1976, Wood and Smith 1989). Male temps tend to be found in accounting, draughting, computing and industrial work (FPS 1975a, Wood and Smith 1989).

The following tables (4.1, 4.2, 4.3, 4.4 and 4.5) present the age, gender and marital status, occupational details, nationality and educational background of the temps in my sample. In general, these tend to confirm the picture from the literature, although their educational qualifications were higher than in other studies (Parker and Sirker 1976, King 1988). Indeed, it has also been noted that in recent years temps are now better educated (Syrett 1985). There was a high proportion of graduates in the research due to the cooperation of two agencies specialising in graduate temps. What is also noteworthy from the data presented below is the high percentage of Antipodean temps. This has been referred to in the literature as the 'Australian Factor' (see Syrett 1985). In the 1970s there were many Australian and other Antipodean temps on working holidays in Britain, whose numbers fell in the 1980s due to stricter visa requirements (Syrett 1985). Presumably, the relatively high percentage in my sample indicates the prevalence and popularity of the 'European tour' amongst Antipodeans.

### TABLE 4.1 AGE AND GENDER OF TEMPS IN THE SAMPLE
(as percentage of the sample)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>AGE</th>
<th>FEMALE</th>
<th>MALE</th>
<th>TOTAL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>15-24</td>
<td>26.9</td>
<td>5.1</td>
<td>32.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25-34</td>
<td>36.8</td>
<td>6.2</td>
<td>42.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35-44</td>
<td>12.2</td>
<td>1.4</td>
<td>13.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>45-59</td>
<td>8.9</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>9.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>60+</td>
<td>1.4</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>1.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Totals</td>
<td>86.2</td>
<td>13.7</td>
<td>99.9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

N = 212: N Female = 183, N Male = 29
### TABLE 4.2 GENDER AND MARITAL STATUS OF TEMPS IN THE SAMPLE
(as percentage of the sample)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MARITAL STATUS</th>
<th>FEMALE</th>
<th>MALE</th>
<th>TOTAL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Single</td>
<td>55.0</td>
<td>10.0</td>
<td>65.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Married</td>
<td>23.2</td>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>26.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Divorced</td>
<td>5.7</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>6.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Widowed</td>
<td>2.4</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>2.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Separated</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>0.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Totals</strong></td>
<td>86.8</td>
<td>13.8</td>
<td>100.6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**N = 212:**  N Female = 183, N Male = 29

### TABLE 4.3 OCCUPATION AND GENDER OF TEMPS IN SAMPLE
(as percentage of the sample)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>S</th>
<th>C</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>P</th>
<th>M</th>
<th>A</th>
<th>AC</th>
<th>S</th>
<th>O</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>FEM.</td>
<td>63.1</td>
<td>5.6</td>
<td>1.9</td>
<td>6.1</td>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>3.7</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>1.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MALE</td>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>2.9</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>1.9</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>3.7</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>0.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Totals</strong></td>
<td><strong>66.4</strong></td>
<td><strong>8.5</strong></td>
<td><strong>2.4</strong></td>
<td><strong>8.0</strong></td>
<td><strong>3.3</strong></td>
<td><strong>1.0</strong></td>
<td><strong>7.4</strong></td>
<td><strong>1.0</strong></td>
<td><strong>2.4</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Legend:  
S = Secretarial,  
C = Clerical,  
N = Nurse,  
P = Pharmacist,  
M = Other Medical Staff,  
A = Accountant,  
AC = Other Accounts Staff,  
S = Supervisory Staff,  
O = Other.

**N = 212:**  N Female = 183, N Male = 29

4.3
The majority of temps work full time (Parker and Sirker 1976, Wood and Smith 1989). 87.8% of all temps in my sample worked full time, while only 12.2% of the sample worked part-time. When these figures were computed for gender, it was found that 89.6% of male temps in the sample worked full-time, compared with 87.4% of female temps, whereas 10.3% of the men worked part-time, compared with 12.6% of the women. The fact that temps may be younger than full-time permanent workers (Parker and Sirker 1976, Syrett 1985, King 1988) and the fact that there are more women both help to contribute to an image of the stereotypical temp as a young woman. This issue which was probed in interview is analysed fully in Chapter Nine below, but it is worth mentioning at this stage that there may be some statistical basis to this image.
4.3 THE WORKING EXPERIENCE OF TEMPS

Certain issues emerged from the questionnaire survey as important. It has been noted that the reason why people do temporary work has generated most research since the 1960s (Syrett 1983). The most commonly-cited reasons in the literature are the lack of suitable permanent work (FPS 1975b, McNally 1979, Alfred Marks 1982, Syrett 1985) and the existence of domestic and personal commitments preventing their taking up permanent work (FPS 1975b, Parker and Sirker 1976, Alfred Marks 1982, Syrett 1985). Temping has been perceived to provide money (Parker and Sirker 1976, McNally 1979, Alfred Marks 1982, Syrett 1985, Leighton and Syrett 1989), work experience (McNally 1979, Nathan and Syrett 1981, Alfred Marks 1982) and it can be used as a stop gap (Alfred Marks 1982, Syrett 1985). The reasons for being a temp in this research are given below in Table 4.6, ranged along a continuum from important to not important.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reason</th>
<th>IMPORTANT</th>
<th>AVERAGE</th>
<th>NOT IMPORTANT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Inability to find suitable permanent work</td>
<td>32.0</td>
<td>15.2</td>
<td>52.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Money while applying for permanent work</td>
<td>48.3</td>
<td>19.0</td>
<td>30.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Money while deciding what to do</td>
<td>63.1</td>
<td>32.4</td>
<td>4.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work Experience</td>
<td>52.8</td>
<td>36.5</td>
<td>10.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Domestic/Personal commitments</td>
<td>51.8</td>
<td>33.8</td>
<td>14.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Freedom to change jobs</td>
<td>66.9</td>
<td>29.5</td>
<td>3.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Freedom to take time off</td>
<td>73.2</td>
<td>21.1</td>
<td>5.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flexible hours</td>
<td>53.2</td>
<td>36.7</td>
<td>10.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

N = 212: N Female = 183, N Male = 29
What emerges as interesting from the above table is the importance of both freedom and money. The high ranking position of freedom as a reason for being a temp is particularly interesting when compared with the table below which provides a comparison of criteria important in temp and permanent jobs. In the following table freedom does not appear to be as important, and indicates either the possible strength of the image of the temp as free (if this is indeed a reason for temping), or some confusion on the part of respondents on the difference between reasons for being a temp and criteria which are important in temp jobs.

**TABLE 4.7 COMPARISON OF CRITERIA IMPORTANT IN TEMP AND PERMANENT JOBS**

(as percentage of sample)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>TEMPING</th>
<th>PERMANENT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Job Satisfaction</td>
<td>47.5</td>
<td>90.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Respect</td>
<td>35.0</td>
<td>56.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interesting work</td>
<td>51.0</td>
<td>74.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work Experience</td>
<td>34.9</td>
<td>18.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Freedom</td>
<td>28.1</td>
<td>4.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flexible Hours</td>
<td>31.2</td>
<td>11.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Money</td>
<td>61.3</td>
<td>47.9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*N = 212*

A comparison of Tables 4.6 and 4.7 throws up a contradiction in notions of freedom. On the one hand, freedom appears to be most important as a reason for being a temp. On the other hand, it is not an important criterion of temp jobs. It is noteworthy, however, that it still rates as more important in a temp job (28.1%) than in a permanent job (4.2%). This raises some ambiguity about freedom, for not only is it necessary to establish why there are certain contradictory perceptions about it, but also how these emerge. This will be a theme running throughout the thesis, and will be summarised and discussed in detail in Chapter Eleven.

4.6
The importance of money cannot be overlooked. Not only is it important as a reason for doing temp work, it is also the most important criterion about temping (and has been cited as an advantage, Parker and Sirker 1976, Alfred Marks 1982). Money is dealt with as an issue in various ways throughout the thesis. It relates to freedom, for, as will be seen, to exercise some freedom (by leaving a job, for example) may result in the loss of money. Similarly, the anticipation of such may, in itself, result in constraints being placed on freedom (again, see Chapter Eleven). Money is also raised as an issue in relation to time (see Chapter Eight), and this too relates to freedom as temporal.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TABLE 4.8 LONGEST EVER ASSIGNMENT (as percentage of sample)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0-3 MONTHS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>44.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N = 212</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The above table indicates how most assignments are less than three months in length, which has been noted in the literature (Alfred Marks 1982). It is noteworthy that 15% had assignments of over one year in length. The majority of temps, however, not only have short assignments, but also appear not to remain long in temping, as the following two tables show.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TABLE 4.9 NUMBER OF ASSIGNMENTS IN PREVIOUS YEAR (as percentage of the sample)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N = 212</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
As can be seen from these tables there was quite a high turnover of workers in and out of temping. Indeed, as has been noted in the literature temp assignments are short (Alfred Marks 1982). This raises the issue of temporality, for as can be seen from the above figures time is of particular significance for temps. This will be explored in Chapter Eight, for a difference must be pointed out here between the length of time in an assignment and the length of time temping. The former signifies time in a user company, whereas the latter means time with an agency, or indeed a few agencies. These 'times' will both have an influence on the way in which temps experience work. The following table gives the percentage of temps in the sample and the length of time they have spent as temps. As will be seen, the majority (61.6%) leave temping after a year, which may indicate the existence of perceptions about the value of staying in temping long term, which will be pursued in Chapter Eight. This can be compared to one of the reasons for doing temp work cited above, namely, that of gaining work experience. As will be explored in Chapter Nine, temping may well be perceived negatively on a person's curriculum vitae because of notions of 'flightyness', borne out by evidence that temps' assignments tend to be short. After one year of temping 60.8% of women had left, compared with 57.1% of men. After three years of temping, however, 86.2% of women had left, whereas 96.4% of men had finished. Given the greater numbers of women temping in the sample, the number of men temping for longer than three years was not very significant. As will be seen in Chapter Nine, temporary controllers held the view that men did not stay as temps but were keen to get "responsible jobs". Certainly, the fewer numbers of men doing long-term temp work would tend to support this view.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TABLE 4.10 LENGTH OF TIME TEMPING</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(as percentage of the sample)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1-6 M</th>
<th>7-12 M</th>
<th>1-1.5 Yrs</th>
<th>1.5-2 Yrs</th>
<th>2-3 Yrs</th>
<th>3-5 Yrs</th>
<th>5+ Yrs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>38.2</td>
<td>23.4</td>
<td>11.5</td>
<td>10.0</td>
<td>5.7</td>
<td>6.7</td>
<td>5.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Legend: M = Months, Yrs = Years

N = 212
In the literature it was noted that temps tended not to receive benefits which permanent workers received (Parker and Sirker 1976, Alfred Marks 1982, Syrett 1983, Meager 1985). Amongst the temps in my questionnaire survey 28.8% said they received benefits compared to 71.2% who said that they did not. A similar picture can be found when the issue of training is examined (although there was a high non-response rate to that question in the survey). It has been noted in the literature too that temps tend to miss out on training provision (McNally 1979, Meager 1985, Syrett 1985).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TABLE 4.11 TRAINING PROVISION (as percentage of sample)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>YES</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-Financed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State-Financed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agency-Financed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Picked up Temping</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(17.5% did not answer the question)

N = 212

Meager (1985) concluded his study of temporary work wondering whether the state or the individual would have to bear the cost of training, given the lack of agency responsibility. The above table tends to support his findings and indicates the lack of agency-financed training, although several writers have noted that more agencies have recently started to offer benefits and some training in order to compete better (Syrett 1985, IDS 1988). The question to be asked at this stage is how this occurs and why. This issue will be dealt with in Chapters Six and Seven.

It has also been noted in the literature that user companies spent very little time on the induction of temps into the company (McNally 1979, Alfred Marks 1982, Syrett 1985, Meager 1985). The following table sets out the replies of temps in this research.
TABLE 4.12 LENGTH OF BRIEFING
(as percentage of sample)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>5-15 Minutes</th>
<th>30 Minutes</th>
<th>1-2 Hours</th>
<th>2+ Hours</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>75.0</td>
<td>15.1</td>
<td>6.6</td>
<td>2.8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(0.5% of sample gave no answer)

N = 212

Management may expect temps to become effective almost immediately (Alfred Marks 1982), and their ability to adapt quickly has been noted (Syrett 1985). This perception of the temp's adaptability will be discussed in Chapters Six and Seven.

Temps may feel that they are the victims of negative perceptions of management and permanent workers (Alfred Marks 1982, Syrett 1983). 55% of temps in the sample said that they were ignored by management, compared to 39.6% who said that they were not (5.8% did not answer the question). 63.5% of the sample reported that they socialised with permanent staff, whereas 36.3% of the sample did not. 51% of the sample said that they were perceived as 'just a temp' while 49% said that they were not. This indicates that it is perhaps with management that temps have problems in dealing (or vice versa) rather than with permanent colleagues. 91% of temps in the sample felt that they did not have a higher status than permanent staff in the user organisation, whereas 59.4% of the sample felt that their status was lower. Problems with integrating temps into the workforce have been cited in the literature as well as some workforce opposition to them (Meager 1985).

In relation to employment status, 66.5% of the sample said that they felt they were employed by both agency and user company, 25.5% reported that they felt they were the agency's employee, while 7.1% felt that they were the employee of the user company. Only 0.9% reported themselves as feeling self employed. This indicates that, apart from legal ambiguities noted in Chapters One and Two above, the majority of temps regarded themselves as the employees of both agency and user company. This may mean that their experience of work will
be influenced in some way by this situation. Despite the low percentage of those reporting themselves as the employee of the user company, the following table shows, however, that this notion of being an employee is not necessarily based on very regular contact with the agency, for as can be seen nearly one-third of respondents had little agency-instigated contact apart from receiving their weekly wages.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TABLE 4.13 CONTACT WITH AGENCY</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(as percentage of sample)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FAIRLY REGULAR CONTACT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AVERAGE CONTACT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VERY RARE OR NO CONTACT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>41.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N = 212</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In the literature the reasons why temps are used by organisations have been cited as: holidays, illness and maternity leave (Pearson 1975, Syrett 1983, IDS 1983, Meager 1985, IDS 1988, Wood and Smith 1989), seasonal fluctuations of work (Pearson 1975, Alfred Marks 1982, Syrett 1985, Wood and Smith 1989) and extra and emergency cover (Alfred Marks 1982, Syrett 1985, Meager 1985, Wood and Smith 1989). Temps are also used for projects or staff reorganisations (Pearson 1975, Syrett 1985, Meager 1985, Wood and Smith 1989). Meager (1985) has referred to all these reasons as 'traditional', and he has suggested that certain 'new' reasons have become important. These 'new' reasons are generally seen as the avoidance of commitment to workers (Syrett 1983, Meager 1985) due to economic uncertainty (Alfred Marks 1982, Syrett 1983, 1985, Hakim 1987b).

The temps in the sample reported the following reasons for their use at the time of the questionnaire survey. It can be seen that one of Meager's 'new' reasons was cited as the second most important reason. There was also a high percentage of user organisations looking for permanent replacements. It has been noted in the literature that one way in which user companies will resort to permanent recruitment is through the use of temporary staff (Syrett 1983, 1985).

4.11
TABLE 4.14 REASON TEMPS USED BY COMPANY
(as percentage of sample)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reason</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Company Looking for Permanent Replacement</td>
<td>53.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Company does not want Permanent Replacement</td>
<td>23.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Special one-off Project/Specialist Expertise</td>
<td>9.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Permanent Person on Holiday</td>
<td>3.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Permanent Person Ill</td>
<td>7.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Permanent Person on Maternity Leave</td>
<td>0.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extra Volume of Work</td>
<td>2.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

N = 212

Of the 9.4% being used for special projects above, this figure was divided between 8.1% of the women in the sample and 17% of the men. This could be related to their occupation (Table 4.3 above) and may indicate that different kinds of temps are required by user organisations for different reasons. This may be related to Meager's 'new' temps, and the 'new' reasons for their use. This is only a tentative suggestion, however, as the number of male temps in the sample was much smaller than female temps.

4.4 DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

There are several key issues which have been raised in this chapter. First of all, it was noted that, in general, although not representative, the data from the questionnaire survey in this research tended to support other data in the literature on temps. Thus, temps tend to be mainly women, many doing secretarial and clerical work, and many of whom are young and single. This issue will arise in Chapter Nine when different stereotypes of the temp will be examined. It will be seen that a prevalent temp stereotype is of a young woman, which is linked to the issue of freedom. What will be examined will be the structural roots of these stereotypes.
The educational standard of temps in this survey was higher than in other studies, and it was also noteworthy that 13.7% of the sample were from the Antipodes. It was found in interview with agency representatives and user company personnel officers that there was a certain feeling that Antipodeans made 'good' temps. This issue obviously needs further clarification and investigation and will be taken up in Chapter Six.

The turnover of the temps in my sample was quite high, and most assignments were less than three months in length. Temps are temporary, indeed, but is there any way in which this temporality is structurally rooted in their relationship with the agency and the user company, and does this temporality have any influence on, or is it emphasised by the temp's status as 'stranger'? Chapter Eight examines the specific issue of the temp's temporality. This issue also raises the associated notions of freedom and money. As was shown, freedom and money both appear to be important for temps, although freedom seems to be somewhat ambiguously viewed. The importance of freedom as a reason for being a temp was cited, however, it did not appear to be as important as a criterion of temp work. Money was important both as a reason and a criterion, but much more important as the latter. Chapter Eight will examine the relationship of time with money, whereas Chapter Eleven deals with the notion of freedom.

It was also noted how many temps in the sample missed out on the provision of training, benefits and user company induction. In ways this could be related to the issue of employment status which showed that most temps regarded themselves as employees of both the agency and user company. This may indicate that both agency and user company appeared to be denying a certain responsibility towards the temp. Chapters One and Two have already shown the importance of employment status as an issue in the legal literature on temps. For the purposes of this thesis, it is now necessary to consider a way in which to investigate and analyse this status. The temp's tripartite employment relationship must now be subject to scrutiny. The following chapter outlines the theoretical methods and the model employed in this investigation.
CHAPTER FIVE - EXAMINATION OF THE TRIPARTITE RELATIONSHIP

5.1 INTRODUCTION

The relationship under consideration is tripartite in structure. It occurs between an employment agency, user company and a temp. It is crucial to recognise the three-way form of the relationship and the fact that none of the members can be studied in isolation from each other.

When the three-way relationship is established between an agency, user company and a temp, another element is introduced. The temp goes to work in the user company and there forms a relationship with permanent workers. This relationship is also three-way for it involves the user company as well. The two three-way relationships are interdependent and articulate with one another. What occurs in one will influence the other, and vice versa, because there are two common elements in each and one is dependent upon the establishment of the other. In analysing the temp's working situation there are, therefore, three other parties to be considered. These are the agency, the user company and the permanent workers. These parties interrelate in two interdependent three-way relationships.

To analyse the temp's working life, it is essential to examine these three-way relationships. Simmel (1950:145-169) described the structural properties of triads. His work was chosen in this study as a starting point because his approach was a formal one. He suggested that in order to analyse any relationship it was necessary to concentrate on its formal characteristics as these determine the interaction within the relationship. Relationships differing in content may therefore have the same form. Simmel's formal analysis of triads is used in order to illuminate the data on temps and bring order to it. The association between the agency, user company and the temp will be called the market triad in this study for this relationship occurs in the labour market. The relationship between the user company, permanent workers and temps will be called the workplace triad.
All relationships exist in and develop over time. When the temporal dimension of this relationship is examined, it will be seen that the interactions within the relationship, determined by the three-way structure, have also got particular significance because of time. It will be suggested, using the work of Elias and Scotson (1965) that temps are perceived as 'outsiders' because they arrive later in time than permanent workers and user company management. This has implications for their interactions over the time of their relationship together. Furthermore, temps are mobile due to the three-way structure and this 'stranger' status (Simmel 1971:143-149) emphasises their existence as 'outsiders'.

This chapter will start with a description of the constituents of market and workplace triads. Having established the interdependence and articulation of the triads, attention will then be turned to Simmel's analysis of triads. This analysis will be taken further and the temp's position in the workplace triad will be theoretically presented.

5.2 THE TRIPARTITE RELATIONSHIP NETWORK

5.2.1 The Market Triad

The three-way relationship between the agency, user company and temp will be hereafter called the market triad. The market triad occurs in the labour market. The user company is a purchaser of labour power. Temps sells their labour power to the user company through the labour market intermediary of the agency. The agency is the active factor in bringing the two other parties together in order that the transaction is made.

5.2.2 The Workplace Triad

Formally, the workplace triad occurs between the user company, permanent workers and temp. Substantively, it occurs between different groups in the workplace who represent these formal positions, for example, management (user company), permanent colleagues of the temp (permanent workers) and the temp.
The terms 'agency' and 'user company' are used in the text and they deserve some explanation. The temp, for example, deals with an agency manager, usually called a Temporary Controller, and a user company management representative in the market triad. The terms 'agency' and 'user company' were chosen rather than 'management' to clarify the distinctions made between the two separate organisations. They were also chosen as formal terms to illustrate the structural relationship which exists. In the workplace triad 'user company' will also be used. This provides some continuity of terms used in both the market triad and the workplace triad, and again shows the formal position of this triad. It must be remembered, therefore, that 'user company' and 'agency' are terms used to represent user company and agency management.

5.2.3 Other Possible Triads

If two temps from the same agency work in the same user company the following formal triads occur. There will be two market triads, one between temp 1, agency and user company, and the other between temp 2, agency and user company. In the user company workplace the triads which may emerge from these can be seen as follows: temp 1, temp 2 and permanent workers; temp 1, permanent workers and user company; temp 2, permanent workers and user company; temps 1 and 2, permanent workers and user company. In other words, the possible combinations with the addition of one extra temp are greatly increased and if this second temp is from a different agency the picture becomes even more complicated.

5.2.4 The Articulation of Triads

The triads are interdependent and articulate with one another. The workplace triad is dependent upon the establishment of the market triad. Furthermore, what happens in the market triad will influence what happens in the workplace triad and vice versa because each has common elements. In fact, from the user company's point of view in order to be able to establish the
workplace triad it is necessary to enter into negotiations to form the market triad.

Each triad, whether market or workplace will function in similar ways. This means that the structural possibilities will be the same in each because each is three-way. Furthermore, each triad is dependent upon the other triad. This also influences the operation of the triads. What emerges, therefore, is a series of triadic relationships which are interdependent. These triads cannot be studied in isolation from each other. To analyse the position of the temp in the workplace, for example, it is necessary to recognise not only the existence of the permanent workers and user company in the workplace triad, but also the market triad and the way in which movements and developments in one influence and are influenced by the other.

5.3 SIMMEL AND THE TRIAD

5.3.1 Simmel's Formal Sociology

Simmel was interested in the forms of interaction which constitute all social formations (Wolff 1950, Coser 1965, Levine 1971, Frisby 1984). He considered the interactions and reciprocal character of social relationships between individuals and groups to be very important and believed it was crucial to recognise that society was composed of these universal relationships. To analyse social relationships, according to Simmel, it was necessary to concentrate on their formal characteristics as relationships differing in content could have the same form.

He was also interested in the effect which the number of interacting individuals and groups could have upon forms of social relationships. The mere number of individuals in a particular group could influence the interaction within the group. By concentrating on the basic structures of small groups, Simmel claimed that it was possible to ascertain the sociological consequences of certain specific numbers.
Simmel's discussion on the triad developed from his analysis of the dyad. He claimed that it was the addition of one extra element to the dyad which was to be of fundamental sociological importance. Simmel used the terms "zweierverbindung" [Woolf 1950:123] and "verbindung zu dreien" [Woolf 1950:135] meaning groups of two and three elements, respectively. The conventional translations of these descriptive terms are dyad and triad (see Woolf 1950:123, 135, Caplow 1968:17). Simmel's analysis of triads was concerned with patterns of social relationships involving three elements and he identified three triad types which he defined in relation to conflict. For Simmel it was the three elements in a triad which determined the patterns of interaction. In other words, the presence of the three elements determine the specific forms which conflict takes in any triad.

Simmel suggested that social situations involving three elements have formal similarities whether the elements are individuals or states. Relationships differing in content may therefore display the same formal properties. The most fundamental issue is that different social relationships which are composed of three elements are similar in structure and their interaction is determined by this three-way form. The triad is therefore a universal element of social life.

Simmel identified three triad positions (1950:145-169). These are a) the non-partisan and the mediator, b) tertius gaudens and c) divide et impera. These three types can be present in any triad and the options available in a triad, therefore, are similar because of the three-way structure. These triad types will now be illustrated.

5.3.2 The Non-Partisan and Mediator Triad Type

If two elements are in conflict with each other the mediating position is a structural possibility for the third to take (see Simmel 1950:145-153). The mediator wishes to bring two conflicting elements together and attempts to eliminate or at least to alleviate any difficulties which each of them has with the other. It can mediate by accommodating any discord between the other two parties, or it can balance the contradictory claims of one party against the...
other. It can do this by presenting a different side to each of the others and by preserving a distance which makes it impartial.

The mediator listens to both sides, and, in order to alleviate the tension between them, presents each side's case to the other. The intensity of the conflict is lessened by the presence of the mediator whose intervention serves not only to block the intensity of their conflict but also to act as a filtering device. Certain information may therefore be altered, obscured or glossed over when it is relayed from one party to the other through the mediator.

There are two kinds of non-partisan mediator, according to Simmel. One stands above the differing interests of the other two elements whereas the second kind is closely concerned with both sides. These non-partisan mediators exhibit a particular blend of proximity and distance. The first kind must ensure that its distance does not appear too great. The second kind of mediator must be wary of the fact that its close interest in each of the others may be open to suspicion.

The existence of an impartial third element can serve the perpetuation of the group. The second kind of mediator, identified above, has an interest in maintaining the group's unity and it works at preserving some stability amongst the three elements. Nevertheless, this mediator may be distrusted because its equal interest in both parties is difficult to demonstrate. The mediator, therefore, faces the constant risk of the group's demise.

5.3.3 The Tertius Gaudens Triad Type

If the third decides to make use of conflict between the other two parties in order to serve its own self interest, another triad type emerges (see Simmel 1950:154-162). This triad type is called the "third who enjoys" and means the third who gains certain advantages from a conflict, whether latent or expressed, between the other two parties. The conflict may be found in the expression of difference between the two parties or else may be apparent in overt tension. Open hostility between the two parties is not necessary for the
tertius gaudens to gain advantage, but conflict is the most common form of this triad type, according to Simmel.

There are several different types of tertius gaudens. The third, wishing to gain from the conflict between the other two elements, may keep itself at a distance. Both other parties, engrossed in their conflict, may leave the third alone to pursue certain advantages. Alternatively, the third can actively support one of the conflicting parties by moving closer to it and gaining benefits from this situation. The third does not have to be more powerful than the other two, if it moves closer to one the addition of power gives this one superiority. In so doing the third gains where it might not have done.

The tertius gaudens can also be achieved by the division of duties amongst two parties. If one party turns over a former duty to two other parties it can gain by getting them to do more together than it used to do by itself.

The tertius gaudens demonstrates, like the non-partisan mediator above, a complex blend of proximity and distance. Where there are two conflicting elements the third can either maintain its distance or else move closer to one of the other parties. Whether near or far, the tertius gaudens' intention is to gain and it is an egoistic exploiter of a situation.

5.3.4 The Divide et Impera Triad Type

In this triad type the third intentionally produces conflict between the other two parties in order to gain a dominating position (see Simmel 1950:162-169). This triad type occurs where there is mutual dependence between the other two or where the third fears the outcome of their bonding. The third in this instance knows how to set one against the other. It is not necessarily the fact that they are going to attack the third, but the possibility that they may do so which prompts the divider. The divider moves to keep the other two parties apart because it fears the outcome of such a possible coalition.

Both distance and proximity are apparent in this triad type. The divider can be very successful by knowing how to keep its distance from a conflict which
it has started. In this way, the conflict can continue without the third's explicit intervention. Where it is necessary for the third to become involved in order to oppress, the third may draw closer to one of the other two and support that party. This can produce resentment and jealousy in the first party who is unsupported and a sense of superiority in the supported party. The divider does not have to be more powerful than the other two. Like tertius gaudens above it is the addition of power to one other party which ensures the divider gains.

5.3.5 Concluding Remarks on Simmel's Triad Types

The triad types demonstrate specific forms of disloyalty, instability, insecurity, jealousy and distrust. These are determined by the three-way structure. The mediator, for example, may attempt to bring stability to the group, but its position is open to distrust. The mediator may also appear to be disloyal if one of the conflicting elements thinks it is too close to the other conflicting party. This may lead to jealousy and a sense of insecurity. These are dangers of which the third as a mediator is aware, and which can augment rather than mitigate the conflict between the other two elements.

The triad can be volatile and flexible. There are a number of positions structurally possible which means that there is also a tension inherent in the triad. The triad may be temporary, therefore, for conflict, shifts and developments between the three elements may ensure its demise.

The presence of three elements entails specific forms of proximity and distance. With time, each element draws nearer to, or further away from, other elements. This also shows how the triad may be unstable, and how this instability unfolds over time. There is an uneasiness in a triad because of the existence of three elements and developments between them over time. This may lead to ambiguity and contradictions determined by the three-way structure.

The next section looks beyond Simmel's triad types and illustrates a fourth structural type. It will also be suggested that not only may the triad be
temporary, because of its structure, but that its existence unfolding in time has specific implications for interaction amongst the three elements.

5.4 BEYOND SIMMEL

5.4.1 Tertius Perdens

In tertius gaudens above, it was noted how the third by moving closer to one of two conflicting parties may gain an advantage by exploiting this situation. If this collaboration between two parties is permanent then the emergence of a new type may be seen. In this structural position two parties collaborate so that both gain an advantage. Conflict occurs between the two collaborators and the third, who may lose as a consequence of this collusion. This position is called tertius perdens in this study and means, following Simmel's tertius gaudens, the third who loses. Tertius perdens was not formally developed by Simmel and represents an oversight in his work on triads.

Tertius gaudens also showed how the third can gain by turning over a duty to two others so that it procures an advantage by getting both to do more than the third did on its own. Where a duty is divided between two so that each does less for the third, a situation of tertius perdens exists. The two collude in order to 'gang up' on and exploit the third. Tertius gaudens, therefore, has a tendency to turn into tertius perdens, but tertius perdens is a distinct type for two elements win and the third loses. This loss may be intentional or unintentional but it is due to the collaboration of the other two against the third.

As stated earlier, divide et impera appears to be based on an awareness of being outmanoeuvred. The position of being outmanoeuvred, however, was not formally developed by Simmel and represents an oversight as it is quite clear that tertius perdens is a distinctive triadic position. Caplow's work on coalitions in triads (1968) appears to suggest that a coalition may, at times, result in the third's being outmanoeuvred (1968:20), and, by inference, perhaps a tertius perdens position. Like Simmel, he did not develop this type and 'coalition' is not sufficient as a term to describe what is occurring in tertius perdens. Collusion between two parties against the third refers to the
process of 'ganging up' on the third and this is where conflict may be seen to lie in this position. The two, therefore, may exploit the third by collaborating together. 'Coalition' is not specific enough to describe the process of loss, because a coalition may occur in other triadic types and not only in tertius perdens (as Caplow (1968) has shown). It must be noted, therefore, that this thesis takes Simmel's analysis further and posits the existence of this fourth position, one which, for the purposes of this study on temps, has significant implications, as will be seen in later chapters.

Simmel's analysis of triads focused on "the sociological significance of the third element" [1950:145]. This appears to stress the importance of the third as a role and not as a structural position. When Simmel's triad types are examined it appears that the position of the third as mediator, divider or the third who gains is defined in relation to conflict between the other two parties. Tertius perdens, on the other hand, takes conflict as existing between the two collaborators and the third. It is not just that the third intervenes in the conflict between two but that the presence of three elements entails the structural possibility of two 'ganging up' on the third to exploit or gain advantage of some kind. Any party in any triad can be the third.

Similarly, according to Simmel the third may 'disturb' any intimacy between the other two elements. This means that any element may disturb the other two in a triad. In the workplace triad, however, temps may 'disturb' the intimacy between the permanent workers and user company and a tertius perdens situation may be seen to occur because temps arrive later in time than permanent workers. This situation will be developed in the next section.

5.4.2 Temps as 'Outsiders'

A three-way relationship is tense because of shifts and developments between the three members. It is not merely that conflict exists but that it is structurally defined by the existence of three. In the workplace triad, conflict between management and workers is now given an added dimension because of the presence of the temp in the workplace. Furthermore, this relationship is dependent upon the market triad which may also be conflictual.
The introduction of the temp into the workplace itself marks what may be an apparently conflictual situation. Temps arrive 'later' than permanent workers, and this lateness in time may result in specific forms of collaboration between the other two groups in the workplace triad. Elias and Scotson (1965) noted the importance of time in all social relationships and suggested that latecomers in time may be labelled by others in a relationship as 'outsiders', which can have particular implications for both those who label and those who are labelled. Elias and Scotson's study of a village community in the English Midlands analysed the effects of the inhabitation of a new housing estate on the original occupants of the village. Before the new housing estate was built there had been two recognisable groups in the village, one working class and the other middle class. The occupants of the new housing estate were also working class. Elias and Scotson noted, however, that, rather than interests between the two working class groups being emphasised, the difference between the new arrivals on the housing estate and the older inhabitants of the village were stressed. Elias and Scotson concluded that the later arrival in time of the housing estate inhabitants meant that the other two groups now defined themselves as sociologically 'old' (Elias and Scotson 1965:12, Mennell 1989:121). They were the 'established' who had apparent shared characteristics in comparison with the third group who, as 'outsiders', were perceived as different. Indeed, the third's difference had further implications for not only did a labelling process occur but it led to a denial of access to certain resources by the other two groups (1965:172).

The later arrival in time by the 'outsiders' provided the context for their stigmatisation by the other two groups. Furthermore, the presence of the 'outsiders' threw the other two parties together in collaboration against them and a tertius perdens situation could be seen to result. (It must be noted, however, that Elias and Scotson did not make nor develop this point on tertius perdens.) This example of tertius perdens is of particular significance for assessing the temp's situation in the workplace triad. Temps arrive in the workplace to find that the permanent workers and the user company have a relationship which was established before they came. Consequently, they may be made to feel different and 'outsiders'. This difference may be expressed in the way that temps are perceived as 'newcomers' or as 'new' in the workplace.
Temps are sociologically 'newer' (Elias and Scotson 1965:12) and they may disturb the other two groups and push them together in defence against the temps' perceived difference.

Temps as 'outsiders' in the workplace triad cannot be discussed without reference to the market triad, for the temps' particular kind of disturbance must include recognition of the market triad's existence and, more specifically, the temps' link with the agency. Temps are 'outsiders' in the workplace triad because they are also perceived as 'belonging' to an agency and are therefore 'not one of us'. This means that their arrival in time is always late, even if some permanent workers actually start work later than they do. Temps are always connected to the market triad outside of the workplace triad and this also defines their difference.

A tertius perdens situation, therefore, may be seen to occur where the permanent workers and the user company 'gang up' on temps because they are 'outsiders'. Permanent workers may stress that they 'belong' together and that temps do not because the temps are 'new'.

5.4.3 Temps' Mobility and their Status as 'Strangers'

Temps are also mobile because the three-way structure of the relationship entails a certain instability and temporariness. Indeed, they move between the market and workplace triads. Within the workplace triad temps may be defined by their mobility and temporality. They have roots outside of the user company workplace and they are 'here today, gone tomorrow' (Simmel 1971:143). Thus, temps are 'strangers' (Simmel 1971:143-149). 'Strangers', have roots outside of the social group or particular society which they inhabit (Simmel 1971). This belonging outside, or elsewhere, gives them an air of temporality, mobility and freedom. 'Strangers' always appear to be in the process of moving on, even if they are not actually doing so. They have a very specific relationship with their 'host' society, defined by their status as 'strangers'. They exhibit a particular blend of distance and closeness; distance because they have come from elsewhere, which can result in closeness of a distinctive kind, such as their receiving confidences (Simmel 1971:145).
distance enables them to be used as detached commentators and observers, which in themselves may involve a certain proximity. Indeed, they represent a synthesis of wandering and attachment (Simmel 1971:143).

This 'stranger' status of temps may enhance and emphasise their position as 'outsiders'. As 'strangers', temps exhibit a distinct blend of distance and proximity because they have origins in the market triad which lies outside of the workplace triad. They may therefore be close to certain members within the workplace triad, but this proximity will be influenced by their detachment. Thus, temps may be perceived as 'free'; they may be perceived to be free to leave, free to be involved, or free to be distant.

Temps who stay for a while in a user company workplace may find that their 'stranger' status is altered. There may be shifts in their distance and proximity because they are "here today, stay tomorrow" (Simmel 1971:143), which changes their position somewhat, but it does not necessarily diminish their status as 'strangers'. Indeed, in certain ways their 'stranger' position is enhanced, because they are still associated with the market triad and the agency, and yet they may form closer links in the workplace triad. They are still associated with mobility and freedom, therefore, although these will have altered over time.

The temps' situation in the workplace triad is a complex blend of several factors. They are involved in a three-way relationship whose structure determines the interaction within it. A particular triadic situation of tertius perdens may occur in the user company workplace because the temp's later arrival in time may push the other two parties together in defence of their perceived similarities and in retaliation against the temps' perceived differences. This situation is emphasised by the temps' status as 'stranger' characterised by a certain mobility and freedom. As 'strangers' they are 'here today, gone tomorrow'. Sometimes, however, they may be "here today, stay tomorrow" (Simmel 1971:143), where their mobility is altered but not diminished.
5.5 CONCLUSION

This chapter began with a formal description of the different triads which are found when a temp registers with an agency and goes to work in a user company. Both market and workplace triads are formally similar. Simmel's types are a structural possibility in each triad. The structure of the triad is therefore a central determining factor of interaction. The triads are interdependent and articulate with one another, which also influences interaction and can either limit or empower each element.

In the workplace triad temps may occupy the position of 'outsiders'. This means that, for example, conflict may exist between temps and permanent workers over the temps' perceived differences. It may also be emphasised by the temp's status as a 'stranger' who is mobile and who may thus be perceived as free. Permanent workers and the user company may 'gang up' on temps because they are perceived as different and they have arrived later in time, and the collusion of the other two parties in tertius perdens may mean that temps are labelled as 'outsiders', because they are perceived as not 'belonging'.

They are also 'outsiders' because they are 'strangers' and have roots outside of the workplace triad. Furthermore, they are 'outsiders' because they are temporary due to the three-way structure. As seen in this chapter there is a certain instability and tension in this relationship determined by its three way structure, the interdependence of the triads and the unfolding of the relationship over time. This means that the relationship may be temporary for conflict amongst any of the members may result in its demise. Temps are mobile and move from triad to triad. Temps, therefore, may occupy several triads in their working lives as temps. Furthermore, the relationship is flexible for there are several positions which are structurally available. This flexibility also influences its temporality and instability.

This theoretical discussion on the temp has shown that not only is the structure of the relationship a determining factor, but so also is the temp's status as 'stranger' and 'outsider' within this triadic relationship. The following two chapters present an analysis of the triads within which temps find themselves on commencing work. For ease of access and reading, Chapter Six will deal
with the market triad, whereas Chapter Seven will examine the workplace triad.
CHAPTER SIX - KEY ELEMENTS OF THE MARKET TRIAD

6.1 INTRODUCTION

The structure of the relationship between the agency, user company and the temp determines the way in which the three parties interact. It is therefore necessary, in order to analyse the working situation of the temp, to examine this three-way relationship. Chapter Five presented the theoretical framework that will be used in this chapter and the following chapter. There are a number of points worth reiterating.

The relationship between the temp, user company and the agency is called the market triad in this study because it occurs in the labour market. When this relationship is established, the temp enters the user company on an assignment and another triad is formed. This second triad is called the workplace triad in this study and it occurs between the temp, the user company and the permanent workers. Both triads are interdependent. What happens in one will influence developments in another. This chapter will analyse the market triad, whereas the following chapter will examine the workplace triad and its articulation with the market triad.

As was stated in Chapter Five, the work of Simmel on triads (1950) is used in this thesis. He described three triadic types, a) the non-partisan and the mediator, b) tertius gaudens and c) divide et impera. These may occur in both market and workplace triads. Simmel's analysis is taken further, however, and a fourth triad type is suggested. This type, tertius perdens, was not developed in his work, and, as will be seen, this triad type is of great significance for the temp, particularly when the temp's status as 'stranger' (Simmel 1971) and 'outsider' (Elias and Scotson 1965) is recognised.

A very specific example of tertius perdens in the workplace triad was described in Chapter Five using the work of Elias and Scotson (1965), who argued that lateness in time is an important factor in social relationships. In the workplace triad the temp's later arrival provides the context for their stigmatisation by the permanent workers. Temps will be seen and defined as
'outsiders', and therefore different from the permanent workers. Apparent shared interests between the permanent workers and the user company may be emphasised. In other words, these two parties are sociologically 'old' (Elias and Scotson 1965:12, Mennell 1989:121) and this 'oldness' may be used to preserve a superior status.

Temps are also defined and perceived as different because they are 'strangers' (Simmel 1971). As 'strangers' temps belong outside of the workplace triad. They are mobile between both market and workplace triads and this mobility and the potential to be mobile emphasise their difference. Furthermore, what is of note is that the interdependence of the market and workplace triads may be played out through the temp as 'stranger'. In other words, the temp's mobility between both triads is a sign of their interdependence, and this has implications for the way in which the temp is perceived.

When considering the temps' working experience, therefore, it is necessary to take into account not only the complexities of their triadic relationship, but also their particular status as 'strangers' and 'outsiders' within this relationship. This chapter and the next will unpack the various components of this complex situation. It will be necessary to first of all consider various dynamics of the market triad and the way in which this functions as a three-way entity. It will be seen that in this triad there are several important elements which are central. One of these is the division of the position of 'employer' between the agency and the user company. Both of these parties in the market triad will occupy the position of 'employer' but each will be responsible for different duties. The issues of training and benefits provision will be examined along with the status of 'employer' in Section 6.3. It will be suggested that these may be analysed as a tertius perdens situation. The collaboration of agency and user company over the role of employer means that temps may be perceived as non-employees, or as self employed (see Chapter Two). This will have further implications in the workplace triad where this perception interacts with their status as 'strangers' and 'outsiders' (see Chapter Seven).

First, however, attention is turned to the importance laid on the temp's ability to 'fit into' the user company. This, it will be suggested, is emphasised by the
agency which occupies a mediating role and attempts to reconcile the two
other parties in the market triad. It appears, however, that more pressure is
put on one party (the temps) than the other party (user company) to whom the
agency's interests may be closer. This situation is better understood when the
agency's role as 'employer' is also taken into consideration.

6.2. THE MEDIATOR IN THE MARKET TRIAD

The patterns of conflict which exist in a triad are distinctive because of the
three members. Where there are two elements in conflict with each other, or
which have different or divergent interests, the mediating position is a
structural possibility for the third element. The mediator's function is to
alleviate the dissension between the other two members.

There are two kinds of non-partisan mediator, according to Simmel (1950). One
maintains itself above the contrasting opinions and interests of the other two
parties. The other is closely concerned with both sides. This second kind is a
more complex mediating position and it will be explored in this section for, as
will be suggested, this is the agency's role as mediator.

The mediator can work in a number of ways. It has an interest in maintaining
the group's unity and therefore wishes to bring the other two parties together.
In doing so, it may have to keep them apart. This classic example of mediation
involves distancing two elements from one another so that the objectivity
gained by this distance can lessen the intensity of the conflict or differing
opinions.

Alternatively, the mediator may bring two formerly-distanced elements
together. The conflict in this case may only be latent or its potential may
only be realised by the mediator. The mediator's awareness of the differences
of the other parties entails obscuring these in order to facilitate their
bonding and to avoid potential conflict. In this situation, the two parties are
brought closer together by the mediator. In moving closer the potential for
tension may become greater, particularly if each party's differences are
known to the other party. The mediator's skill lies in defusing or avoiding this.

The mediator aims to present each side's case to the other. It may obscure certain aspects of each element because these may be unfavourably viewed or received by the opposing element. The mediator is interested, therefore, in keeping the peace, or in giving the appearance of so doing. Conflict or tension may be latent or bubbling under the surface on both sides of the mediator, but it is up to the mediator to defuse this or make it seem as if it has been defused.

Distance is, therefore, necessary to maintain impartiality and function as a mediator. Care must, however, be taken, because this distance from both other parties may be open to suspicion. The other two may think the distance is too great to mediate properly. The mediating position must also contain a certain closeness. The mediator must be able to listen to both sides and proximity may be required to elicit information from each party. This must be obscured in conveying selected information to the other in order that this party receives it under the guise of objectivity. The other two parties may think, however, that the third is too close to one or other party and may doubt and distrust its position. To demonstrate, therefore, that one is a successful mediator it is best to appear to be non-partisan and to show that one does not adhere too much to either of the other parties. As stated above, this is difficult to do if the mediator has an interest in both other parties. It may present a different side of itself to each in order to do so, as well as presenting each side's case to the other. The mediator position is therefore shifting and tenuous for the structural dangers are manifold.

As a mediator in the market triad, the agency may have a difficult task and, as this section will make clear, the agency's interest in keeping the group together means that the role it takes may be duplicitous. Simmel suggested that mediators who are equally close to each of the other two elements are impartial, although they find this impartiality difficult to maintain. It appears, however, that the agency is not impartial. It attempts to give the appearance of impartiality, but it clearly has its own self interests and may, at
times, constrain one or other party to achieve these. This will be revealed as this section progresses.

The agency supplies the temp to the user company and it has an interest, therefore, in bringing the two parties together and in avoiding any conflict which may arise between them. One agency representative described the process of bringing together two separate parties as "...like doing an enormous intricate jigsaw puzzle whereby you have to take into consideration all sorts of factors" (Director, Secretarial 1:30). In doing this, the agency may hide certain aspects of each party from the other so that each appears favourable to the other. The agency does this in order to keep the triad functioning. As stated earlier, the agency has an interest in both other parties and in maintaining the triad's unity. The agency may be equally close to both, but attempts to give the appearance to each of the parties of being equally distant. It thereby wishes to ensure that its position is perceived as non-partisan.

"You hear both sides, you placate both sides...I mean, they may at the end just say 'You know, I really didn't like it there because blah blah blah blah blah' and then when I was talking to the client they might say 'Well she was blah blah blah blah blah'. Now I'll just agree with them, you know, you have to really to a certain extent. Take it in and beware, you know, beware of it, but I just placate both..." [Temporary Controller, Graduates 2:13]

The agency is both literally and metaphorically at a distance from both other parties. It is physically distant from the user company workplace and, therefore, from where both other parties in the market triad are based. It also needs to appear at a certain distance from both in order to function as a mediator. It cannot be perceived as too close to either user company or temp, otherwise one, or other, or both will distrust it. There is a danger, however, of appearing to be too distant. Its ability to mediate or to be interested enough in the other parties will be questioned if the distance is too great. The agency must ensure that it maintains this balance of proximity and distance or at least the appearance of such. It must also be prepared to actively intervene between the other two parties, if it is to mediate, to keep itself informed of what
is going on between the temp and the user company. In so doing, it attempts
to alleviate potential conflict. The agency's mediating role also covers
ensuring that the assignment runs smoothly for its duration. This will entail
having to isolate one party from the other and listening to each side's case.

"...I will talk to both the client and the temp, to see if there are any
problems that might be coming up. So, a small problem if I didn't talk to
them each week might turn into a big problem. So every week temps
end up having to talk to me...I know exactly what's going on. And it
means that they, even if they don't see the benefit of it, will get the
benefit of it. So I can nip problems in the bud."

[Temporary Controller, Accountancy 3:12-13]

The agency has to ensure that its distance from the other two parties is not too
great. At times this may take the form of moving a little closer to the temp. In
so doing, it has to be aware of the user company's position, however, and in
seemingly moving closer to the temp it does so on the user company's behalf, as
the following quote shows:

"...I always point out to most temporary staff that they are going to be
the odd person out in the office. One of the particular reasons why I
always talk to the client and the temp each week is to, shall we say, give
the temp a pat on the back, because the client won't often necessarily
say to the temporary 'You're doing a very good job'. It doesn't mean
they're not, or anything like that, I want to find out. So, again, every
time I speak to the client, find out how good they are, whatever, then I'll
always reiterate that to the temp to make sure that their work is being
appreciated... And secondly, to make them feel that as they're not part of
that company, they are still part of a team, being part of the company
here." [ibid:18]

This specific example illustrates the way in which the agency can present
aspects of one side's case to the other side. The agency representative is
ensuring that the triad is maintained and is facilitating the bonding between
the other two parties. As the carrier pigeon he is ensuring that the temp hears
"good" news. This can have the effect of making the temp more favourably
disposed towards the user company. It also demonstrates to temps how the agency appears to have an interest in them. It may further result in keeping any potential conflict at bay.

Agencies not only intervene to pass on "good" news they are also interested in keeping an eye on the progress of the bonding between the other two parties.

"...if I feel that somebody's bored in what they do, I'd rather pull them out and put them in a job that was more challenging to them, more rewarding. Because if they're bored in a job they'll be looking over their shoulder all the time for something else. And if another agency comes up at that then I lose my temp and I don't like that. I'd rather the client was happy with the temp they've got and the temp was happy in the job that they were doing." [Director, Accountancy 2:14]

Agencies in this situation may resort to ending a particular triad. They will, however, keep both parties and match them up with others in new triads. What agencies fear and work to avoid is the loss of one or both parties as a source of business.

"We've had threats. Companies like to threaten temporary agencies. See, if a company is particularly dissatisfied with a particular temporary then the only person they can scream and shout at is me. The buck has to stop somewhere. Sometimes a company will say 'This temporary has not done what they were directed to do, their timekeeping is abysmal, they have a very poor attendance record, they are disruptive and we are never going to use you again'. Now that happens very very seldom and normally it's because...a temporary has completely screwed up." [Temporary Controller, Accountancy 1:9]

Agencies as mediators must, therefore, be very sensitive to potential conflict in order to avoid these situations. Agencies are also aware of the competition that exists for attracting user companies and temps. If an agency does not mediate successfully, business may be lost to another agency.
"If somebody doesn't match up there's always another agency, or probably another agency, depending on the machinery, who's waiting to jump in. So you've really got to try and please the client." [Director, Secretarial 4:4]

The agency has to give the appearance of being equally interested in both parties so that both will trust it as a mediator, but the agency may be more interested in one party rather than the other. As the above quote has made explicit, satisfying the user company's needs is more important for the agency than satisfying the temp's needs. Although the agency can perceive its position to be "...a real agony auntie situation..." [ Temporary Controller, Accountancy 1:35], its real interest lies in keeping the triad going for as long as possible. This may mean acting as a mediator but its self interest is apparent.

"And I like people who talk straight and if they're in an assignment and it's not working out I like to know. If they're somewhere where the assignment is much more senior than they thought it was going to be I like them to let me know so that I can give them a rate increase, so that I can adjust the rate to the right level...Because I mean if a temp is unhappy they will go back and say to the people 'Look I'm unhappy' and it all reflects badly on the agency. And you have to bear in mind...the importance of word of mouth to an agency." [Temporary Controller, Accountancy 5:11]

The interest of agencies in maintaining the triad means that in attempting to accommodate both parties they may administer more to the needs of one party than the other. This may be seen in the way that agency representatives stress the importance of the 'fitting in' of the temp into the user company. As mediators, agencies bring the temp and the user company together. Mediators wish to ensure that each of the other two parties is made acceptable to the other. For agencies, this takes the form of 'fitting in' one party to the requirements of the other party. One of the parties, therefore, is specifically groomed to fit into the other. In this way agencies ensure that the user company is satisfied.
"In terms of the type of people we are looking for really it doesn't particularly matter about their skills. Obviously their skills are important, but because we deal with secretarial, clerical, right through to accounting...and computing to a certain extent, we can fit people in providing they're the right calibre of person, flexible, likeable, resilient." [Director, General 3:4]

The agency therefore ensures that the temp is acceptable to the user company in order for the temp to 'fit in'. Acceptability is central to the agency's position as mediator and is usually explained in terms of 'fitting in':

"I mean, a person may fit into one company and not into another. That's another reason why I like to visit companies because there is a company type. There's a...[user company]...salesgirl, they all look the same...And if you visit companies you see that there is a company type."
[Temporary Controller, Accountancy 1:13]

'Fitting in' is perceived in several ways by the agency. For example, acceptability is important in terms of appearance so that conflict can be avoided in the user company:

"We're looking for the professional temporary secretary, so somebody who is well presented - that is vital because it's going to be the first thing that people will focus on when this temporary secretary walks into the office, when the focus of attention is on them anyway. So they've got to be well presented...they've always got to turn up in a dress or a skirt or a suit the first day that they're at an assignment. If they find that they're in a very trendy PR company or advertising company then they can dress accordingly, but that first day that they appear they've got to have the full weight of the...[Secretarial 1]...reputation behind them. And so we always say that they should never wear trousers, even if they're smart trousers, because particularly in the City everybody is immaculately presented, right down from the, you know, the chairman's PA to the receptionist, or particularly to the receptionist." [Director, Secretarial 1:14]
The personality of the temp may also be perceived as a sign of acceptability:

"Personality to the nth degree...people with more personality I prefer to use if I can, simply on the basis that I know the company will tend to keep them on longer etcetera etcetera, or they'll fit in more easily...[They are a]...reflection on the company and my decision-making process. So if I feel there is a doubt, unfortunately if they don't convince me that they're going to fit, I can't necessarily put them into a client company, because I could possibly lose that client. That's the biggest problem." [Temporary Controller, Accountancy 3:16]

Another way that acceptability is viewed to be of importance is in terms of a temp's flexibility:

"...the most important thing altogether is flexibility. They have got to be able to do whatever is asked of them cheerfully and willingly and be as helpful as possible. So if they're asked to make the tea and the coffee they jolly well do, and if they're asked to photocopy they go and do it. And they can do it all with a smile on their face even if they're gritting their teeth. They've got to be quick, they've got to use their initiative, they've got to be involved. I think that's probably what gives us the slight edge over possibly other temporary secretaries, that the clients look to us to provide them with a temporary secretary who's going to be well presented, turn up on time, be reliable, not spend hours making personal telephone calls, rushing out for endless interviews, sitting there reading the paper, all the trademarks of a bad temp. But somebody who, they take all that for granted, somebody who really is going to be involved with the company for the length of time that they're there and to use their initiative if there's a crisis, and not just sit there with a label on them saying 'I'm just the temp and I'm going...home...nothing to do with me'." [Director, Secretarial 1:14-15]

Such flexible temps may be used with "difficult" user companies:

"Obviously you know flexibility in the sense that they'll do more or less anything and go more or less anywhere. That's lovely. That's really
helpful when you're sort of desperate in some instances or you've got a very difficult client and you think 'Oh yes, I'll put Anna in there and she'll be superb - just what the client wants.' [Temporary Controller, Accountancy 5:10]

and

"We have a set of our best temporaries who we try to keep in work. If we feel that we have a particular difficult company we will send one of our better temporaries there because they are more reliable." [Temporary Controller, Accountancy 4:5]

It is the avoidance of conflict which makes acceptability so important for the agency as mediator. The agency may argue that it is crucial for the temp to be acceptable in order to avoid tension.

Real pressure may therefore be put on the temp to be acceptable. As well as appearance, personality and flexibility, the agency may also emphasise reliability. From the agency's point of view, if temps are reliable they will be able to avoid conflict, or, at least, inform the agency of its occurrence. This may make the agency's position as mediator a little easier and may make it possible for the agency to act before the situation becomes too difficult. This again illustrates the way in which the agency can use the temp to secure its own objectives. Unreliability, therefore, may be perceived as the temp's inability to help the agency in its mediation and shows the way in which the agency is not impartial:

"The fact that they aren't going to go into a job is not important, but the fact that they didn't tell us and on time is important. So unreliability in that sense. And then not turning up and not ringing us, which is very rare. Obviously poor work... and just poor attitude really. Perhaps they're not flexible enough and you'd encourage them to go elsewhere, because you just can't fit them in any of our places if they're not and you might suggest that they go elsewhere. Similarly, if they've done bad work, are unreliable, you'd actually say it. You'd just tell them to go out." [Director, General 3:7]
The agency in its attempts to maintain the triad may stress the importance of providing a "personal service" to user companies. Many agency representatives said in interview that they kept their particular user companies by providing a consultancy type business.

"I think from my own experience, having worked in a body shop - excuse the expression body shop - but the big agencies who just supply a volume of people...[there is a]...difference between a body shop and an agency proper. But I worked in both and...in the body shop environment, as long as a person had the experience it didn't matter, you just send them off...and you'd hope that the two'd get on okay. What I found working in a more selective environment, not my own agency, but in my previous employer who was slightly upmarket from the body shop, it was far more important to make sure that the personality of the individual was right with the business that they were going to do. If that was wrong they would get thrown out. But experience, if you've got the experience that was the first part, but the personality was the main thing." [Director, Accountancy 2:16-17]

This quote explicitly shows how the agency's interest in maintaining the triad may best be served by looking after one party more than the other. The agency as mediator may appear to be non-partisan and equally interested in both other parties. This can, however, be deceptive. It is the agency's interest in maintaining the triad which informs its role as mediator. This is obvious in the way that acceptability is stressed as important for temps, yet not necessarily for user companies. User companies must prove their acceptability as good debtors but their ability to 'fit in' with the temp is not as important for the agency as the temp's ability to 'fit in'.

One interesting aspect of acceptability was the expressed preference for Australian and New Zealand temps because they 'fitted in' better. It has already been noted that what Syrett (1985) called the Australian Factor was important in the 1970s (see Chapter Four), and 13.2% of the sample in this research were from the Antipodes. This may indicate that there is a subculture surrounding Australian temps (Syrett 1985) and, indeed, in interviews with
agency representatives it appeared that Antipodean temps had a particular image. One agency representative explained why she thought temps who were on working holidays from Australia and New Zealand were 'better' than British people:

"Well it's not that they're technically better, they just seem bright and with it and they've got a good attitude and a good way with their employer. They're very easy to get on with and that always helps. If you're easy to get on with, clients will be much more flexible."

[Temporary Controller, Accountancy 5:6]

If temps have to 'fit in' in a user company workplace, it is useful from the agency's point of view, if their appearance and/or personality are acceptable. Temps from the Antipodes are perceived as acceptable in many ways and are therefore regarded as "good" temps. They are also perceived as acceptable because they are travellers. They are explicitly mobile and explicitly 'outsiders' and 'strangers' in the user company workplace. The agency knows that they will be leaving and this enhances their acceptability as temps. They are 'here today, gone tomorrow' and this double 'stranger' status appears to make them more acceptable (see also Chapter Eight, Section 8.3 below). The agency's emphasis on what constitutes a "good" temp illustrates its concern with the temp's acceptability. The mediator's interest in maintaining the unity of the group coincides with the agency's self interest, which is to keep the triad going. In mediating, the agency may therefore be keen to accommodate the user company's needs rather than the temp's in order to secure its own interests. It may be easier for the agency as a mediator to 'fit' the individual temp into the user company, rather than the other way around. Temps are therefore metaphorically as well as physically brought to the user company and 'fitted in'. The emphasis on the temp's acceptability illustrates the coincidence of the agency's self interest and that of the mediating position.

The agency's ability to provide an acceptable temp may, at times, be questioned by the user company. This illustrates the dangers of the mediator role for the agency.

6.13
"...peak season midsummer time things do tend to go a little wrong then, i.e. if you ask for people with a specific...knowledge...they come in sometimes and they haven’t a clue what they're doing, they have never even seen the machine, that sort of thing." [Personnel Officer, Oil 1:6-7]

The agency’s appearance of being a mediator may also be distrusted by temps. There may be suspicion that the mediator is not impartial or is not sufficiently interested.

"[Temps]...don’t get enough support from the agencies. My daughter did agency work too and she said you cannot complain ever. 'Don't complain about the jobs. They'll get sick and tired of you and they won't give you any more jobs'...Because some employers are not easy and if you cannot tell your agency then it’s tough. And the agency’s there to make money." [Temp 2, Medical 1:2]

These two examples illustrate the dangers of mediation for the agency. There are times when conflict arises or when the appearance of interest in one of the parties is open to suspicion.

There are occasions, too, when the agency's interest in maintaining the unity of the group veers away from conciliation. The agency as a mediator is interested in preserving the unity of the group as a triad because it gains from this. Not only does it gain revenue but also the prospect of future business. Just as the agency has a very real interest in making the temp acceptable to the user company and thereby facilitating the union, it does not want the union to be too successful. If there is the possibility that this may occur the agency may ensure that it gains from this. By preventing the anticipated association of user company and temp, the agency may wish to make both aware of their differences and aware of the way in which their union works due to the presence of the agency as mediator. This position is precarious for the agency to take, but may also be necessary for it has an interest in the triad’s remaining a triad.

The agency, therefore, may not alleviate conflict fully but will allow the other two parties to remain aware of their differences. One particular example
of this deeper side to the mediator role is the requirement of a specific commitment from the temp after having provided training. Some agencies may train their temps to increase their acceptability (see 6.3.2 below). This works in both user company and agency's interests. It will also work in the temp's interest but the agency may ensure that the user company and the temp cannot elope permanently because the temp owes the agency a favour.

"This friend of mine who is working for a legal agency...they did give her a training...She was sent to her jobs and now she has to, even if she finds a good place to work and she'd like to join the staff, she can't because so many weeks or months she has to stay with the agency as a temp for her course...She is very grateful because she is using the word processor all the time now, but she cannot, if anybody offers her an interesting other job, she has to refuse because they paid for the training." [Temp 1, Medical 1:2]

In this way the agency is working to maintain the triad functioning to serve its own self interest. The agency, therefore, may deliberately remind the other parties of its presence. This may be done under the guise of being a mediator and avoiding potential conflict, but such a position also illustrates the agency's fear of some kind of permanent reconciliation between the other two. The agency may appear to be sympathetic, but its self interest is apparent.

"The girls sometimes get muddled up, you know, and they forget who they're working for. If they've been in a booking long term, you know, we generally have to remind them that, you know, that we employ them, therefore, if they're out sick, please let us know soon." [Temporary Controller, General 2:10]

To conclude this discussion on the mediator, it is quite obvious that in the avoidance of potential conflict agencies will attempt to make the temp as acceptable as possible to the user company. This focus on acceptability centres on personality, appearance, flexibility and reliability. A "good" temp is one whose acceptability satisfies some or all of these criteria. One interesting point about acceptability is where certain types of temps are perceived as 'better'.
than others because they may appear to fit the formula. Agencies may appear to be non-partisan and may appear to be at an equal distance from both other parties. By stressing the acceptability of the temp they will, however, be attempting to use the temp to secure their own self interests. At times, agencies may feel it necessary to attempt to prevent the permanent unity of the other two so that their position of gain is not lost. This is closely associated with their role as an 'employer', the subject of the next section.

6.3 TERTIUS PERDENS IN THE MARKET TRIAD

In the tertius gaudens position the third enjoys certain advantages gained from conflict between the other two parties (see Chapter Five, 5.3.3). Tertius perdens, on the other hand, describes the formal triad type which occurs when the third loses out due to the collaboration of the other two parties. In tertius perdens the two may collude and share a responsibility between them in order to do less than if each did it alone. In so doing, they both gain in relation to the third who loses. This loss may be an unintentional or intentional consequence of the two's collaboration. The two, in other words, 'gang up' on the third and the third may be exploited.

This collaboration between two maintains the triad as three-way for it is in the space of collaboration where their gain may occur and where the third loses. Collaboration between two parties against the third may not necessarily be based on explicit similarities between the two. The third's presence may throw both of them together in collusion over perceived similarities in relation to the third's supposed differences. Collaboration may also be used as a form of control for the two may jointly control the third. The third may feel exploited because both other parties exert control over it. Alternatively, control may be difficult to exercise at times for if the collaboration between the two is quite loose the third may experience a sense of freedom.
6.3.1 Tertius Perdens and the Collaboration over 'Employer'

It has already been noted that temps have two social employers (see Chapters One and Two) and that 66.5% of temps in the sample in this research said that they regarded themselves as the employees of both agency and user company (see Chapter Four). In the market triad, then, the agency and the user company collaborate over the role of employer. They divide certain responsibilities between them which means that one 'employer' has some commitments but is freed from others towards the temp. It also means that there are some duties which both 'employers' claim are not their responsibility. The temp, in this situation, may therefore experience some loss.

One agency representative said it was the 'employer':

"...for PAYE purposes and administration to check up on temporaries' progress, for example. The clients are the employers for supervision purposes." [Temporary Controller, Accountancy 4:10]

The agency as the supplying 'employer' has responsibility for paying the temp's wages and National Insurance. The user company is the supervising 'employer'. Neither of the 'employers' perceives itself to be the "direct" employer because it collaborates over the role employer with the other. Each may claim that certain duties are not its responsibility because it is not the "direct" employer on account of the presence of the other 'employer'.

According to one agency representative

"We certainly deduct their PAYE and National Insurance. We're not their employer in the sense that employers normally are considered to give them rights to notice and maternity benefits and statutory benefits. We're not the employer in that sense. But we obviously do in the sense of tax and National Insurance." [Director, General 3:7]

One personnel officer said:

6.17
"My opinion is that the agency should make it very clear that they are their employer. I mean...it is a funny situation...if they had a problem you know we'd tell them to talk to the agent and then the agent would talk to us and we'd sort it out...I mean if we had a problem with an employee for any reason we'd go back to the agency and say to them that if they couldn't sort it out with their employee we'd just give them notice and employ someone else, so. I mean, there's always that, you know, if they don't do what is requested or they haven't got the right attitude they know that they're not going to be around for very long. That is the whole essence of, you know, being able to employ an agency person. You have that choice." [Personnel Officer, Oil 3:13-14]

The agency's role as the mediator will cut across its role as an 'employer'. As the supplying 'employer' and mediator it will have an interest in solving problems with the other 'employer'. The user company will also rely on the agency as a mediator and supplying 'employer' to alleviate tension.

By collaborating over the duties of employer both agency and user company may gain flexibility. There are certain responsibilities which each does not have. The agency can disclaim responsibility for the day-to-day supervision of the temp and the user company is freed from payroll commitments to the temp. It pays a fee to the agency calculated on the actual number of hours that the temp works with the user company. Both will gain a certain amount of flexibility because they will each do less than if each was the only employing party.

For example, as one personnel officer said:

"Well just for flexibility, the sort of filling in gaps. I mean, they're easy, easy to employ, you know, not being the direct employers, I mean, we can stop and start them whenever the need arises." [Personnel Officer, College 3:9]

There is, however, the potential for conflict between the user company and the agency over the issue of employer. Neither the user company nor the agency takes full responsibility for the temp and this may result in some
tension or in differences of opinion over where certain responsibilities lie. The agency as the mediator and the supplying 'employer' obviously has an interest in alleviating this as much as possible. Tension may also occur between the user company and the temp. When the user company and the agency collaborate over the duties of employer the control of the temp may be difficult to exercise because the agency may claim that day-to-day supervision is the user company's responsibility. Furthermore, the agency is physically distant from the user company and may rely on the user company to provide adequate supervision. The user company, however, (as in the example above), may claim that the agency has a mediating function as the supplying 'employer' to ensure that the temp behaves properly.

This demonstrates the difficulties inherent in this relationship because of its three-way structure. Two parties by collaborating may gain at the expense of the third. In collaboration, however, there may be space between them which is not defined as one or the other's or in which their control may overlap. This may result in a situation where, although gaining, the advantages held are shifting and tenuous.

One personnel officer, for example, said that using temps meant a certain flexibility for the organisation as a whole, but that temps were not flexible because they constrained permanent workers:

"And there are a lot of limitations on what we can use agency staff for, because particularly in the ward areas they aren't experienced in that particular location. Agency nurses are experienced nurses usually, but they don't know the local procedures and they don't know the patients on the ward. So, they tend to be given fairly mundane tasks that don't stretch them. And...I know that a lot of managers complain that every time they get a new agency they have to retrain them and so they are limited. But on the other hand they actually turn up with a person. There's not many times when we've never brought anybody in."

[Personnel Officer, Hospital 2:2]

Although both user company and agency are gaining by splitting the duties of 'employer', it is clear that where such duties are not defined as belonging to
one or other party the flexibility sought by either may be undermined. One way that this may be seen to occur is in the confusion that temps may express and which may result in their feeling free or not committed to either 'employer'. In collaborating, the two parties may be at a distance from the temp. This distance may result in the temp's feeling alone. Temps, may therefore perceive themselves to be self employed.

"I feel like I'm self employed most of the time although I mean, I'd say...'I work for...[Graduates 1]...' but I actually feel like I'm on my own most of the time." [Temp 1, Graduates 1:3]

Alternatively, the temp may feel close to both user company and agency and may therefore experience divided loyalties:

"It depends on the individual company. Here I feel that I'm very much an employee of the company. And also the agency. It's a case of torn loyalties. I know the people very well and I do feel that when I answer the phone you are representing the company. The people on the other end of the phone have no idea that you are an outsider, I suppose, so to speak. I do feel loyalty to the company that I'm working for. And you must try and do your best. Because that's what you're paid for. You're paid to do that. But also I've certainly got some loyalty to...[Secretarial 4]...because they're my employers." [Temp 2, Secretarial 4:11]

Although collaboration between two parties may result in some advantages, there is confusion because the three-way structure shifts over time. The two collaborators may be both close to and distant from the third which can result in the third's feeling alone or feeling torn between both. There is also confusion because the third may not know what each of the other's responsibilities cover. This may result in the temp's feeling a lack of commitment.

"Well really I'm obligated to...[General 1]...because you know they got me the job and they offered me the work...I suppose in a way, I feel like I'm an employee of...[user company]...in a way that I've got to get the
work done and I'll do my best to get the work done. But in the other way...if something happened and I were to walk out, I would. So I suppose I feel more so the agency.” [Temp 1, General1:27]

The risks inherent in a three-way relationship may be seen in this confusion. The two collaborators may not clearly define where each of their responsibilities lie. There may therefore be differences of opinion over the space between them. Meanwhile, the third is confused over the collaboration of the others. This may result in the third's exploitation. For example, temps may feel that as they have two 'employers' they are made to work harder than if they had only one. It may also result in the third experiencing a sense of freedom for in the space between the third and the collaborators there may be room for slight manoeuvre. What is also apparent from the above quote is that the temp's status as 'stranger' within this three-way relationship is also significant. Moving between the two 'employers', the 'stranger' status of temps is emphasised. As 'strangers', temps may feel alone, or distanced from one or both 'employers'. Furthermore, where the two 'employers' collaborate against temps, this can also serve to underline their status as 'strangers', and as 'wanderers' moving between both of the other parties. temps may experience some contradiction in their situation, as the above quote made clear. Contradiction, structurally defined, is played out in a very specific way because of the way in which the temp's status as 'stranger' is articulated within this three-way relationship.

6.3.2 The Division of Training Provision in Tertius Perdens

It has been noted that temps tend to miss out on training provision (McNally 1979, Syrett 1985, Meager 1985), and only 1.9% of the sample in the questionnaire survey had received training from their agency (see Chapter Four). One of the responsibilities of an 'employer' which is shared by the user company and the agency is the provision of training. Both may claim that as they are not the "direct" employer they do not have to provide training. Both may be beneficiaries in tertius perdens by not having to train the temp.

One agency representative said:

6.21
"...a client will request a particular model of WP or software package or something. If we have the exact match then fine no problem. If we haven't we just say 'This person has stacks of WP experience, hasn't done your one, but is totally confident that she can pick it up, give her five minutes, she'll be fine.' The decision is then their's." [Temporary Controller, Graduates 2:14]

The agency may claim as the supplying 'employer' that although it does not provide training, its temps are experienced and do not need training. User companies may claim, as the other 'employer', that training is not their responsibility for they are meant to receive a trained commodity:

"I think it would be too much for us as a company to take on that kind of responsibility. And I don't think that we'd be willing to. We've certainly, not to my knowledge, ever had any policy of training temporaries because to some extent it would be taking on the responsibility of the employer and we're not. We're very specifically not, you know! And while in the course of a job someone may be taught something it would be by the by rather than an intentional thing. You know, it would, you'd teach them maybe to help you get a job done while they're here. To that extent, they may, you know, because obviously any temp whatever job they're doing they're gaining experience and learning new things." [Personnel Officer, Oil 3:12]

Another personnel officer claimed:

"A temp's got to come in and be able to do the job from 9 o'clock, 9.30, that morning. You're not going to spend a week letting them find their feet, you know! It's not what you're paying for. They need wider training...It's the agency who should train them. You're buying a product and you expect a finished product, you know. Well, I see an agency temp as a product and I want it fully ready to use, not self assembly!" [Personnel Officer, College 4:9-10]
Both user company and agency by dividing employer responsibilities between them do less than if either was the only employer. They may both claim a certain freedom from providing training or may experience a certain flexibility. The collaboration of the agency and the user company in the role of employer is also related to the agency’s role as mediator and as a supplier of the temp. At times the agency may wish to improve the acceptability of the temp by providing some training (see Section 6.2 above). There may then be certain requirements which the temp may have to fulfill.

Some agency representatives said that they provided cross training for their word processor operators from one word processing package to another. There were certain requirements which they wanted from temps in this instance:

"It depends on the job, but we will train and cross train if a girl is good and looks as though she will stay with us for a while for her reasons. And we will pay at our expense to have her trained onto a different machine." [Director, Secretarial 3:11]

This agency director required the temp to stay with the agency as compensation for receiving cross training. The agency, by providing training, was demonstrating some commitment as an 'employer' towards the temp. It wanted this commitment reciprocated by the temp.

Another agency representative was very explicit about the temp's commitment:

"In the main if we've got someone who's got absolutely super typing speeds, wants to temp for - we find out their futuristic (sic) plans - wants to temp, we would undertake to send them to training school and they would commit themselves to working for us at least three months after that and we don't charge them. So we register them. We possibly put them into a booking for a couple of weeks to confirm their skills and make sure that they're alright and then we'll arrange a two or a three day training course...and have them trained and put them into a booking where they're utilising that word processing training 6.23
straight away. And then they'll work for us on an on-going basis for three months. They must stay with us for three months...if they go off and they don't stay with us for three months they're then charged in full for that...Because anyone who's trained by us we know are excellent and we have no qualms in using them at all. And we know that we can send them anywhere. And of course the secret is to make sure that they're always in work after training them and they develop a huge loyalty towards an agency who trained them so well." [Temporary Controller, General 2:6]

Alternatively, the agency may negotiate a reduced rate with the user company to cover the cost of cross training a temp. This illustrates the sharing of training provision between both user company and agency in order that both do less.

"They have this system whereby they put you into a job where you don't know how to use the machine and they’ve got something called Training Time, which for the employer to pay less you can teach yourself or somebody in the office can teach you in a day or half a day or how long they choose to give you." [Temp 6, Secretarial 1:10]

Temps, in many cases, will be responsible for training themselves. The user company and the agency by collaborating over employer responsibilities may free themselves from supplying certain duties to temps. Temps may therefore lose out on formal training. When this is considered alongside the agency's emphasis on the temps' acceptability temps may feel quite constrained to perform well. In doing so, however, temps may improve their record with the agency and may then earn a higher rate. One temp explained how she acquired word processor training and moved from a typing to a word processing rate:

"I had no idea how to operate one until I was sent to an assignment and found myself sitting in front of one. Brand new, it had just come out of its box - the firm had only started that morning. Three of us went in to get things going. And the Olivetti typewriter that was being promised wasn't there, just this word processor...So I just set to and read the book.
It's great. So I rang up...[Secretarial 1]...and said 'Put that on my thing, my records'. So, yes, I'm self taught. I haven't had any training."
[Temp 3, Secretarial 1:10]

Temps by training themselves may thereby prove their flexibility to both 'employers'. An interesting situation therefore occurs. As seen in the mediator section above, the agency emphasises the importance of the temps' acceptability in order to fit them into the user company. The user company will also say that temps are flexible because the supplying 'employer' provides a temp as and when the user company wishes. The user company and the agency then gain flexibility by collaborating over the duties of the employer for each does less than if it was the only employer and each is less committed towards the temp. Temps, meanwhile, feel self employed and responsible for their own training. By proving themselves adaptable and able to train themselves the temp's identity as flexible is generated. In other words, the agency may constrain temps to be flexible in order to 'fit in' to the user company. By not getting any training through the agency's collaboration with the user company, temps may prove their adaptability and flexibility by training themselves. Temps will therefore be perceived as flexible workers (see Chapters Two and Four above).

They may also, however, be inflexible workers. The danger of collaborating over the duties of employer may result, as seen earlier, in the user company's having to provide some training. The user company, consequently, may feel constrained and may put pressure onto the agency to provide training. Where this occurs the agency as a mediator may feel it necessary to train the temp in order to alleviate the potential conflict. The agency, therefore, will feel constrained because it has made some commitment towards the temp and it will require some reciprocation from the temp. This, as seen above (Section 6.2), may work against any permanent bonding between the user company and the temp, but will be in the agency's interest in maintaining the triad.

Flexibility, inflexibility, freedom and constraint can be seen to exist in this relationship in specific ways. The collaboration over the duties of employer and the provision of training may entail a certain flexibility and freedom for the user company and agency, but this is closely bound up with constraint.
6.3.3 The Provision of Benefits as an Employment Responsibility

As noted earlier (Chapter Four) only 28.8% of the sample received any benefits such as holiday, Christmas or Easter entitlements. The non-receipt of benefits has been cited in the literature (Parker and Sirker 1976, Alfred Marks 1982, Syrett 1983, Meager 1985) and this provision of benefits is another area where the sharing of employment responsibilities between the user company and the agency may be seen. Both user company and agency representatives may claim that the provision of benefits such as annual holiday entitlement and bank holiday pay is not their responsibility as 'employers'. They may be unclear about whose responsibility it actually is, but may envisage the provision of benefits as a commitment which is unnecessary for neither may gain from providing them.

One agency director claimed some responsibility as an 'employer':

"...it's not the same as having four weeks' paid holiday. You don't get bank holiday pay as a temporary secretary, you don't get sick pay benefit from the temporary employers. We're partially responsible, but it's after you've worked for 13 weeks, and you can only qualify if you've worked on the Monday, been ill on the Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, and the first day you qualify is a Friday. And then you have to start all over again the next week because the contract is on a weekly basis. So, of course, you get it from the Government, but it's not quite the same sort of thing. You don't get the perks that you get in a permanent job." [Director, Secretarial 1:23; emphasis added]

Another director felt that the offering of benefits implied some commitment and this could be seen as enforced:

"We have all the benefits which we offer to permanent staff which temporaries can have if that's what they want or, alternatively, if they prefer, rather than have those benefits, to receive a higher rate, then that is their choice...the temporaries that want to do temporary work just for a short-term reason whatever that may be, can miss out, and that doesn't seem really very fair. So we give them the choice and I
think really we prefer that that choice remained. Otherwise, you're sort of *inflicting* things onto people." [Director, General 1:8; emphasis added]

Where temps do not receive any benefits they may experience a sense of loss.

"...if you're out of work for a day, such as statutory holidays, we can't help that we're not working, but because we're not working we don't get paid...I think what I like least about this particular agency is the fact that they don't pay bank holiday money, which I think they ought to." [Temp 4, Secretarial 1:6]

What emerges from this is the contrast between training and benefits provision. Where cross training is provided, both user company and agency may collaborate as both may see the advantage of having trained temps. When the provision of benefits is considered, however, no such advantages may be perceived by either 'employer'. The user company will disclaim any responsibility for providing benefits because it is not the 'employer' who is responsible for the temp's weekly wages and National Insurance. The agency may recognise the commitment that would be made if benefits were paid to the temp and may feel that such a commitment would be unwelcome. The agency, consequently, may require the temp to work a certain number of hours in reciprocation for benefits payable. The agency as the supplying 'employer', may feel it necessary to make some commitment towards and take some responsibility for the temp. In so doing it ensures its position of gain by requiring a reciprocal commitment from the temp. The agency, therefore, may constrain the temp because it feels that the provision of benefits is an unwelcome commitment to make.

Where the user company and the agency share the duties of employer the temp may lose out on training and on receiving holiday entitlement and sick pay. The temp may be confused over what each 'employer' is responsible for, and may feel self employed or a certain lack of commitment towards both 'employers'. Not receiving benefits and being paid hourly may also be perceived as a lack of commitment towards either 'employer'.

6.27
"It made me feel much less tied down. Like, to get paid by the hour makes you feel less tied down, because you don't have to lie about ringing in sick and all that stuff. You can't do all those things." [Temp 3, Graduates 1:4]

The temp may therefore feel freed from commitment because there are two 'employers' and both of these in their collaboration demonstrate their lack of responsibility towards the temp. A complex situation results; the temp feels free and unfree, the agency and user company experience flexibility and, at times, inflexibility, control and the lack of control. All of these occur in particular forms due to the three-way structure and are manifest in all triadic positions. What this illustrates is the ambiguity inherent in this relationship.

6.4 CONCLUSION TO THE MARKET TRIAD

The agency adopts a mediating role in supplying a temp to the user company. It attempts to bring two different parties together and to smooth over any difficulties which each may have with the other. It must give the appearance of being a successful mediator in order to provide the temp to the user company. It is interested in maintaining the unity of the triad. At times, this may entail keeping both parties aware of their differences so that permanent bonding between the user company and the temp is made a little difficult. In this situation, the agency as a supplying 'employer' is interested in maintaining both parties' dependence on it and in retaining the mediator role. To lose one or both other parties would mean the loss of business. The agency may have to ensure that in such situations there is some gain to be made.

The agency shares the duties of employer with the user company. In this collaboration both user company and agency disclaim responsibility for certain commitments although the agency may, as the supplier, sometimes feel it necessary to fulfill some duties. In doing so, it will attempt to constrain temps for the commitment that it has made towards them. Due to the fact that there are two 'employers' temps may feel self employed and responsible for themselves. This may be emphasised by their status as 'strangers' and mobile between the two 'employers'. They may therefore feel a certain freedom but
also a constraint to be acceptable to the user company. They may also lose out on training and benefits' provision and yet prove their adaptability and flexibility by training themselves.

The analysis of the labour market triad has shown the contradictions which can occur because the relationship is three-way in structure. All of these can result in different and contradictory positions being taken by the three parties. This is further enhanced when the temp moves into the user company and the workplace triad is established. This is the subject of the next chapter to which attention now turns.
CHAPTER SEVEN - THE WORKPLACE TRIAD AND INTERDEPENDENCIES

7.1 INTRODUCTION

The workplace triad occurs between the temp, user company and permanent workers, and it commences once a temp enters the user company workplace on an assignment. Its establishment takes place with that of the market triad. Both triads are interdependent and they articulate with each other. Issues arising in one affect the other and vice versa.

This chapter will analyse the workplace triad and will then examine the articulation between it and the market triad. Several mediators may be seen in this triad, for example the temp and the user company may act as mediators. For temps, their acceptability may be important in assessing their ability to act as a type of mediator. For the user company, mediation may be necessary if it seems that conflict between the temps and the permanent workers will disrupt the workplace and constrain the user company's flexibility. The user company, therefore, has an interest in maintaining the workplace triad. This variety of mediator positions may be seen as an indication of the triad's instability and volatility.

In the workplace triad, then, one of the parties may mediate between two conflicting parties. Alternatively, one of the parties may gain an advantage from conflict or tension between two other parties (tertius gaudens, Simmel 1950:154-162). Indeed, conflict may be instigated between the two other parties so that the third gains a dominating position (divide et impera, Simmel 1950:162-169). Advantages to be gained in this triad include freedom and flexibility. Similarly, two parties may 'gang up' on the third in order to gain such advantages (tertius perdens). These positions will be developed in this chapter.

In the workplace triad a particular kind of tertius perdens situation may be found. The temps' arrival in the user company workplace may result in the other two parties collaborating against them. The temp's perceived differences
will be 'contrasted' with apparent shared characteristics between the other two. Temps may be 'seen, therefore as 'outsiders' (Elias and Scotson 1965) whose later arrival in time provides the context for their being perceived as different and for the collaboration of the other two parties against them. Not only may temps be seen as 'outsiders' but they are also 'strangers' (Simmel 1971:143-149) and they are characterised by mobility. They do not belong to the other groups in the workplace. They have come from, and are going to, somewhere else. Furthermore, this status as 'strangers' may mean that temps are used as mediators. The distance and detachment of temps from the workplace triad, the fact that they do not 'belong', may be an asset when mediation is required. Alternatively, of course, their status as 'strangers' may mean that mediation is supplied by some other party, such as the user company, when the perceived difference of the temps gives rise to conflict within the workplace.

The temps' perceived difference is therefore made explicit in several ways. They are both 'outsiders' and 'strangers'. They have links with the market triad and with another 'employer'. Given the instability and insecurity of the three-way relationship they are destined to move on. This influences the other parties' perception of them as a disturbance and it entails an uneasiness about them. This chapter will show how this uneasiness may be explained. It will also illustrate the specific ambiguities and contradictions which are inherent in this relationship because of its structure. Several themes will be explored and the triadic formations will be used as a starting point in order to analyse the structural roots of these themes in the three-way relationship. The triadic types enable the story to be told in a coherent fashion. Themes that arise in this chapter are, therefore, ones that may be seen as central to the working life of a temp. These include freedom, flexibility and control. All, as will be seen later, are accompanied by their opposites.

7.2 THE NON-PARTISAN AND MEDIATOR IN THE WORKPLACE TRIAD

Several mediators may be seen in the workplace triad. This section will illustrate different kinds. As will be suggested, the different mediators indicate the instability of the relationship. The mediator's position is
fraught with tension for shifts in alliances in the triad make it tenuous. This, coupled with the possibility of different mediators in the workplace triad, is another indication of the relationship's volatility.

As seen in Chapter Six above, the acceptability of the temp is central to the agency's role as a mediator in the market triad. In the workplace triad the temp's acceptability is again important. The user company may require an acceptable temp so that conflict between the temp and permanent workers can be downplayed.

"I suppose they want somebody who's a bit bland who can fit in anywhere!...They want somebody who...can operate the machinery, cope with the phones and not be too controversial. I suppose that comes back to appearance again. They just want you to blend in. That's the important thing...They just want somebody to come in and carry on, and for them not to notice!" [Temp 3, Secretarial 1:13-14]

The acceptability of the temp may be important in diminishing the potential for tension between the temp and permanent workers. This acceptability is related, as seen in Chapter Six, to the agency's role as mediator in the market triad. In the workplace triad there may, however, be occasions where the agency's success as a mediator in providing acceptable temps may be passed on to the temps. Temps, because they are seen as acceptable, may be used as mediators and as successful mediator because of their specific blend of proximity and distance.

"They're...[Secretarial 1]...held in very high regard by the clients that I've been sent to. I think, before, I think if the agency has had a reputation, a reasonable reputation, it's, if I've been used in a temporary position, as I have been once or twice as a sort of management support, or as an unprejudiced observer of problems, it's been on my reputation rather than the reputation of the agency, whereas here I'm in a similar sort of position I'm being used as an observer and a commentator on management problems, but it's because of their...[Secretarial 1's]...reputation as much as me..." [Temp 5, Secretarial 1:2]
Where the acceptability of the temp is necessary for the agency in its mediating role, it will have consequences both for the temp as mediator and for the agency as future mediator. This temp was used as an impartial observer, a type of mediating arbitrator, because of the agency's proven acceptability. The agency's acceptability was due to its prowess as a mediator in the market triad providing temps who 'fitted in' to user companies. The distance of impartiality helped the temp in this example to be a mediator in the workplace triad. She felt that she could maintain the distance of non-commitment and, as such, be a type of observer and advisor:

"If you look responsible you tend to be used as an observer if people are aware of something unfortunate going on, whatever it may be. So it's better that you don't become involved... They trust you to, they trust you to be discrete. In some cases you do sign declarations of confidentiality. I don't - and this is a conscious policy on my part - I don't make a point of becoming involved socially at lunchtime. If it happens, then okay, I'll be sociable and polite. But I don't particularly, I don't seek it and this is noticed. And I think that is a point in your favour." [ibid:4]

This temp by maintaining a position of non-involvement could then be an observer. What arises is the situation that because temps are acceptable they are perceived as successful mediators. The focus has shifted from the agency's emphasis on acceptability in the market triad to the consequences of this in the workplace triad. It is the temp's status as 'stranger' which is also significant in this instance. The temps' perceived rootlessness, or non-belonging, means that there may be occasions when they are used as observers and are acceptable as such. Their ability to 'wander' may also mean that their detachment ensures a certain amount of confidentiality.

This illustrates the interdependence of the triads as well. In the workplace triad the user company may adopt a mediator role. The user company, like the agency in the market triad, has a very real interest in alleviating tension between permanent workers and temps if such tension threatens to disrupt the work being done. As well as being useful and acceptable as an observer (as shown in the example above), the temp's status as a 'stranger' may also be
perceived as a sign of difference and of possible conflict. User companies, therefore, may be anxious to ensure that temps work similar hours to permanent workers and may reprimand temps who arrive late or leave early. Temps, however, may resent this interference and may not appreciate how the user company is only attempting to mediate conflict:

"I dislike people being petty about when you work for them, and one of the things is when they wham at you that you arrived three minutes late or leave five minutes early. I can't stand that. I think it's really stupid. Because you can sit at your desk for those five minutes and do nothing and they'd be happy...I like being able to come in late if I feel like it...I work when I feel like it really...if they're going to be really strict about it, I'll just sit there and get cross, so there isn't any point really." [Temp 6, Graduates 1:12]

The user company may be anxious to be seen to take this stance. As a mediator, the user company is interested in maintaining the workplace triad. As an 'employer' the user company has an interest in ensuring that both sets of employees work well. The user company does not want the temp's perceived difference to generate conflict. Nor does the user company want permanent workers to think that the temp is not being controlled. The user company as an 'employer' in the market triad wants a flexible worker. In the workplace triad the user company needs to ensure that this worker is adequately controlled.

The user company may now perceive the other collaborating 'employer' as a disruptive force because the temp's loyalty is divided between both.

"Sometimes they will not communicate as much as they should do, you know, they won't because we're paying them, it's the agency, yet we're paying the agency, we're one removed from that. They feel their loyalty is to the agency as opposed to us sometimes. So if somebody does come in late they won't come up and apologise, they'll just saunter in and sit down. And I think that's, I find that unacceptable, I find that quite discourteous, you know. If you come in late, especially if you've given the impression that you've been scheduled to work these hours,
well I would expect somebody to come up and say 'Look I'm sorry, but, you know, I'm late', rather than just sneak in and sit down. And I'd feel that their sense of loyalty is certainly being misplaced as a result of that. And that can cause problems." [Personnel Officer, Media 1:6]

The user company, therefore, may have a problem in attempting to reconcile any tension between permanent workers and temps because in the market triad it collaborates with the agency and shares the role of employer with it. In the workplace triad, if and when commitment from the temp is required, the temp's allegiance towards the other collaborating 'employer', or their non-belonging as 'strangers' may be resented.

In the workplace triad the different kinds of mediating positions and the problems which arise demonstrate the instability and insecurity of the relationship. Any one member may find itself in a contradictory situation because the three-way structure entails shifting alliances and allegiances amongst the three members. The interdependence of the triads as well as the structural possibility of different triadic positions may serve to exacerbate the situation.

7.3 FREEDOM AND FLEXIBILITY IN THE WORKPLACE TRIAD: TERTIUS GAUDENS

In the workplace triad temps may gain a certain freedom or flexibility from conflict or tension between the permanent workers and the user company. Temps may enjoy this freedom because they are 'non-employees' and therefore not involved.

Tension may also exist between the permanent workers and the temps. This tension can arise from differences between both sets of workers. Temps are perceived as different not only because they are non-employees but because they are 'strangers' in the workplace. They are mobile due to the three-way structure which means that they 'wander' into the workplace and they are perceived as free. Their status as 'strangers' emphasises the difference between them and permanent workers who, in contrast, appear fixed and
immobile with a longer history of association with the user company. This can give rise to friction between the two sets of workers from which the user company can gain the advantage of flexibility or freedom. The user company, for example, may gain flexibility from temps because they are defined as non-employees and mobile.

These situations of advantage enjoyed by either temp or user company are what Simmel called tertius gaudens (1950:154-162). The basic formula of tertius gaudens exists where the third enjoys an advantage from tension or latent antagonism between the other two elements. This tension may be expressed as a general difference, a "mutual strangeness" [Simmel 1950:159], or else as open conflict between the other two. Tertius gaudens does not exclusively depend on hostility between the two, although conflict may be the most common form.

The central issue to be examined here is the enjoyment of flexibility and freedom gained by the third from tension between the other two parties. As will be seen contradictions will occur because of the three-way structure. This will mean that flexibility and freedom may entail inflexibility and the lack of freedom.

7.3.1 Employee Status and Flexibility

The permanent workers have an association with the user company as their employer which exists before the temp's arrival into the workplace. The temps' later arrival and their links with the supplying 'employer' (agency) in the market triad emphasise their difference as non-employees. If conflict arises between the employer and the employees temps as non-employees do not have to be involved.

"...they had a little clampdown here the other day about different bits and pieces and this memo went round. And I thought 'Oh well, I don't have to listen to this since, you know, because I'm above all that, you know, although they pay a fee'...I can be involved sometimes and then if it's something that I don't care to be involved in, I just say 'Well it's..."
nothing to do with me. So, I'm not making an opinion.' You know, keep out of it when I find that it's getting a bit stormy...There was a great big row here a couple of weeks ago and everyone was saying 'Woowooowoowoo', you know, and I said 'Well it's not my place to say'. So I kept neutral. I was on everyone's side!" [Temp 4, Secretarial 1:8]

The temp, in other words, can gain the advantage of freedom from involvement. The user company, too, may gain the advantage of flexibility from the conflict that may arise out of the differences between permanent workers and temps. As already seen, the difference between temps and permanent workers may result in temps being seen as non-employees.

Temps may be treated differently by user companies because they are defined as non-employees. They may also be perceived as flexible workers and used accordingly. This will then fuel the perception that temps are different. In other words, the use of temps for certain jobs because they are perceived as different from permanent workers may mean that their difference is emphasised. It would now be useful to examine the advantages which the user company may gain from the differences between temps and permanent workers.

User companies may gain flexibility from temps in many ways. They may, for example, move them around various departments. Temps may also be engaged whenever and wherever user companies require them, and they may do a wider range of jobs because they do not have a specific job description. This flexibility can be gained because the temp is defined as a non-employee in comparison with permanent workers.

"But I suppose you can ask them to do a variety of other jobs that maybe you wouldn't ask your permanents to do, how about in another department, whereas usually our secretaries are based in a particular department and we wouldn't normally ask them to go and help out in Biology if they're working in, sort of, English. Though as a temp you can sort of transfer them around the College whenever the need arises." [Personnel Officer, College 3:10]
Conversely, the difference between permanent workers and temps may also mean that personnel officers may not expect temps to do certain things in the workplace because they are perceived as non-employees. This may result in a situation where personnel officers either cannot expect temps to do particular duties, or do not want temps to do them. This has close associations with the perception of temps as 'strangers' who are going to move on. The different things expected or sought from temps and from permanent workers arise from their definitions as employees and non-employees. This is emphasised by the mobility of the temp. This means that if commitment is sought from a temp it may be jeopardised. It may also be threatened by the presence of the other 'employer' in the market triad. In these situations the user company's awareness of what can be gained is modified by the perception of the temp as a non-employee. Conflict arising from the differences between permanent workers and temps may sometimes be difficult to gain from and the advantages may not be very obvious or appreciated.

"...I think you're always going to get a slight lack of commitment, less commitment than somebody who's coming in to do the job permanently who knows that next month if things don't tally they're going to have to pick up the pieces, whereas a temp knows she's not. So I think you can't expect the commitment same as you would from a member of staff."

[Personnel Officer, College 2:8]

The same personnel officer said in reference to permanent workers:

"...but there's always some kind of continuity that you don't expect from a temporary member of staff, either to be looking out for things that they weren't too happy with, or saying 'Oh we could improve on this'. You don't expect that of a temp. I'm not saying you don't expect a temp to come in and question things, obviously, if they, you know, if there's a job and they said 'You know, we're really going...[the wrong way]...about this', you think 'Fine', if they had initiative to suggest that." [ibid:17]

Another personnel officer said:
"...I mean, on the temporary side it can, it depends on the person's personality, because some people they don't want to be involved in the company and they don't want a long-standing commitment because they can't cope with commitment, so by their very nature of the way they are, they would rather just move around, because then they can, you know, they can stop when they've had enough, or if they feel they're getting too close or it's just, you know, people are expecting too much of them, or the work is, or they just don't want responsibility. And as a temp I suppose you can absolve responsibility if you want to...they don't feel that they're pressurised by it...as a temp you know you can't have responsibility, as a temp you haven't really, you know, there's much more of a security net around some of them, perhaps...I think I've met some personalities like that who've obviously viewed temping work from that way." [Personnel Officer, Media 1:12]

In some cases, then, the user company may not be very certain about the advantages of using temps. For other user companies the flexibility of the temp may be seen in their ability to adapt to their surroundings and by their not suggesting any changes that could be made to the workplace. The temp's lack of commitment, therefore, may be welcomed.

"They've got to fit into the job, you know, it isn't, as a temporary, it isn't their place to change the job or try and, you know, their job is just to come in and fit into it and be adaptable to it. And I would dislike a temporary to decide to change the filing system or do anything radical, you know. They're there to keep the status quo...to keep the thing rolling...A good temporary I think should, they have to...run the show as it is. If they don't like it as it is, that's not their business. They either move or you know just get on with it as it is and then produce a high quality of work. And, in fact, many temps, many often don't file at all. I'm not against that...I certainly wouldn't expect them to go around changing things." [Personnel Officer, College 4:17-18]

Several contradictions may be seen to emerge in the workplace triad. With the structural possibility of certain kinds of conflict between two of the three parties the third may 'enjoy' an advantage in tertius gaudens. The flexibility
or freedom that is 'gained may be offset against constraints which are experienced. There is an ambiguity, therefore, inherent in this relationship due to the presence of three members and shifting alliances over time. The user company may gain from the expression of difference between the temps and the permanent workers emphasised by the temps' status as 'outsiders' and 'strangers'.

With time in the workplace triad, shifts may occur amongst the three parties. This may result in a different situation. If temps have a long assignment with a user company the user company may express more commitment to them:

"I guess when they're just here for a week or two we do tend to regard them more as employees of the agency. Once they become long-term with us...in many ways they're regarded more as a...[bank]...employee, and we do expect exactly the same from them as a permanent worker." [Personnel Officer, Finance 1:5]

With time, therefore, the user company may expect more from temps although they are still non-employees. Temps in such a position may describe their situation as "honorary permanents". One temp interviewed had been with a user company for three years at the time of interview. She said:

"You see, now I feel that I'm permanent. I can't really say on what it's like now, because it's just like being a permanent temporary." [Temp 1, Medical 2:6]

Despite this she felt that there were limits to what she saw as appropriate behaviour for a temp:

"I mean, we have to write out a book of the job. Now I don't think that that is my place as a temp, but, as I say, it's expected because I've been there so long." [ibid:9]

This demonstrates the way in which shifts in allegiances may occur in the triad over time. The user company and the temp in this particular example had become closer due to the length of this specific assignment. It was quite
obvious, however, that the presence of the permanent employees served as a constant reminder to the temp that she was a non-employee as did the presence of the agency in the market triad. This temp, therefore, resented having to do certain jobs for this emphasised her difference. Not only was she a non-employee, but she was expected to behave like a 'real' employee. The shifting and blurring within the relationship over time give rise to this situation and also, paradoxically, serve to emphasise her position as a non-employee. Contradiction is, therefore, inherent in the three-way structure of the relationship. It may develop and change over time, but it remains structurally rooted and is always possible. In the following section further ambiguities may also be seen.

7.4 FREEDOM AND FLEXIBILITY: TERTIUS PERDENS IN THE WORKPLACE TRIAD

The temps' apparent difference and their arrival in the workplace may mean that the permanent workers and the user company become aware of their apparent shared characteristics and 'gang up' on them. The user company as the employer may feel that it has a certain responsibility for permanent workers as its employees. There may therefore be some form of co-operation between these two parties based on their shared characteristics. Temps as non-employees will be excluded. Permanent workers, in comparison with temps, may feel that they 'belong' to the user company and use this collusion with the user company to exploit the temp in some way. Similarly, the user company may state that its allegiance is to permanent workers and not to temps because temps do not 'belong'. Collaboration between the user company and permanent workers against temps may mean that the temps lose out. This form of tertius perdens will now be examined under several headings.
7.4.1 Induction into the User Company

75% of temps in the sample surveyed stated that they received briefing of only 5-15 minutes in length (see Chapter Four above). This lack of adequate induction has also been noted in the literature (McNally 1979, Alfred Marks 1982, Meager 1985, Syrett 1985). Temps in interview said that although their induction could vary in different user companies, in general, it tended to be at a minimum.

"...if you're a temp you're just, they don't really take much interest in you because they know you'll come and go. A lot of the jobs that I've been in they've had people come and go over the years and my last job...they'd had 16 temps in that job...since they'd had a permanent member of staff. Because it was such a boring job. And so if someone comes into that job and so they sit there and they do that typing and it doesn't take two minutes to say 'This is the typewriter and here's the pile of typing'. And I think if a permanent person came in they'd make more effort because they'd be trying to keep them, but they don't really because they don't try very hard to keep them...[the temps]..." [Temp 6, Graduates 1:22]

Another temp said:

"...they just throw you in with the book of the job and that's it. They don't bother much. I mean, for instance at...[user company]...as a permanent you're put on an induction course and you're shown round...and you get to know how the...[user company]...works. But when you're a temp they just presume you know." [Temp 1, Medical 2:9]

Temps will not receive a long induction into the user company for several reasons. First, marketed and sold as a flexible commodity by the supplying 'employer' and mediator in the market triad, temps are expected to be able to 'fit in' to the user company immediately. Secondly, temps are mobile as 'strangers' and are paid in accordance with this mobility. The user company will, therefore, be keen to get its money's worth as quickly as possible. Third, the temps' 'stranger' and 'outsider' status may mean that they are perceived as
flexible and adaptable and that, as a consequence, they do not need a long induction unlike permanent workers who, as employees and in collaboration with the employer, are expected to have a longer history of association and will therefore be given time to settle into the workplace.

"I mean, people, I suppose because they're aware they're paying you by the hour they...make you sort of get on with it as quickly as possible...I think it probably does take other people longer. I mean, they're just left to pick up things, maybe proportionate to the time that they're expected to be there or something, I don't know. I think that probably has something to do with it." [Temp 7, Graduates 1:23]

The temp's ability to move on stands in stark contrast with the permanent workers' 'stability'. The temp, therefore, will be expected to become effective straight away. This can also be related to the status of 'employers' in the market triad. The user company and the agency co-operate together over the duties of 'employer'. The temp will be perceived as a non-employee by the user company to whom no training needs to be given (see Chapter Six, 6.3.2 above). In the workplace triad the user company will collaborate with permanent workers as similar, 'established' (Elias and Scotson 1965) and 'belonging'. Temps will therefore lose out on induction courses and their 'outsider' status may be made very apparent. Not only may the user company not provide any formal induction; but the permanent workers may not provide any or much informal induction.

"Well I remember for instance at...[College 4]...when I started I was given like a general conversation for about five minutes about what I'd be doing, you know, and what...[College 4]...did, you know and all this. And then I was told to get to work. Very, very basic rudimentary induction course. And then a couple of weeks after that a permanent member of staff started and they were introducing her to everybody, you know, showing her around...and they wanted her to know everything. So she was made to feel like part of the family and everything. And it took a long time before I got into that position. And I had to work for it." [Temp 1, Accountancy 3 at College 4:6]
What the user company gains by collaborating with permanent workers in this instance is the immediate effectiveness of the temp. The permanent workers enjoy the advantage of an 'established' status. They 'belong' and, therefore, have access to certain facilities and benefits which further confirm their status as 'belonging'. The process becomes more involved with time and has greater implications for all parties. This will also be seen in the following section.

7.4.2 Training and Benefits Provision in the Workplace Triad

As shown in both Chapters Four and Six above, training and benefits provision for temps tends to be minimal. In the workplace triad this assumes added weight due to the alliances between different members. In the market triad, as seen above, the user company and the agency as 'employers' may co-operate over training temps. This may result in temps being responsible for training themselves and proving their ability to be flexible. Alternatively, the user company may feel constrained to provide a little training and may argue that temps are inflexible because of having to do this. In the workplace triad the presence of the permanent workers as 'belonging' and thereby gaining the right to training and to benefits is in contrast to the temp's position as 'outsider'. Again, collaboration between the two parties who 'belong' to each other means that the temp as the 'outsider' may be a loser.

This status may be even more marked with time spent in the assignment.

"...staff get paid holidays and things like that...they will obviously have the benefits of working in...a permanent organisation and especially if you have had a long term temporary in departments and they can...almost become a member of that department whereby they're not regarded as temporary now and, you know, they seem to think that they should have the same benefits as well, you know, even though they're getting paid well, but that they should get holiday entitlement and all the rest of it. I mean, we've had quite a few queries from temps bringing in their timesheets and saying 'Well look, there was this bank holiday here and can I take for it, because you know...[College 1]...wasn't
open and I couldn't come in?' and 'Well no, no, we can't do it.'”
[Personnel Officer, College 1:7]

The passing of time in the workplace triad does not mean that temps are not 'outsiders' any more. In many ways (as seen in Section 7.2 above) temps may be expected to become more committed to the user company and yet their status as 'strangers' is made more explicit. Again, this shows how contradictions within the relationship may change over time. These contradictions become explicit because the 'stranger' has stayed and not moved on. This means that temps retain certain aspects of their 'stranger' status but others will be altered and a contradictory situation may ensue where the temps' difference appears more stark.

7.4.3 'Nasty' Jobs - Collaboration and Control in the Workplace

Flexibility and freedom may also be gained by the collaborators by giving temps 'nasty' jobs. Again, this is related to other developments which have already been highlighted. Temps may receive 'nasty' jobs because they are marketed and sold as flexible and adaptable by the agency, as the supplying 'employer' and mediator in the market triad. They may prove this flexibility because they may not receive any training or induction into the user company and must adapt quickly to their changing environment. Temps arrive later in the workplace. Their presence not only disturbs the other two parties but may drive them together in retaliation against the disturbance. They may therefore be given 'nasty' jobs because they are 'outsiders' and this, then, serves to emphasise further their perceived difference.

"They are made to feel outsiders almost. They're just there, employed there to do the, you know, horrid filthy jobs, you know, that other people just don't want to do. Purely there to be at the beck and call of everybody else within the office." [Personnel Officer, College 1:9]

Temps because they do not 'belong' to the user company may then have to try a little harder.

7.16
"...if I want anything like extra like stationery or...you know books, things that all the permanent staff are got, I just go on about them, kind of thing, I ask for them. It's probably just because it's in here it's just a certain kind of, you know, politics. But I know I sort of work a little bit harder than anybody else to get what I want, what they're getting...Being shoved around sometimes as well from one place to another isn't very nice." [Temp 6, Secretarial 4:3]

The user company gains flexibility because it may only need a 'body' to work. The permanent workers gain the freedom of not having to do such work themselves.

There is, however, a contradiction in this situation because temps treated as 'outsiders' and victims of collaboration may feel that they can rebel because they do not belong.

"Well I've noticed, for instance, the place I'm working in now, I think they talk, I don't know whether this woman would do it if I was permanent, but I think they look down their nose at you a bit more. Like I'm a temporary worker, I'm always bound to make jugs of coffee kind of thing. But then again, after a while, because I am a temporary worker, I feel I could go and tell her to do it herself, whereas if I was permanent I wouldn't be able to. But then maybe she wouldn't ask me to do it, and ask me in the way that she does." [Temp 1, General 1:18]

Another temp said that she was:

"...able to tell people to 'get stuffed' if I feel they don't treat me properly! Because you can't do that, you know if I was a permanent worker I couldn't say 'Ah get stuffed, go away', you know. I like doing that." [Temp 6, Secretarial 4:3]

The temps' mobility means that they feel they can leave the user company at any time. This may therefore mean that although 'ganged up' on by the user company and permanent workers temps feel free to leave and this may enable them to stay. This contradictory situation arises in several ways. The three-
way structure of the relationship means that freedom exists in specific forms. Different positions can be taken and different alliances made so that the temp may feel free.

The existence and interdependence of both market and workplace triads also contribute to this feeling of freedom for the supplying 'employer' is always present and its presence acts like a guarantee of another job.

"...you could feel like you could tell them where to go, whereas if you were in a permanent position you'd think 'God, I couldn't tell them off like that'. But to me I could tell them what to do with their job and walk out and just walk into another one. Quite easily." [Temp 1, General 1:13-14]

The temps' flexibility enhances their mobility but it also constrains it as does the presence of the agency who has an interest in not upsetting the user company. In the workplace triad the temps' flexibility is made apparent by their mobility and freedom. They are flexible and can adapt quickly because they come and go. This flexibility which marks them as different may then be used by both permanent workers and user company. They may collaborate because temps are perceived as flexible and therefore different. This may constrain temps for although feeling free as 'outsiders', they will also feel limited by their action.

"When I arrived there, I told the man on the desk who I was and he shouted over to this girl who was just taking her coat off 'Mary another temp for you'. So I thought 'This is it'. I said 'My name is X'...And she said 'Hello, and this is your desk' and that was it, you know. Normally when you're sitting with somebody, and it wasn't that busy, you chat and you exchange information about whatever you've been doing. But there was none of this. She expressed no interest in me whatsoever. Nor did anybody else...As I say, although they didn't speak to me much, they were rude to me in subtle ways and made me feel, I went and got myself a cup of coffee and I found this very pretty mug with a hand-painted fuschia on it and brought it back to my desk and Mary says to me 'Oh you're brave, drinking out of Mr Somebody or Other's cup'. And I
said 'Why? Has he got something?' And she said 'He doesn't like anybody drinking out of his cup'. God Almighty! He was away that week. He didn't matter at all...But it was that sort of attitude. 'What the hell are you doing drinking out of the nicest cup', sort of thing."

[Temp 3, Secretarial 1: 6-7]

Freedom, flexibility, control and constraint may therefore be seen to exist in this relationship in specific and quite contradictory ways. The three-way structure of the relationship and the interdependencies of the triads give rise to ambiguities and ambivalence. Some of the parties may adopt several contradictory positions which may constrain them as well as giving them more control. Similarly, each party may express a certain freedom or flexibility, but this will be offset with constraint. The result is a feeling of ambivalence about the relationship because the structure allows shifts in allegiances over time. Contradictions within the relationship may therefore become apparent in a different way over time. The relationship shifts and develops over time. The structure of the relationship will remain the same but the content will change.

7.5 DIVIDE ET IMPERA IN THE WORKPLACE TRIAD

In divide et impera the divider wishes to eliminate any possible associations between the other two parties, or, at its most extreme, entice them to turn on each other so that in their annihilation the third gains advantage. The divider is interested in keeping the other two parties apart by insigating conflict between them so that their antagonism divides them. This conflict might just be an awareness of their mutual differences and of their incompatibility. The divider fears the outcome of the other two parties 'ganging up' against it. It is this threat which prompts the divider.

Temps may represent a threat as 'strangers' and as different. Where the user company manipulates this difference in order to gain some advantage, conflict may result between temps and permanent workers. The advantage that the user company gains may not only be the flexibility and adaptability of temps but that the threat which the permanent workers perceive from temps may result in permanent workers being more flexible too. Permanent workers
may also realise that their relative security with the user company may be threatened by temps whose disposability makes them an attractive option if the user company seeks some re-organisation.

"I think they're generally, they tend to be the sort of person who is prepared to have a go at anything. So that's quite useful if you've got lots of all sorts of things to do. Obviously then the nature of their employment is flexible, because you can pay them just for the hours that you want to use them. And I suppose you've just got a choice about whether you do a particular job whereas if you've got a member of staff in a post if that particular area of work diminishes you've got to sort out their future and this actually takes more effort."

[Personnel Officer, Hospital 2:5]

Temps may be used by user companies as a way of controlling permanent workers. Their 'stranger' and 'outsider' status may be perceived as a threat by permanent workers and this may cause some friction which can be used by user companies as a form of control. The hourly rate that temps are paid may also be perceived as a threat by permanent workers. The user company is aware of how much the temp costs and is keen to get its money's worth which can constrain the temp. Friction may arise between temps and permanent workers where both do similar kinds of jobs for different rates of pay. The user company may argue that it is a matter of choice for temps and permanent workers whether to temp or to work permanently. The user company, however, has made a decision (for whatever reason) to use temps and the resulting friction may be manipulated to the user company's advantage. Temps may undermine the bargaining power of permanent workers, for the user company may argue that the temps' higher rate of pay is to offset their disposability.

"And then...you might get a permanent person who is jealous of the money side of things, but then that's their choice when they choose to become permanent that they make that decision, you know...but then, especially the way the industry's going over the last year and a lot of people are being laid off, I mean, that's the kind of thing you miss being an agency or contract worker...and all of a sudden you have no
income and not that many jobs around. And those are the kind of risks you take. And it's an individual decision...it's like an individual responsibility...So it's silly really to get upset about things like that, just as much as it's silly for a permanent person to get upset about the money because it was their choice in the first place." [Personnel Officer, Oil 3:14-15]

In this particular example, the user company was gaining flexibility from its ability to engage and release temps as and when it required. Temps also represented a threat to permanent workers, usually signified by the amount of money that they were earning, because their disposability made them attractive. Permanent workers were thus made aware of the vulnerability of their position.

7.5.1 Industrial Action - a Divide et Impera Situation

Industrial action at a user company may represent a potential *divide et impera* situation. The user company may divide the opposition by introducing another element onto which the focus of attention may be transferred. The user company may gain by maintaining productivity levels and using the presence of temps as a diversion. The use of temps in this way emphasises their status as 'outsiders' and 'strangers'. Temps may be used to cover for striking workers because they are 'outsiders'. In doing so, their 'outsider' status is enhanced because their difference as 'scabs' makes this explicit. As 'strangers' they are mobile, they 'come today and go tomorrow' (Simmel 1971:143) and may be used in an industrial dispute because they can be released at the dispute's end. To the striking workers temps represent 'here today and stay tomorrow' (Simmel 1971:143) and are therefore perceived as a threat. They are perceived as a threat to the strikers' future jobs, to their permanent status and to their aims as strikers. Conflict may thereby ensue between permanent workers and temps. There may still be tension between the user company and permanent workers, but a new dimension is added with the temp who may be used as a controlling device.
The user company seeks flexible labour by using temps who, due to the structure of the three-way relationship, are easy to engage and release. The user company shares employment responsibilities with the agency and as an 'employer' of the temp may claim that certain duties are the commitment of the other 'employer'. In the workplace triad there are two sets of employees towards one of whom the user company is committed as the employer. If a strike occurs at the user company the user company may claim that as temps are not its employees they are therefore not involved in the dispute.

"They're not members of...[Media 2]...staff. They're not members of the trade union. And yes we would expect them to come in...I would expect them to come into work regardless of how they felt. I mean it is up to the agency to ensure that they do. If not, it's up to the agency to provide somebody who will." [Personnel Officer, Media 2:7]

The user company may be interested in an agency who will guarantee that temps will be supplied during industrial action. This may be perceived as a sign of the agency's reliability and therefore acceptability. The user company may rely on the agency as the supplying 'employer' to mediate and provide a temp who will not be involved in any conflict in the workplace triad.

The user company, however, may be aware of trade union opposition to temps where trade unions recognise the threat posed by temps as 'strangers' and 'outsiders'.

"The trade unions in this District Health Authority are against the use of agency and they raise it sporadically as negotiating with temps. They don't fail to co-operate or anything like that. But they don't like it particularly and they are keen at chipping away at it...Well, we've had a very difficult balancing act to perform to keep reasonable levels of cover without resorting to agencies. Obviously this is one of the bargaining points that we would have with the trade unions. If they take out so many staff we have to bring in agency to keep the service going. And obviously they don't want us to do that, so." [Personnel Officer, Hospital 2:6-7]
According to another personnel officer:

"We have a good relationship with the unions and we would never strike break in that way. I'm sure of that. The College policy would be no. We wouldn't do that. Obviously any temps we had at the time would go on working, but we wouldn't bring in extra ones." [Personnel Officer, College 4:15]

This example illustrates the strength of the bonding between trade unions and user companies who would not use temps as a disruptive element or one that would divide the opposition.

All of the above examples demonstrate the contradictory situations that may occur even where a user company attempts to be a divider. The user company's position cannot be considered in isolation from what occurs in the market triad, for divide et impera in the workplace triad may be dependent upon the agency's existence in the market triad and the interdependence between the two triads.

Meanwhile, what is the temp's position? It was noted in Chapter Six above (6.3.1) that temps may feel self-employed or may express divided loyalties because they have two 'employers'. Temps may therefore feel that it is their decision whether or not to cross the picket line. This, of course, is influenced by the constraints placed on the temp by the 'employers'. Alternatively, they may express divided loyalties, split between permanent workers and the user company in the workplace triad. In the market triad, this may be perceived as divided between the user company (as the site of conflict) and the agency (as the impartial distant non-involved party).

Temps as non-employees, therefore, may feel responsible for themselves. In the workplace triad this position is emphasised by the presence of permanent workers as employees of the user organisation. One way in which the temps' non-employee status is signified is through their mobility as 'strangers' which means that their roots lie in the market triad outside of the workplace triad. It is in the market triad that temps get paid, but, obviously, this payment is affected by developments within the workplace triad. In the situation of
industrial action in the workplace temps may express an impartial attitude, yet
the threat of not being paid may mean that they would cross the picket line.

"Because I feel that I'm working for myself and because of the
insecurity...Well if it was a very strong issue I probably wouldn't or
an issue that I strongly agreed with hopefully I wouldn't but perhaps
financial restraints would mean I would have to. It's not something I
would want to do, but because I see temporary work as working for
yourself and therefore you're not involved in the issues of the
corporation or institution and therefore I probably would with regret."
[Temp 8, Graduates 1:6]

Another temp said:

"...if they went on strike I'd think 'Oh well I won't bother going back.
I'll just get another job and start again', that's the sort of lines I was
thinking of. But I mean, I just wouldn't be involved in that, to be
worrying about whatever's going, because I'm a temp and their
internal politics or whatever just wouldn't worry me. And if they
started throwing cans at me when I crossed the picket line or something
I'd be a bit more worried. But, you know, I'd still go to work unless
everyone was really nasty to me or anything like that."  [Temp 4,
Secretarial 4:11]

For other temps, the advice of the agency representative may be sought:

"I think I'd see how the majority of people were reacting and if lots of
my colleagues on switchboard and reception were saying 'Oh don't do so
and so. Don't go', I think I'd stick with them and I'd probably
phone...[agency representative]...and say '...this is happening and
there's nothing I can do'. Well there's nothing you can do really...I
don't know how...[agency representative]...would feel. I think she'd
understand that there's probably not a lot I can do about it. So she'd
probably just say 'fair enough'. But she'd probably phone up and
explain it to them and say 'What is she supposed to do?'  [Temp 2,
Graduates 2:9]
Temps may feel that the choice is theirs because the structure of the three-way relationship and their positions as 'strangers' or 'outsiders' ensure this. What happens, then, is that as 'strangers' they may make decisions which then confirm their 'stranger' status.

There is legislation, however, which explicitly states the agencies' and, by extension, the temps' position in such a situation. The use of temps as a direct replacement for striking workers is against the Employment Agencies Act (1973). One agency representative who participated in the fieldwork was aware of this and emphasised her impartiality:

"This can happen and it may have happened that we have had a booking from a client and then there is a strike. But another of the rules of the Employment Agencies Act is that we will not supply temporaries to cover for striking workers, and we're very careful to follow that...I mean we don't want to get involved in anything controversial like that. I mean, we don't want to be seen to be taking sides, you know, we can't and we won't and we wouldn't want to." [Director, General 1:17]

The Employment Agencies Act (1973) may therefore be seen as a form of legislation which attempts to legitimate the agency's impartial position. On the issue of strikes, however, it may not have been very successful. One ex-agency representative told the following story:

"First of all we tried to give...fitters for typesetting presses to ensure that they ran at optimum level and to stop breakdowns, and we had to stop it because we knew that we were hitting the unions. Every agency tries to go along with the unions. Every agency. Because the biggest opposition they can have is from a union. And in a way that can be stemmed from the people on the shop floor, there's a problem there. So they try to appease them. Some agencies try to ensure that their staff join unions, so that once they're union joined other unions can't object when temporary workers come along...But it seems that they...[agency]...would supply staff to them regardless of union. Mainly because if...in a way you're dealing with a market, where if somebody wants to take on 50 to a hundred temporary staff, even if it is covering
jobs which are usually held by union people, if your agency doesn't get it and do it, some other agency is going to. If every Friday you get your ass cracked for not meeting your budget or deadlines, then this is a reason, this is a solution for getting over it. A hundred of those equals about ten per cent commission into your own pocket. So why not do it."

[Personnel Officer, Hospital 1 and ex-Temporary Controller, General Agency:11-12]

A representative from the user company involved in this particular strike was also interviewed. She remarked:

"I believe there was one agency that refused to send girls here. Other than that, everybody was very pleased to have...[Media 3]'s...business."

[Personnel Officer, Media 3:9]

This example illustrates the ambivalence which surrounds the issue of industrial action despite the existing legislation. The three-way structure generates such ambivalent and contradictory positions.

This example also illustrate the interdependence of triads and how events and developments in one influence and affect the other. The user company's attempts to divide permanent workers by instigating conflict between permanent workers and temps in the workplace triad occurs with the aid of the agency in the market triad. The two collaborating 'employers', therefore, may affect events in the workplace triad. (A further example of this articulation may be seen below in Section 7.7.)

7.6 CONCLUDING REMARKS ON THE WORKPLACE TRIAD

What the discussion of the workplace triad has made clear is that contradictory or ambivalent situations occur due to the three-way structure. This may mean that, for example, temps are simultaneously free as well as constrained, or that the user company gains flexibility from temps while feeling that they are inflexible. Not only is the ambivalence within the relationship structurally rooted, but the effect of time on the content of the
relationship must also be considered. Contradictions may change over time, but still remain in the relationship because of its three-way structure and the interdependence of the triads. Each party's position may therefore constantly be changing as members move closer to and away from each other. This means that a temp may feel both free and unfree, for example. The interdependence of the triads also influence what occurs within each triad so that temps may be constrained by the agency in the market triad to be flexible in the workplace triad. This, in turn, affects their perception and feeling of freedom.

Simmel's triad types have provided a starting point for analysing the temp's work situation. This present chapter and Chapter Seven have shown that positions held within a triad develop over time. As a result, the complexities of the dynamics of this relationship may be even more pronounced in time. Time, therefore, must be recognised as an integral part of all relationships.

This chapter has also clarified the feeling of unease and ambivalence which can be found in this relationship. It is not only a case of the third formally disturbing which makes the temp unwelcome at times, but because a chain of events determined by the three-way structure of the relationship are unleashed. The ambiguity in the relationship means that parties may feel uneasy about it or about certain members. Temps may be perceived as a "necessary evil" [Temporary Controller, Accountancy 1:33]. Indeed, temps may also regard agencies as a "necessary evil" [Temp 6, Secretarial 1:9]. The three-way relationship, its scope for subterfuge, outmanoeuvring and tension mean that participants feel uneasy. This gives rise to the situation where a personnel officer might say:

"...effectively it's disruptive, because it can have an unsettling effect on a department, because a department evokes its own cohesion and its own interaction in terms of inter-personal sort of relationships within the force and things...But in an ideal world, no, we wouldn't like to have temporaries, because effectively they can be disruptive. Just because they're new and because they, you know, because they're not as integrated as other people within the team. Although saying that, it's a friendly company so people do integrate fairly quickly. But there is
this 'Oh God, we're going to have to have a temp for two weeks', or whatever. 'And there is that kind of attitude.' [Personnel Officer, Media 1:5]

To conclude, therefore, ambiguity and insecurity lie at the heart of this relationship. This is due to the three-way structure, the interdependence of the triads and the changing content of the relationship over time. Temps hold a central position in this relationship. They move from one triad to another, as does the user company, but unlike the user company, they are mobile as 'strangers' which entails a certain freedom and also constraint. They may also be the 'odd ones out' as 'outsiders'. The above quote clearly indicates the way in which tems as 'strangers' and 'outsiders' are perceived within the workplace triad.

Finally, this chapter will end with a short note on the interdependence of the triads. As has been made clear in the text the articulation of the triads may influence triadic positions.

7.7 THE ARTICULATION OF MARKET AND WORKPLACE TRIADS

The importance of the interdependence between the triads has already been shown. As this chapter has made clear, developments in one triad may be influenced by movements in another and vice versa. One example of the articulation of triads has been chosen in this section to illustrate the way in which complex interconnections occur in this relationship.

The workplace triad is dependent upon the establishment of the market triad. The temp is supplied by the agency to the user company in the market triad. The user company and temp move from the market to workplace triad when the temp starts the assignment and enters the user company workplace and works alongside the permanent workers. The agency in the market triad is aware of the possibility of conflict which is ever present not only in the market triad but in the workplace triad. The agency as mediator is not only attempting to bring the user company and temp together but is ensuring that the temp 'fits in' to the user company and is, therefore, acceptable. In so doing, the
articulation of triads is obvious for if the temp causes conflict between parties in the workplace triad, this can have an effect on the market triad.

The agency is physically as well as socially isolated from the workplace triad. This has both advantages and disadvantages. The agency is also distanced because it is one removed from the temp, due to the user company's intervention between the temp and agency. If the agency representative wants to communicate with the temp it may find that the user company is blocking its way. The agency, in this instance, may therefore have to rely on the user company, or on another temp, to mediate if conflict arises between the temp and other parties in workplace triads. The agency's reliance on another temp occurs in another market triad's articulation with a common workplace triad.

"...they're quite funny, agencies, actually. You know, you're fine when you're doing what they want, but as soon as they say, I don't think they like people who say 'Oh no, I don't like that job', because an example was we had a girl downstairs in...[user company]...and one day...the manageress of the agency phoned up and said 'Oh! Can you go down and see whatever her name was? She's not very happy there. And just tell her that, you know, it'll be okay'. And I thought 'God! You know, I just can't believe it'. You know, she probably phoned the agency up and I know she'd been sitting there for like two days doing nothing. And I think she felt she was wasting her time. And so she probably phoned the agency and said 'Look can you move me', but the agency don't like doing that, you see - especially...[user company]...are good customers - you know, to take somebody else out. So...I went down there. And she said 'Oh no, I just phoned up to see if they had anything else. I was sitting here doing nothing'. I just sort of said 'Oh how are you getting on'. I mean, I'd never met her before. I thought 'God! I'm doing the agency's job here', that's what I felt a bit. I thought 'Well why did they phone me?' Especially because a week before I'd gone into...the manageress, and said something, because in their adverts they say 'Every three months expect a rise'. And I went in and I said 'Look I've been here for three months, whatever, and where's my rise', and she said 'Oh well you're paid too much for what you do already' although not
In this particular example, the agency representative perceived potential conflict between one temp (temp 1) and the user company. Due to her distance from the workplace triad she decided to use a second temp (temp 2) as a mediator. The agency representative, by using temp 2 as its mediator, was attempting to defuse the conflict. She was also trying not to lose out as a result of the tension between the user company and temp 1. The freedom of temp 1 was constrained by the agency through temp 2. Temp 2's mediator role demonstrated that particular blend of proximity and distance to ensure good mediation. She was close to temp 1 because she worked in the same situation. She was also impartial for she was not in conflict with either party. She was constrained by the agency representative, however, to act as the mediator and this constraint limited her feeling of freedom. Temp 2 was mediating for the agency between the user company and temp1, but also mediating between the agency and temp 1. This role was imposed upon her and was not chosen by her. The user company, in the meantime, was gaining an advantage from its distance. It did not get involved in any of the proceedings. The consequences were that the user company did not lose temp 1, and the agency representative did not have to bear the user company's wrath for providing an unacceptable temp.

This example not only shows the interdependence of the triads but also the complexity of positions available. The contradictions of this relationship and the unease which may be expressed can be seen too. Recognition of the interdependence of the triads is very important for neither market nor workplace triads can be totally isolated in discussion. Interaction in one can have effects in another. Furthermore, not only is recognition of its existence crucial but also a realisation of its impact. The interdependence between the two triads can constrain various elements, as shown, and this has consequences for each party.
7.8 CONCLUSION

This chapter and Chapter Six above have examined several key issues which arise in this relationship. To analyse the situation of the temp in the workplace it is necessary, first of all, to recognise the three-way structure of the relationship in which the temp is involved. This larger relationship is, however, composed of several interconnected and interdependent elements. When the temp registers with an agency and is assigned to a user company what is called the market triad in this study is established. When the temp starts an assignment with the user company the workplace triad is established. The market triad therefore occurs between the temp, agency and user company, whereas the workplace triad takes place between the temp, user company and permanent workers. In any sociological analysis of the temp all these elements must be considered.

Having recognised the interdependence of the triads and the fact that the triadic structure of the relationship determines the interaction that occurs within it, the next most important point is the position of temps who move between both triads. They are not the only ones who do so as the user company is also involved in both triads, but for temps their mobility is a defining feature. They are mobile because they move between both triads. They are also mobile because, given the structure of the three-way relationship, they will move on to other market and workplace triads. This mobility as 'strangers' defines them as 'outsiders'. This perception of the temp may influence relations within the workplace triad. The two other parties may collaborate with each other in retaliation against the temp's disturbance. This is influenced by, and influences events in, the market triad. For example, temps may be constrained to be flexible and adaptable in order that the agency as mediator 'fits' them into the user company. Flexibility may also be gained by the user company who, in collaboration with the agency over the duties of employer, may do less as an 'employer'. So, in the market triad the temp is going to be constrained to be flexible by the other two parties. In the workplace triad this flexibility will have different implications. The temps' mobility in comparison with permanent workers will define them as flexible. Both permanent workers and user company may 'gang up' on temps so that the user company gains flexibility and the permanent workers do not have to
be flexible. Alternatively, the user company may use the presence of the temps to gain flexibility from the permanent workers. The tension between both sets of workers as 'different' may mean that the user company enjoys flexibility from them.

Contradiction is inherent in this relationship because of its structure. Shifts amongst the three parties in each triad towards, and away from, each other mean not only that specific kinds of conflict exist but also that ambiguity may be experienced and expressed. The relationship may also be unstable and insecure and this leads to further uncertainty. Bearing this in mind, it may then be seen not only how flexibility may be obtained in the relationship but also how inflexibility may occur. The temp may be constrained to act in a particular way as seen above, but in a three-way relationship there is no absolute certainty of this, despite the collusion of two members to exploit the third, and this results in inflexibility being experienced and expressed. Temps, although constrained to be flexible, may also feel that they are free. This arises from the three-way structure and the mobility of their 'stranger' and 'outsider' status. The following quote illustrates the contradiction of their position.

"If you are in a permanent job and somebody is in their off days and things might annoy you or be stressful or whatever, you know that this time next year you're still going to be there and if the problem's there it's still going to be a problem. When you're a temp something that's annoying, or whatever, you can say to yourself 'Oh well, next month I'm not going to be here'. So it doesn't bother you. I mean, the chances are you probably will be there next month but you say to yourself 'Oh well', you know. It's just probably knowing that if you really hated a place or hated someone or something about the job you could leave the next day if you wanted to. I mean, I've never, I've never walked out of a temp job, but it's just, it's funny really, it's just having that freedom, that feeling of freedom." [Temp 7, Secretarial 4:7]

This shows that not only does the three-way relationship contain ambiguity but that this is developed over time. The mobility of the 'stranger' who does not belong is not diminished over time, as this quote indicates. Indeed,
although this mobility may not be exercised its potential is important. Furthermore, this mobility and temporality influence social interaction in the workplace. The following chapter examines this theme of time.
CHAPTER EIGHT - TIME AND THE TEMP

8.1 INTRODUCTION

As has been noted in Chapters Six and Seven, the three-way relationship is complex and the temps' position in the workplace is determined by the structure of this relationship and its existence in time. Temps are temporary because of the structure of the three-way relationship. They arrive later in time to the workplace triad. This provides the context for their status as 'outsiders' (Elias and Scotson 1965). This, in turn, is emphasised by their position as temporary and as 'strangers' (Simmel 1971:143-149).

How may time be conceptualised in this relationship? It has been noted already that the majority of temps leave temping after a year, and that temp assignments tend to be short (see Chapter Four). Temps are therefore defined in relation to time as temporary, yet there are other notions of time to be found as well. Temps, for example, arrive later in time to the workplace triad. They disturb the time of the user company and permanent workers. They also have their own time with the agency. For example, they may stay for a specific length of time with an agency during which they spend several periods of time in different user companies. Temps, therefore, occupy several different times and not just one linear time.

This chapter will examine time in this relationship and the implications which it has for social interaction. Time is an integral part of all social relationships and the discussion will commence with an examination of the way in which this can be seen using Marx (1954). Giddens's work on time-space (Giddens 1979, 1984, 1987) will then be introduced in reference to the concept of the temp's time. It will be suggested that the temp is involved in a series of locales (Giddens 1984) which articulate with one another. Finally, regionalisation within these locales will be examined. Front space and back space (Goffman 1959, Giddens 1984) in the locales of this relationship will be considered, as well as the implications that these have for interaction.
According to Marx (1954), time acquires a particular importance in the capitalist mode of production. Within capitalism time becomes something by which to measure the value of a commodity. In other words, 'time is money'. It is the context within which the transformation of raw material into a specific product occurs and it also constitutes this process.

Marx noted how time transforms labourers too. Time provides the context within which labourers are changed and it constitutes this transformation. Labourers freely sell their labour power. At the end of the production process, that is, at the end of a definite period of time, it becomes clear that they were forced to sell and that the time spent in the production process constituted the period of exploitation.

Time is therefore integral to all social relationships. Social relationships occur in time and also develop over time. Time is embodied in the relationship and provides the context within which the relationship occurs. If time provides the context for the temps' relationship and also constitutes that relationship, what may be said about temps and time? First of all, temps are temporary because they participate in a three-way relationship. This may mean that permanent workers and/or the user company in the workplace triad may treat temps in a particular way because they are not going to be around long.

"I never talk about myself. I ask them about themselves. I am interested about them and extraordinarily enough they are totally uninterested, because you are a temp. Nobody asks if you have children or what they do or anything and you're not going to tell them either. If you wanted to you'd find it a bit difficult because you have to be interested in them, to boost their egos." [Temp 2, Medical 1:3]

Secondly, temps are mobile. They are 'strangers'. They have temporal roots outside of the groups in the workplace triad. Given the structure of the relationship they may be 'here today, gone tomorrow' (Simmel 1971:143). Their mobility defines them and also their association with time. This means
that, although they may be in a user company workplace for a long while, their sojourn is perceived as finite. As 'strangers' they are also 'outsiders', which means that interaction in the workplace triad will be influenced by this perception. The temps' mobility, which is a sign of their temporality, may be perceived as difference by the permanent workers and the user company in the workplace triad. It may also be perceived as difference by the temps themselves.

"It's just that, like when you start a job and everyone sort of says, asks you whether you're a permanent or temp, you say 'I'm a temp' and you sort of feel relieved to yourself knowing that you can leave whenever you feel like it. If you don't like the people, well you don't have to go back the next day. That's the only way you feel different, or I feel different." [Temp 4, Secretarial 4:7]

Interaction within the workplace triad will be determined not only by its three-way structure but by its existence in time and the way in which temps have a specific relation to time. Temps also intrude on the 'time' of the permanent workers and user company (see Chapter Six, Section 6.3 and Chapter Seven, Section 7.4 above). This process may develop and shift with time in the workplace triad.

"Well if you're in a place for over a month...They include you when they're having things after work, have lunch together...But when you are there for a week...They don't invite you to have coffee with them or lunch with them and it's quite normal that they wouldn't, because I wouldn't particularly want to go." [Temp 1, Secretarial 4:8]

For this temp, time spent in the workplace triad meant that her position as distant was a little more difficult to maintain. Time was constituting her relationship with permanent workers which was developing from one of particular kinds of exclusion to inclusion. Time was also providing the context within which this development was occurring. Structurally, her ability to be distant was still possible, but shifts in the workplace triad over time meant that her hold on this position was tenuous.
Temps are associated with mobility because of their status as 'strangers' within the three-way structure of the relationship and its development in time. As seen above, however, according to Marx, time is money, and the temp's position in the workplace is perceived from a financial point of view. To the user company temps are personified labour-time because their labour-power is bought by the hour. Temps as 'strangers' in the workplace will therefore be seen as more closely linked to finance than any of the permanent staff. This will emphasise further their difference as 'strangers' and their mobility.

"You find a lot of them are very envious. Well, because of the pay and because if they're that kind of person who is permanently employed and is frustrated with the job but who don't want to leave, or can't leave or haven't got the guts to leave, then they envy you, because they know you are getting paid more and they know you can leave whenever you like." [Temp 3, Secretarial 4:10]

Time is money more explicitly for temps than for other workers because temps are paid by the hour (see Chapter One and Chapter Four where a majority of temps stated that money was the most important criterion of temp work). Time, however, is 'here today, gone tomorrow' because it must not be wasted and the temp as a 'stranger' is also 'here today, gone tomorrow'.

The longer a temp stays in a user company, the stronger the bond may become between the user company and temp in the market triad. The temp may then acquire the status of 'honourary permanent' or 'permanent temp'.

"I mean on a long assignment at that oil company when I left there I mean I was really sad when I left because I found that they regarded me almost as a permanent person. But on the shorter assignments perhaps...you miss that sense of belonging or perhaps the more intimate contacts with people. But you do miss out on that when you're a temp in the shorter assignments. You don't really get to know people the same way you would if you were a permanent person...If you're a permanent person you can go in there and adapt and change things whereas if you're a temp you haven't really got that leeway, authority...You can to a certain extent, but not quite as much as a permanent...Well if you're..."
uncertain about the tenure of the temporary position and you might be reluctant to suggest changes in case it's seen as a, you know, in case it's seen, as if you're outstepping your boundaries. And also because you're never quite sure just how long, I mean, you've heard of temps being involved in something and then for whatever reason they might leave next week." [Temp 7, Secretarial 4:3]

The temps' difference from permanent workers is defined, as seen in this quote, by time. Their temporality, as signified by their mobility, 'stranger' and 'outsider' status, means that they are different from permanent workers. Time also constitutes and provides a context for their development to 'honorary permanents' which denotes their difference from short-term temps.

"You know, I don't actually think of myself as a temp...you see, I often see temps coming into the office and I think how ghastly it was, you know, they weren't invited to lunch or whatever and they used, sort of, sit on their own. Because I've been in one place for a long time, this doesn't apply. You know, if we're going out for a drink, or somebody's getting sandwiches they will ask me if I want a sandwich." [Temp 7, Secretarial 1:6-7]

The temps' shift in status with the passing of time in the workplace triad means that they may regard themselves or be perceived as similar to permanent workers. The ambiguity of their status becomes a little sharper. The presence of the agency in the market triad and the presence of permanent workers in the workplace triad serve as a reminder of their non-employee status. With time in the workplace triad they are 'here today and stay tomorrow' (Simmel 1971:143) which does not lessen their difference from permanent workers but only alters it. They may feel the 'same' as permanent workers but they are still mobile and disposable. Indeed, they may find that the passing of time in the workplace triad entails developments which may be unwelcome.

"I find I get a bit paranoid after about eight weeks...There was a different set of expectations that came into play...You couldn't get away
with pretending that you didn't know the filing system after eight weeks for a start! And also they came to rely on you being there working overtime, doing certain things that I wasn't prepared to take on, responsibility and commitment." [Temp 8, Secretarial 4:1]

Temps as 'honorary permanents' only enhance their 'stranger' status and do not reduce it. The passing of time in the workplace triad emphasises their status because they are still involved in a three-way relationship. Shifts and developments in the relationship have obviously occurred over time, but the structure as a central determinant of interaction remains intact.

With time in the workplace triad there are also going to be developments in the market triad as both are interdependent. The link with the agency on a long assignment with a user company may be weaker than on short assignments because there may be less direct contact between temps and the agency. This may affect the temps' perception of their 'employee' status.

"I know I'm an employee of the agency, perhaps on the short assignments you feel more attached to the agency, but on the longer assignments, I think, you almost forget that, you know, the agency is there. I mean, obviously on a longer assignment your responsibilities develop with the client company, but at the same time you're still like an ambassador, so to speak, for the agency. Whatever you do will reflect on the agency...Well with this agency I found them very nice from the very beginning. But obviously they've got to test you out over maybe three or four assignments to find out just what your standard is. And then once they've found that out and once they know that you're actually reliable and efficient they will maybe give you the choice of jobs, or give you the better jobs..." [Temp 7, Secretarial 4:4]

As shown in Chapter Six (Section 6.3) the user company and the agency in the market triad share the role of employer. Temps may feel torn between both 'employers'. Time spent in the workplace triad (and therefore an association with the user company in the market triad) may only serve to make this feeling more ambiguous. It may also mean, however, that the temps' acceptability is confirmed which may increase their prospects of "better"
assignments. The interdependence of the triads means that time spent in the workplace triad will obviously influence developments in the market triad.

Time in the market triad may have an effect on the type of workplace triad in future assignments, yet it will not influence the way in which temps are perceived as 'outsiders'. They will still disturb the intimacy and the relationship between permanent workers and user company in the workplace triad. Temps are, therefore, involved in different 'times'. Time spent in the workplace triad will influence the market triad where temps may have proved their acceptability to the agency. How, then, may these 'times' of the temp be explained?

8.3 LOCALES IN THE THREE-WAY RELATIONSHIP

Giddens (1979:198-233, 1984:110-161, 1987:140-165), like Marx (1954), states that time provides a context for interaction and that it also constitutes the content of interaction in all social relationships. He suggests, furthermore, that time cannot be considered without space because events happen in space as well as in time. Movement in space, for example, is also movement in time and no two individuals can occupy exactly the same space at exactly the same time. Time and space provide the settings for social interaction which are called locales (Giddens 1984:118). Each locale provides a context for interaction as well as constituting it.

In the three-way relationship, temps are involved in several locales. The agency provides a setting in time-space for interaction between its representatives and temps. It is, following Giddens, a locale. It also provides a setting for interaction between the agency representative and the user company representative, although such interaction may only occur through contact by phone and letter.

The user company workplace is another locale. It provides the setting for the temps' interaction within the user company. The agency is not involved in this locale, but the two locales (agency and workplace) are interconnected. This has implications for interaction within and between both locales. Before
examining this, the temps' interaction in each locale will be considered to see in what way each of these provides a context for, and constitutes, social interaction.

Time for the temp is expressed as a series of locales. For example, a temp may be with an agency for a few years. In that locale the relationship between the agency and the temp may develop and change.

"But it started out by giving me sort of odd jobs, and some that were not very well paid. And sometimes they would ask me to go and hold the fort where other people, I mean, I remember they rang up once and they said 'Oh you know these people have gone through three temporaries in a week, and we're in despair. Can you go in and stop it', you know. And I went in and sort of gritted my teeth and did the rest of the week so that they didn't get left in the lurch, because it was a very bad situation. But I felt the fact that they did seem to appreciate that kind of attitude, you know, that they know they can rely on you to sort of get through whatever's going, and most of the jobs they've given me I've enjoyed a lot. They've taken a lot of care with me." [Temp 9, Secretarial 4:1]

The passing of time in the agency locale may mean that the temps' closer association with the agency entails lessening the sense of insecurity. Temps may prove their acceptability to the agency as the above quote shows. Interaction in the agency locale is influenced, therefore, by developments in workplace locales.

"I used to worry every week like 'Oh my God, are they going to find me a job next week?' and...I mean, I didn't know how people would react to temporary workers and things like that, or what you were supposed to do as a temp worker. But as the years go on you sort of just, it's the same as if you were permanent really. You've still got to get the boss's sandwiches and things like that." [Temp 3, General 1:6]

This does not mean, however, that in workplace locales the perception of the temps' difference will become less.

8.8
"But you do find that when you do go into some companies, some companies that I've been to, that the other girls don't speak to you at first, and it takes time to get to know them. So if you're changing jobs every week it would be quite hard work really." [ibid:4]

Time spent in the agency locale does not influence each workplace locale as much as time spent in a workplace locale will affect the agency locale. Time in workplace locales may mean that temps have proved their acceptability to the agency and this may have an influence on interaction within the agency locale. The agency, as was seen in the previous section, may send temps on 'better' assignments. Time in the agency locale is composed of times in workplace locales, and may result in temps feeling that the quality of their assignments has improved. Yet, each workplace locale will entail the process of being 'new'. Time in a workplace locale will alter this 'new' status. Although still mobile, longer time in a workplace locale may lessen the feeling of insecurity because the mobility, although still present, is less practised.

"I think in the beginning when I was doing it I was doing two weeks here and two weeks there, I was going off it rapidly because I changed around all the time and people just, you know, didn't take any notice of you when you're a temp there for two weeks, nobody really takes any notice. But now that I've had a permanent long-term temp job I like it. But that's only because I've been here for such a long time. It's like being permanent if you like, except I'm a permanent temp. So apart from that I don't think I'd like it as a long-term thing. It's moving around all the time I don't think I'd like that...and you don't know if there's going to be a job next week or whatever and then you've to get to know everything again when you move to somewhere else." [Temp 6, Secretarial 4:1]

Time for the temp is expressed as parallel occurrences. The agency locale may be seen as a constant. It occupies a time-space parallel to the workplace locales and influenced by them. All these locales are contexts of interaction and all constitute some type of transformation in the relationship. The picture becomes more complex if a temp changes agencies because there will be more
agency locales as well as workplace locales. In the workplace locales a temp may not necessarily change user company to change locale but may move from department to department. Each department will be another locale and may entail 'starting from scratch' and building up a bonding. Temps as 'strangers', 'wander' (Simmel 1971:143) through different locales. These experiences are accumulative.

"It's made me a bit more confident actually. Having to go in, because I'm basically shy, having to go in and meet different, a new lot of people every few weeks or whatever, and having to get on with things has, and the fact that I've been able to cope with it has boosted my confidence a lot...I like to sort of wander from place to place. That's nice, rather than being settled. It's made me more independent, knowing that I can go into places and cope with what's happening and it has made me more flexible. If people say to me, ask me to do something I've never done before, I don't think I'll crack up. Well I do, but, inside...And it's made me want to go, to go on to more challenges, you know, and go to other places and see that I can apply what I've learnt in previous jobs. Also learn a bit more. Yes it has made me, I have got a temp attitude. Not a fly-by-night attitude, but a sort of wanting to go on and on. Not wanting to stay in one place all the time just to possibly stagnate, but to go on and find new situations." [Temp 3, Secretarial 1:8]

The temps' time as 'wanderers' is constituted by their times in workplace and market locales. The interdependence of these locales means that over time, or times, the temps' relationship develops. Their relationship is constituted by these different times which have also provided the contexts for this development. Temps, therefore, may be perceived as travellers who have accumulated different experiences.

"If you travel your perspective on life changes, and it's exactly the same with temps. They get a very very different view of business as a whole, and their sights are expanded no end. So the benefits I think is the experience they gain by the variety of clients that they will actually be exposed to." [Director, Accountancy 2:13]
What is interesting about seeing the temp as a traveller or as a 'potential wanderer' (Simmel 1971:143) is the attitude of agencies to Antipodean temps (see Chapter Six, Section 6.2). Antipodean temps are explicit 'strangers' as they are 'here today and gone tomorrow'. Agencies may profess to prefer them because their dates of departure are known and they can therefore be 'fitted in' easier.

"But the reason we use them is that comparing them with their British counterpart we know exactly where we stand with them, we know how long they're going to be here, we know what activities they're going to be doing during the course of the year, the beer festivals, the grape picking, the skiing, trips around Europe when the sun comes out. They invariably know when they're going. And they're not going to leave us to join the permanent job as a British individual would do...The Australian or New Zealander will not do that. They will see the job through." [ibid: 8-9]

Antipodean temps are double 'strangers' and this seems to make them more acceptable. They are explicitly temporary and this appears to cancel out, on occasions, the unease which agency representatives may have about temps.

As has been seen, the locales within which the temp is involved are not discrete entities autonomous from one another, but they are the contexts for the relationship and constitute it through their interdependence. Meaning for the relationship is produced through their articulation (following Althusser and Balibar 1970:91-118).

The articulation of different 'times', therefore, is what occurs in this three-way relationship. In a particular locale, the history and time of that locale will articulate with the temp's own history. The relationship of the temp, therefore, is constituted by this articulation of times which each provide interdependent contexts for the relationship to develop. The relationship is a product of its own history and this must be be recognised as composed of layers of articulating times.

8.11
8.4 REGIONALISATION IN TIME-SPACE

As seen so far, temps are involved in different times. There is time spent in and with the agency which runs parallel to time and times spent in and with the user company. These sets of times articulate together so that the temps' 'total' working life is an accumulation of these experiences. In other words, temps occupy an agency locale and possibly several workplace locales. The agency and workplace locales will be interdependent and experiences in the latter will have an influence on the former, which may then have implications for the kind of workplace locale of future assignments.

Temps, therefore, cross and recross the boundaries between agency and workplace locales during their working lives as temps. Their 'total' experience as temps is an accumulation of this crossing, recrossing and occupation. Furthermore, within each locale there are also boundaries and it is the manipulation of these which also has implications for the 'total' experience of the temp. Regionalisation occurs in space and time (Giddens 1984:119-122). In locales there is also a differentiation in space and time between front and back regions (Goffman 1959:109-140, Giddens 1984:122-126). According to Goffman (1959:114), the front represents the region where the performance occurs. The back region is where the performance is prepared and it is closed to members of the audience or is hidden from them. Impressions are constructed in the back region and performed in the front. Those occupying front space in a locale may be controlled by those in the back (Giddens 1987:162-165). In other words, control may be exercised through time-space zoning (Giddens 1987:148-153).

In the agency locale interaction between the agency representative and temps occurs in the front region. The agency representative sells the user company to the temp on the basis of what has been prepared in the back region. The agency representative also deals with the user company representative in the front, or puts on a front when dealing with the user company representative.

As a mediator, the agency must try to make both parties acceptable to each other. In practice, as seen in Chapter Six above (Section 6.2), this means that
the temp is constrained by the agency to be acceptable to the user company. Temps occupy the front region of the agency locale and they may be controlled in this way. Agencies are dependent upon temps to represent the agency in the user company. Temps must put on a front, therefore, so that the user company finds the temp and, consequently, the agency acceptable. Temps occupy front space because they must be controlled by the agency so that they represent the organisation adequately.

The 'selling' of the agency occurs, however, in workplace locales. These locales are differentiated in time and space from the agency locale. There is unease, therefore, about the temp's potential performance. The agency may feel that it cannot fully trust temps to represent it. The temps' loyalty is suspect because they move between both locales as 'strangers'. Both locales are interdependent and the agency relies upon temps to act on its behalf as a supplying 'employer'. The temp is a representative of the 'team' (Goffman 1959:83-108) of the agency. The temp, however, may not have spent a long time in the agency locale. There is unease about the temp, therefore, and this unease may relegate temps to a type of peripheral space in relation to the agency's liaison with the user company. So, for example, because the agency is uneasy about the temp's ability to act as an ambassador it may be necessary to reassure the user company, on occasion, that the agency is still an interested party. This treatment may be contrasted to that given to the temp.

"Another thing I noticed...is that they gave us a little get-together for all the temps and it was in their offices...They had a very nice spread, a finger buffet...And wine...I now know that they took out the girl who orders temps here to the Ritz for lunch. Now can you see the difference between the two parties there. That's what you've got to accept. On the other hand there are more temps to take out. I mean, it would be very expensive if you took them out to the Ritz. And also the client is the one who is paying the lion's share of what we get. They're paying the agency's commission and my salary. So I understand it from the client's point of view. They have to smarm around them a bit. But the difference there is pretty sort of noticeable isn't it. They didn't even bother hiring a hall for us, we were crammed into their

8.13
office...You know your place then. But on the other hand as long as I keep getting the salary I'm not going to mind." [Temp 6, Secretarial 1:14]

In the workplace locales temps may also occupy a front space. As in the agency locale there may be unease about temps because they are mobile between locales. Temps may need to be controlled and, therefore, may occupy front space because they are mobile and 'strangers'. As a representation of 'time is money', temps may be controlled by user companies so that they work and produce according to the user companies' requirements.

One way in which temps may be controlled as front space in the workplace locale may be by not holding 'responsible positions'. The unease about the temp's mobility in time-space and the occupation of different locales means that there is a risk in allowing temps the autonomy of a back region where they may be out of supervisory sight. With time in a workplace locale, however, there may be more relaxation of this. It may also be dependent upon the occupation of the temp and whether that occupation is deemed 'responsible' enough by the user company. There may still, however, be unease about this.

"...but ideally...they try and not have the more senior personnel as agency people. I mean, obviously that is beneficial for a company to do that because you know agency and contract people can always choose to leave at a very short notice. But that isn't always the case...we have got agency people that have been with us for years, say, five, six years and some of those people are also very key people within our company...But they're certainly more a rarity than the other because obviously the company couldn't afford to have too many people like that, because they can lose them." [Personnel Officer, Oil 3:4]

The unease generated by the temp's mobility through different locales means that the user company may feel it is safer to use temps in routine positions. Flexibility may be easier to gain because the user company is not exposing itself to the danger of inflexibility by allowing temps the risk of some autonomy. Boundaries constructed on the temps' arrival may be used to signify the way in which temps are not part of the workplace 'team'. In workplace locales the temps' loyalty to the 'team' of the user company may be difficult to
assess. After all, they have associations with another 'team' (the agency) whom they represent in the workplace locales. From the user company's point of view it may be better to have temps in front space so that they can be controlled. Yet, there is a contradiction too, for their mobility between different locales is perceived as a sign of their ability to evade the user company's control.

Temps may also be given 'nasty' jobs, which may be seen as a sign of their occupying front space in workplace locales.

"Lots of...temporary jobs, the job descriptions never match up to the jobs. Somebody will say they want a secretary for a week and you'll go there and literally play a receptionist. And you'll say 'God this is ridiculous'. Or lots of places will say they want a publicity assistant and you'll go and stuff envelopes for a week! I mean it's terrible! They'd never do that to a full-time person. So you can end up getting jobs that nobody else will do...It's awful to be in that position because you're really exploited. Because it's like 'Oh great, we've got a spare body. We can shove all the work onto the temp'." [Temp 1, Graduates 1:1]

According to another temp:

"For example when I came to this company on Monday morning about 11 o'clock a temp had already been in and thrown out. And the reason was that apparently she was an experienced person and he said to her 'Do a winding up writ' or some technical term. And she said 'What's that' 'What! You don't know what that is?' He told me this. And I didn't know what it was. But I didn't let on. I said to him 'Well if you would show me what you want done, I will do it. He had calmed down by then. This man is a very volatile sort of person. He dictated a letter not to me but to another woman there. She showed it to me and he said 'I'm sorry for the delay in writing but a temp we had last week in a fit of pique tore up the summons and I had to go to court to get another one'. So we said 'Oh tell us what happened!' And so the permanent secretary said 'Oh no such thing happened. I mean, she did no such thing. He lost this summons and just blamed her, you know'. And it is true that when anything
goes wrong in the office 'It must be the temp has done it', you know."

[Temp 1, Secretarial 4:6-7]

Temps in such instances are made aware of their explicit differences as temps. What arises is the following situation. Temps are defined by their mobility which may be what the user company requires. They present user company management, however, with the problem of control because their mobility between locales is also seen as a risk. User company management may collaborate with permanent workers and both may control temps by giving them 'nasty' jobs. In so doing, the temps' status as 'outsiders' is confirmed. Furthermore, because temps are seen as 'here today, gone tomorrow', they may also be blamed for anything that goes wrong in the workplace. They are different because they are mobile between locales. They are also disposable because they are different and they may need to be controlled in front space.

One way in which temps may gain access to a back space of their own may be through the arrival of other temps who are similar because they, too, are 'outsiders' and 'strangers'. This may also increase the feeling of being in control for temps. The similarity in position and situation may result in their collaborating together against permanent workers. As 'outsiders' they may use their perceived difference from permanent workers to create a feeling of some autonomy by being able to generate some back space together.

"You can have a moan about the office crone who sits in the corner, you know. The sort of 'She's always watching'. And it's normally the office crone who disapproves of the temp. She thinks you're forever going to the Ladies' and putting on make-up and lipstick and painting your fingernails. And she's watching for it. But yes, you do, you feel a certain bond with them and you normally end up going for lunch together and having a chat about the permanent people and 'How ghastly it must be to have this job and how boring they are to actually stay!'...It's very difficult to moan with the permanent staff, simply for the fact that they are permanent and...[it's]...their company and they get very protective and defensive. You know. They can complain, but you can't. That sort of attitude." [Temp 2, Secretarial 4:8]
Another temp said:

"I think solidarity, because I'd never experienced it, because...[x]...was the first temp I'd worked with in a small office and I mean it was great, because we had a real laugh. And we actually took the piss most of the time. We were totally outrageous I don't know why they didn't sack us, but it was so cynical. But also I had always worked on my own and it's much better to have a sort of laugh and a giggle with somebody than be thinking it and sitting in a room on your own and having to act really sensible and thinking 'Oh my God, this is ridiculous!'" [Temp 1, Graduates 1:2]

These examples show how temps may form a 'team' of their own and construct their own boundaries within which they have their own front and back space. They may present a front which gives the appearance of work being done but their back space will be where they manipulate these manoeuvres.

"There is a definite temp gang...We do cover for each other, yeah. Because we've got this signing in book where you've got to sign in. Like, if somebody forgets to sign on somebody will sign on for them. You know if somebody's, like, adding an extra hour onto their weekly thing that they didn't do, you know, we'd say 'Well done'...you know, 'It's brilliant'." [Temp 2, General 1:5]

Control of a back space may therefore be possible for a temp with the arrival of another temp. This may signify moves made by temps to evade the control of others such as the user company in its efforts to make temps work. As Giddens (1984:126) has said, this does not necessarily have to occur in a back region but may represent some space within the front which is momentarily free from some supervision.

Regionalisation in time-space is shifting in this relationship. The two interdependent locales entail some movement in each which will influence the other. There is unease about temps in both locales because they move from one to another. They cross boundaries between locales as travellers and 'strangers'. They may also cross boundaries within the locales and their
arrival signifies the establishing of other boundaries as well, such as those between 'outsiders' and 'established', for example. These boundaries are constructed in time and space. Time spent in a locale may influence the position of the temp. Indeed, one temp in the fieldwork who had been with her agency for seven years had socialised on some occasions with her agency representative. In certain ways, then, she moved from the front space to the back space of the agency locale, although as a 'stranger' she was never fully 'in'. Temps never fully belong to any one locale because of their status within the structure of their three-way relationship. They are 'outsiders'/strangers' linked with different locales and different 'times'. Their associations with other locales will set them apart from the permanent workers even in a long assignment, because they have roots in other 'times'.

8.5 CONCLUSION

This chapter has shown that time in this relationship has a particular meaning. Time is the context within which this relationship occurs and is also embodied in the relationship. Shifts and developments in the relationship occur in time. Furthermore, in this relationship there are different levels of time which articulate with one another. It was suggested that the temp is involved in a series of locales. These locales change with each assignment and with each agency. These locales, as regions in time and space, provide contexts for interaction and constitute such interaction. They are interdependent and the agency locale will be influenced by developments in workplace locales.

Within each locale, regionalisation in time-space may also occur. It was suggested that temps may be controlled as front space in each locale. There is unease about temps in both locales because they move from one to the other. This may mean that agencies and user companies may feel it necessary to control temps. Indeed, temps as 'strangers' may represent a threat because of their potential to be mobile. The temps' position may also be influenced by the interdependence of locales. Developments over time in workplace locales may affect the temp's position in the agency locale. Regionalisation in time-space may also shift in this relationship. This further emphasises their 'stranger'
status within this relationship, for they may therefore be mobile between front and back space.

Time, as seen in this chapter, has an influence on the way in which boundaries are constructed. Boundaries between 'established' and 'outsiders' may be generated on the temp's arrival in the workplace locales. 'Outsiders' and 'strangers' may be labelled as a consequence. The following chapter will examine the process of stereotyping the temp and how this is generated in workplace locales. It will also consider the way in which stereotyping occurs in the agency locale and how the temp as front space is labelled as a particular type of commodity which the agency sells to the user company.
CHAPTER NINE - THE TEMP STEREOTYPES

9.1 INTRODUCTION

As seen in Chapter Eight, the temps' later arrival in workplace locales provides a context for their being labelled as 'outsiders'. A realignment of time-space may occur with the temps' arrival. Boundaries may be constructed between permanent workers and temps or between 'established' and 'outsiders' (Elias and Scotson 1965). Furthermore, as 'strangers', temps cross boundaries. One of the ways in which these boundaries may manifest themselves is through the process of stereotyping the temp.

This chapter will examine not only the process of labelling the temp, but also the different stereotypes which may exist. It will be suggested that there are several stereotypes of the temp used by different parties in this relationship and for various reasons. Indeed, one stereotype is used by agencies in advertisements to attract temps (see Chapter One above). There are other stereotypes, too used by other parties. It was seen in Chapter Four, for example, that there are more female than male temps, and, in general, temps tend to be young. This fuels a common perception of temps which will be examined in this chapter. As will be shown, the issue of gender and stereotyping the temp will be seen to apply in particular ways.

The elements of the different stereotypes will first be examined; what these are and whether there are any similarities to be found amongst them. This will be followed by an analysis of the different stereotypes. The parties who label the temp and the structural and temporal conditions under which this naming occurs will be considered. Finally, the consequences of stereotyping the temp will be discussed. As has already been seen, contradiction is to be found in all three way relationships in which the temp participates. Stereotyping may be used as a means of explaining the ambiguities and resolving the contradictions in this relationship. The ways in which these occur will be discussed in this chapter.
9.2 ELEMENTS OF THE STEREOTYPES

There are several stereotypes of the temp which are dependent, to a certain degree, on whichever party is doing the naming. The temp may be described in the following terms: as lacking commitment, unstable, irresponsible, lazy, flexible, adaptable and free. These are perceived as personal characteristics of the temp and as being somehow intrinsic, inherent and natural to the temp.

Although each party may manipulate different stereotypes, there are overlaps between them and the notion of 'easy come, easy go' is one point where such an overlap occurs. The truth in the stereotype of 'easy come, easy go' is that temps as 'strangers' are 'easy come, easy go'. User companies require and use temps because they are easy to engage and release due to the presence of the agency which facilitates this whole process. Furthermore, temps may do temp work in order to be 'easy come, easy go'.

The truth in these stereotypes, therefore, is that the temp is 'easy come, easy go' and this is structurally rooted in the temp's status as 'stranger' within the three-way relationship. Freedom is embodied in 'easy come, easy go' for it carries the implication of a freedom from responsibilities, a freedom to move on and a freedom related to the absence of a defined past or history. As seen in Chapter Nine, temps cross boundaries between locales; they come from one locale and go to another.

The stereotypes are gendered. Underlying the notion of freedom is the idea that the stereotypical temp is a young woman. It has already been noted that many temps are young and female (Chapter Four). There are several assumptions made in stereotyping temps in this way, however, which need to be dismantled. The stereotypical temp is not a man, for example, because it is assumed that male workers have commitments and responsibilities usually in the form of a career. Older women are perceived to have domestic or family commitments, which means that they are seen as 'settled' and 'responsible'. The stereotype temp, on the other hand, is a young footloose and fancy-free woman. She works when and where she feels like, taking holidays as she chooses. Her freedom from all commitments means, however, that she is possibly insecure, unstable and flighty. In other words, she is a 'butterfly'.
She may also be lazy because she lacks responsibility. Yet, she may be adaptable, a chameleon in the workplace adapting quickly and flexibly to her changing environment.

These are some of the central stereotypical elements. It must now be asked how do these elements arise? The different stereotypes are rooted in the structure of this relationship as three-way. Temps move from the agency locale to workplace locales. They are perceived, therefore, as free. This perception is manipulated in different ways and is used to provide a means for resolving ambiguities which arise in this relationship. As has already been seen in Chapter Eight, there is unease in both agency and workplace locales because of the way in which temps move from one to the other. Stereotyping temps may provide a justification for this unease and all parties in this relationship may contribute to the naming process. None of the causes of stereotyping occurs without the influence of the other parties because of the articulation and interdependence between the locales.

9.3 THE NAMING OF THE TEMP - WHY THE TEMP IS LABELLED

In the market triad the agency supplies the temp to the user company to fulfill the requirement for flexible labour that can be engaged and released when the user company wishes. This labour can be taken on and let go because of the existence of the agency as the supplying 'employer'. The agency's presence means that the user company does not have to make a commitment to keep the temp any longer than it requires.

Temps are, therefore, exchanged between the two parties and are perceived as a type of commodity. Furthermore, they are assumed by both exchanging parties to be imbued with certain characteristics as if these were personal traits. One of these characteristics is flexibility. The user company enters a flexible relationship in order to acquire flexible labour. The truth of this stereotype is that temps may be flexible as seen in Chapters Six and Seven. Temps are then, however, perceived to have a flexible personality.
"...being professional temping people they are all automatically more flexible and adaptable." [Personnel Officer, Oil 2:9]

And

"I think to be a temp you need a certain personality." [Personnel Officer, College 4:11]

Flexibility becomes something which is seen as inherent to the temp rather than being generated by the relationship and the temp as the item of exchange is stereotyped. The truth of this stereotype is that temps may be flexible workers because they are easy to take on and easy to get go and this is one of their attractions for user companies.

It is quite clear, however, that there is more than truth in stereotyping temps for this provides a justification for the user company's treatment of temps as non employees. For example, consensus may be difficult to achieve amongst three parties (see Chapters Six and Seven). This means that instability may occur. This instability may undermine the user company's search for flexibility. This may constrain the user company (as seen in Chapter Six, Section 6.3). User company representatives may explain the constraint they experience within the relationship by stereotyping the temp as an unstable, insecure person or one who is irresponsible and lacks commitment.

"As a temp you can flit around and then flit in and out of assignments without feeling really responsible and to a certain extent I think certain people do it for that very reason, because they can't cope with a permanent job, and actually at the end of the day being held responsible." [Personnel Officer, Media 1:12]

Stereotyping the temp may also provide justification for treating temps in a particular way. This may then have consequences for temps holding responsible positions in a user company. It is the three-way relationship which generates instability, however, although it is the temp who is perceived as 'naturally' flighty. Characteristics produced by the relationship are seen as personal traits of the temp. Furthermore, there is a temporality in this

9.4
stereotyping process for instability occurs with developments in the relationship over time. Temps move from agency to workplace locales. This involves occupation in time-space (as seen in Chapter Eight). It also entails a perception of temping as 'not a proper' job, the subject of the next section.

9.4 TEMPING, 'REAL' WORK AND GENDER

The structure of the three-way relationship means that temping may be perceived as 'not a proper job'. There are two 'employers' in the market triad. These 'employers' may change from week to week if any or all of the three parties wish. As seen in Chapter Six, the presence of two 'employers' means that the temp is either torn between both and is perceived as disloyal to both, or else feels a lack of commitment because there is a certain freedom to be enjoyed in the space between the two collaborators. As seen in Chapter Eight, the temp moves from the agency to the workplace locale. There is unease about the temp's mobility and this unease manifests itself in a perception of temping as 'not proper' work. Furthermore, as temping is not seen as a 'proper' job, there is an assumption that those who are serious about work or about life, who have or should have commitments, such as a career, cannot be temps.

"I find that our men are a younger age group than the ladies and I think that the chaps don't stay with us so long. I think we've had one bloke, one or two chaps who've stayed with us on an on-going basis...I find they're normally doing it, it's like a means to an end before going to do their own thing...The chaps don't often grow." [Temporary Controller, General 2:8]

This agency representative thought that men could not really be temps because they were serious about their careers and were only using temping as a stepping stone. She presumed that men who temp would do so as "a means to an end". Career women may also find the same assumptions made about them as temps:

9.5
"...when I was at the firm...at the same time there was a relief telephonist, a nice girl. And they treated her very rudely because she was just the telephonist. I got chatting to her once. I had to talk to somebody. And she turned out to be a trainee barrister, she was just temping between finishing her course and going in for her pupillage. And she said that in some of her temp assignments they had found out that she was a trainee barrister and the attitudes towards her had changed totally. People treated her like dirt most of the time...[but]...if they found out what she was actually going to do they would treat her completely differently. In fact, somebody actually came and apologised to her saying 'Sorry we didn't know that you were going to be a barrister', said this man. Nonetheless they could treat her like dirt. Yet she's still the same human being. Because she's got career aspirations she must be treated with more respect..."  [Temp 3, Secretarial 1:12-13]

To be a temp, then, may be stigmatising for there is an assumption that 'easy come, easy go' is a personal trait. Men and career women are not perceived to be temps because they are seen as serious about their work. The stereotype temp, on the other hand, is not serious because she is 'easy come, easy go'.

There is a contradiction in this stereotype because it is rooted in the position which the temp holds within the three-way structure of the relationship. As 'easy come, easy go', it is beneficial for workers with other commitments to engage in temping because they can easily leave it at any time to pursue their other responsibilities. They may be said to be perfect temps. The perception of 'easy come, easy go' as a personal attribute, however, means that such workers cannot be temps for they are perceived as responsible due to having other commitments. The stereotype temp, on the other hand, is flighty and irresponsible, because she is seen as having no commitments. What may arise is the situation that those who do temp work and yet are expected to have responsibilities may be perceived in a particular way. If, for example, it is presumed that men and career women cannot be temps, how are such temps perceived?
One male temp in the fieldwork who had been temping for several years was experiencing some trouble in finding a permanent job. He had been advised by his agency representative in the following manner:

"She also said to me it might be a good thing on my CV to write 'Look I've stepped out of the accounting practice which I feel was a mistake and I want to get back into the accounting profession'." [Temp 2, Accountancy 3:4]

This example clearly demonstrates the way in which being a temp is perceived as 'not a proper job'. In fact, although this temp had gained some accounting experience as a temp, this was seen to be outside "of the accounting practice". From this it could be deduced that the temp accountant may not be a 'real' accountant. Temping because it occurs in a three-way relationship appears to carry connotations of not being 'real' work.

In other words, if temps are perceived as free from responsibility (by being 'easy come, easy go'), they may also be perceived as free to do something else, or be something or somebody else. Male secretarial temps, by being temps, therefore, may find it easier to work as secretaries. The nature of the temp's disturbance in the workplace as 'easy come, easy go' and the structure of the three-way relationship mean that the male temp as a secretary may be a little easier to accept because he is going to leave and he is a very explicit 'stranger'. What this suggests is that being a double 'stranger' may be less conflictual. (See Chapter Eight, Section 8.3 on temps from the Antipodes.) The male secretarial temp may be 'easy come, easy go' as a temp, and because of this he may be 'easy come, easy go' as a secretary. This may, therefore, lessen the threat of being a male secretary because he is mobile.

One agency director said:

"No, I think they find that it is easier to get work as a male secretary working as a temp...There is a certain amount of resistance. I mean, there, people don't mind taking temporary male workers as secretaries, but there is a resistance, yes." [Director, Secretarial 3:10]
This does not mean that the male secretarial temp may find that temping on his curriculum vitae is helpful in finding a permanent job (see 9.8 below). What is being suggested is that being 'not a proper' secretary in a job which is perceived as 'not proper' (temping) may have the effect of lessening the impact of being a 'stranger'.

The contradiction in this stereotype is interesting. On the one hand, there is an assumption that the 'real' temp is female and flighty. The advertisements used by temp agencies would also support this stereotype (see 9.5 below). Those who have responsibilities, and, in particular, career responsibilities, are not 'real' temps. The male temp accountant, therefore, may have to cover up his foray into temping and refer to it as not 'real' work. On the other hand, temping may provide an opportunity to be free from certain constraints, either perceived or otherwise. The male secretarial temp, therefore, may find it easier to be a temp than to be a permanent secretary.

So far, the user company's role in stereotyping the temp has been considered, although mention has been made of how the agency may perceive temping. The next section looks at the agency's specific role for that reveals more contradictions in the stereotyping of the temp.

9.5 THE ROLE OF THE AGENCY

The agency's part in the naming processing is quite interesting because, as a supplier of the commodity, it obviously cannot be seen to be a supplier of irresponsible workers. An examination of the agency's role illustrates the different and possibility contradictory positions which may be taken by the namers.

The agency is anxious to attract temps to work for its user companies. Advertisements which stress freedom, such as "freedom from working flat out" [Observer 1988], or the seductive appeal of being a temp, for example, "temptress" or "tempting" [General Agency Tube Advertising Campaign 1988/1989], may be used. The use of "temptress" is an extension of the young, footloose, free temp stereotype and it implicitly emphasises these qualities. It
also denotes something dangerous about being a temp which may be an image which the agency does not want to give to the user company. The agency does not want the user company to be misled by its use of the stereotype as an advertising slogan. It may then stress the acceptability of its temps as flexible and adaptable. They are not irresponsible nor flighty, but are what the user company requires. Again, the agency is using freedom as its base and is perceiving this quality as a personal trait.

"A flexible personality fits in well..." [Temporary Controller, Secretarial 2:5]

What the agency's position illustrates is the way in which different stereotypes may be used by the same party. This could be related to the agency's role as a mediator who presents a different side to the other parties in order to alleviate conflict. The other parties may be well aware of the forms of the stereotype which are not being presented to them by the agency. The agency obscures certain forms of the stereotype in its mediator role. The agency works in its own self interest by doing so. Agencies have to attract both temps and user companies in order to do business. 'Freedom' may be used to attract temps, whereas the way in which the temp's freedom or flexibility may be manipulated may be used to attract user companies.

This stereotyping also shows time-space regionalisation (Giddens 1984:110-161) in the agency locale. Temps may be controlled as front space, as flexible personalities, so that if the agency is not well represented by the temps in workplace locales it is perceived as their personal failure. One user company representative made this clear, the implication being that if a temp was deemed unacceptable s/he would be sent back to the agency.

"We would want a temp possibly to be slightly more adaptable, initially, to fit in quicker...because you can often teach somebody a skill, very difficult to change their basic personality." [Personnel Officer, Oil 1:30-31]

The agency as the supplying 'employer' is aware of the danger posed by temps and plays a mediating game in attempting to circumvent this obstacle.

9.9
In workplace locales the temp as 'easy come, easy go' stands in stark contrast to the permanent workers. Stereotyping may operate in a different way in these locales because of the way in which the temp's mobility is perceived.

Temps arrive later in time than permanent workers in workplace locales and this provides a context in which they are labelled. Permanent workers in this instance may be more aware of their apparent shared interests with the user company, rather than their similarities with temps. Permanent workers may side with the user company (tertius perdens) rather than with the temp because the temps are 'outsiders' and not one of 'us'. Given the structure of the relationship, temps are going to move on. Their mobility as 'strangers' also influences the permanent workers' perception of temps as different.

Temps are temporal disturbers. Permanent workers and user company management join together in a bonding of employer and employees. They may therefore define themselves as 'us'. Temps disturb this temporally, and temporarily, and are labelled as 'outsiders'. They are 'outsiders' to their time (their relationship in time). They are also 'outsiders' because they move as 'strangers' from one locale to the other and have associations and a particular kind of history with the agency locale as seen in Chapter Eight. The bonding between the permanent workers and user company has developed over time and this is a time which did not include the temp. Permanent workers are 'old' and 'oldness' is a social asset (Elias and Scotson 1965:149). 'Oldness' provides a distinguishing code of behaviour which serves to exclude those who are not members of the group and acts as a cohesive agent for it, and furthermore, those who possess 'oldness' may monopolise it as a source of power over others (Elias and Scotson 1965:151). 'Outsiders' or 'strangers' do not have access to this power because they arrive later in time. Time constitutes their newness, their difference and their 'strange'ness. The 'established' may construct boundaries which maintain differences between themselves and 'outsiders' and this acts as a form of social closure (Giddens 1984:131).

"The main manifestation is people referring to you as 'she' and talking about you as if you weren't there 'Oh she can do that'. Everywhere,
people have a tendency to blame the temp for every mistake, even ones made long before you came." [Temp 9, Graduates 1:6; emphasis added]

Not only are temps 'outsiders' to the workplace, they are 'outsiders' to the time of workplace locales. They are perceived as 'easy come, easy go', yet this begs the questions 'come from where?' and 'go to where?' They do not necessarily have a history with the user company, nor may they have a future. Their relationship with the user company is perceived in the present. They are 'strangers' and about to move on. This means that in the workplace triad conflict between the permanent workers and the temps can centre on this question. 'Easy come from where and easy go to where?' may mean that temps are perceived by permanent workers as a disruptive threatening force and, as a consequence, may be labelled in some way.

"They might get blamed for things that go wrong after they leave, but that's human nature. Somebody's scapegoat." [Director, Accountancy 2:12]

The permanent workers may, then, map out their own territory in relation to the temp and defend it by using the label to stigmatise. This also provides a justification for "things that go wrong" because temps are seen as certain kinds of people.

"Wherever I have worked I've been treated as a temp...The professor was always saying I was a temp and I was abusing the system and if he didn't say that he implied it. And 'The temps are really no good, they are here one day and gone the other'." (Temp 1, Medical 1:3)

As is obvious, user company management may also use the label for their own benefit:

"I've had people say to me in a semi-joking way 'She's just a temp'. That sort of attitude is not very pleasant to take. And the feeling people also know you're not there for long so they don't have to make an effort to be nice to you. People who aren't particularly pleasant, anyway, take advantage of the fact that you're a temp and they don't have to be
pleasant to you. Take advantage of the fact…that you don’t know anything. For instance, I went to a place once, it was a small company of solicitors, they were quite nice, and I worked for this little fellow and he gave me some letters and I had to type them all out. And it was somewhere around tea-time and he said 'Can you make me a cup of tea, please' and I said 'Okay' and I went off and made it. And the other girls in my office looked askance at me and said 'We never make him any tea', apparently, you know, you were supposed to do it yourself. That sort of thing. You know, he was getting on his sort of little high horse...Showing who's boss." [Temp 6, Secretarial 1:7]

Temps as 'easy come, easy go' and free in workplace locales are labelled as a result of their arrival later in time and also because the stereotyping process is rooted in the structure of the three-way relationship. The temps' mobility between locales provides the truth of the perception of temps as 'easy come, easy go'. Temps, as 'strangers', are 'easy come' from one locale and 'easy go' to another. Their crossing and recrossing of boundaries, as seen in Chapter Eight, mean that there is unease about temps. In workplace locales the temps' boundary crossing and arrival later in time provides a time-space context for a realignment of boundaries between 'us' and 'them'. These boundaries, manifest in the use of labels, denote social distance.

As seen in Chapter Eight, however, permanent workers, agency and user company representatives are not the only parties to construct boundaries. Temps may also do so. The next section examines the temps' role in the stereotyping process and how they too may create some form of social distance.

9.7 THE ROLE OF THE TEMP IN THE PROCESS OF STEREOTYPING

The sociologically 'old' because of their position, can induce 'outsiders' to accept images of themselves. The internalisation of such images can reinforce their position. Where the bonding of the 'old' is disturbed by the temps, for example, the former can induce the latter to accept certain images of themselves as irresponsible or as flighty, by 'ganging up' on them. This may reinforce the position of the permanent workers because they constitute

9.12
themselves as different from temps. It may also be used, however, as a defence mechanism by temps as 'outsiders' to exclude permanent workers and to create an identity for themselves. This identity may then be used to emphasise difference, for example, 'I can always leave' which is further influenced by the articulation of the triads and the three-way structure. The stereotype may be used to provide a distinguishing code of behaviour (Elias and Scotson:151) and to defend the permanent workers' space. It may also be used to define the temps' space and thereby to construct some back space (Giddens 1984:129, 1987:165) in which temps may use another stereotype to be 'themselves', or, in other words, to create identities of their own.

There may be several ways in which temps can do this. For example, if temps are labelled as 'flighty' and lacking in responsibility, temps may internalise this stereotype in order to create space for themselves. They may leave early, or take extra long lunch hours because they can argue that they do not have any commitments to the user company. Alternatively, they may take certain advantages like the temp in the following quote:

"Well this is the funny thing about working, if I'm somewhere I like I never use the phone and I never pinch anything and I'm really good, you know. If I'm somewhere where I have respect for what they're doing. But if I'm somewhere where I don't like people or someone's annoyed me...well, people will use the telephone, so it's just one of those things...I did get told actually in my last job, it just didn't make any difference! I went on using the telephone...But it was just because the woman who ran the office was a bit neurotic and she used to watch everybody, and once you're a temp...!" [Temp 6, Graduates 1:11]

Another temp said:

"I mean, I never worked my full hours there if I could take time off. Like, I always left early where I worked and they always paid me up to 5.30, which was quite nice. Nearly always." [Temp 3, Graduates 1:4]

Another way in which temps may use a stereotype may be to deny that they have the characteristics of one particular stereotype and in the process
generate another. They may, for example, use the label in defence against permanent workers and to actively demarcate their own territory as temps. As the temp in the following quote said:

"I've noticed that people who temp from choice tend to be assertive and independent, perhaps even in some ways more intelligent, or at least more streetwise...These are qualities which managers ought to welcome, but in fact they usually feel threatened by them." [Temp 9, Graduates 1:5]

Agency representatives and user company personnel officers, as seen above, may use the labels 'flexibility' and 'adaptability' about temps. They may say that temps are flexible people. The temp's ability to be flexible is perceived in this instance as something natural and intrinsic to a temp's personality rather than as something which is determined by the interaction of the temp as 'stranger' in the three-way relationship. The temps may use this perception of themselves as flexible to assert their own identity as superior to permanent workers because such workers are not flexible. The permanent workers, however, may also use it to label temps as 'outsiders' and not 'one of us', as seen above.

The identity which temps use may be juxtaposed with an acknowledgement that although temps may be free, they may also be irresponsible and lazy. In other words, temps may internalise several different forms of the stereotype and, in so doing, acknowledge that temps are what the other parties say about them. They may, therefore, be keen to distance themselves from certain stereotypes:

"I mean, I've heard stories. I mean, a friend of mine had about three or four temps in one week, all sorts of funny people who didn't do anything really, just sort of sat about." [Temp 2, Graduates 1:10]

and:

"...I did feel that people looked at me as a temp...I felt that people had a sort of attitude towards me. And that used to annoy me. I never really
thought of myself as a temp. Just because I felt as a real temp was somebody who was doing it, who'd been doing it for a long time...I felt that real temps were people who did it more as a job, whereas I was just doing it you know for a few months in the hope of getting a permanent job." [ibid:8]

The interesting thing about this example is that this temp's mobility and later arrival in the workplace locale was helping others to perceive her as a temp. She resented this, and had several notions of what temps were, which might not necessarily have complemented one another. One had been heard from gossip sources, which have been noted as contributing to stigmatisation (Elias and Scotson 1965: esp. 89-105, Mennell 1989:119). The other was rooted in the assumption that those who temp while looking for a permanent job are not really temps because they have career aspirations. Temps, therefore, may be using different and contradictory forms of the stereotype for various reasons. On the one hand, they internalise the stereotypes, and, on the other, they may be keen to create an alternative view.

It must also be remembered that outside of their history as temps, temps may have been permanent workers, as well. This may not happen in all cases because temps do not have to be permanent workers before being temps. Ex-permanent workers, however, may be aware of the stereotypes that exist and how these may affect them as temps. They may have been actively labelling temps when they themselves were permanent workers. Furthermore, temping may have been seen as attractive because of the perceived freedom arising from the mobility of 'easy come, easy go':

"What it means is that I'm as free as a bird, I suppose. You know, I can come and go as I like...I think it was probably as soon as the second job, 'Gosh this is fun', you know, do my bit and then go, think about the next job." [Temp 3, Secretarial 1:7]

When temps arrive in the workplace not only are they aware that they are newcomers but that they are newcomers of a particular kind and, as such, have been labelled prior to their arrival. They arrive to be confronted with the intimacy that exists between the two other parties. They disturb this intimacy
because of their presence as the third and also because they may be about to move on like the 'stranger'. These factors contribute to the naming process. Furthermore, temps may be labelled before they arrive in the workplace locale because disruption is feared by the permanent workers and the user company. Once in the user company workplace, temps may be treated with disdain or with detached amusement by permanent workers because it is assumed that as 'wanderers' they will not be around for long.

"The permanent staff...are often too close to the work to be able to pick out the main points. Often it seems that their only reality is their own office, and comments on your last place are received like travellers' tales - amusing but irrelevant to real life." [Temp 9, Graduates 1:5]

As temps they may also be perceived as a threat and as competition which is unwanted, and this may give the permanent workers a reason to stigmatise. Permanent workers may therefore stress their 'sameness' with the user company. Temps will, therefore, be aware of their position as 'strangers' and as 'outsiders' and may feel that user companies are justified in treating them in particular ways because they are temps. They may be aware of the distance between themselves and permanent workers in workplace locales. They may also be aware of their own crossing of locale boundaries and may use this perception to explain the user company's or permanent workers' behaviour towards them.

"I think that being a spy must be very like being a temp." [Temp 9, Graduates 1:5]

Another temp said:

"These are areas which are, these days, a little bit sensitive, so it's better that they keep a core of employees rather than use people like myself who could if I were indiscreet go down the road and discuss it with a competitor. Because I have, I've certainly been around long enough to be dealing, in my present job in fact I am dealing with people I have been assigned to in other organisations. So you have to be extremely careful." [Temp 5, Secretarial 1:6-7]
New permanent workers because they are defined as 'permanent' are sociologically 'older' than temps (even if the temps have been in the user company longer). As defined permanent workers they are entering a relationship with the user company which is perceived to have a future, and which has a past. They possess, as permanent and 'older' workers, more power resources in the workplace. Long-term temps can only become 'permanent' temps or 'honourary' permanents. Indeed, 'honourary' permanents may use the stereotype to label other temps because such 'honourary' permanents have a longer bonding with the user company. Yet they may still be aware of their 'freedom' and they may make use of this as an identity.

"Well...you have to be a certain type to actually go into it anyway. But once you're in there you become a normal person...because all the people I know who are temps they're all different types of people, but I suppose when they all came in they were all similar types, until you get established and you become your own person." [Temp 1, Medical 2:8].

and

"You've got to have a certain attitude, I think, that you sort of 'take me or leave me. And if you leave me it's your loss', kind of thing." [ibid:6]

Stereotyping, then, may be used by temps as a form of identification or identity. It may also be used in defence against the way in which the permanent workers and user company 'gang up' on the temp in the workplace triad. Different stereotypes may be used, therefore, as a method of defending their 'disturbing' powers and their structural position. In many cases, where stereotypes are used like this, temps may remark on the permanent workers' inability to move and to be 'free' like they are. The stereotype, in this case, may be also emphasised when there are a few temps together in a workplace. They may 'gang up' on permanent workers and label them in the process of doing this. In this way they may attempt to create some back space for themselves, where they may resort to regressive behaviour or behaviour which may be perceived as 'acting like a temp'. This may reinforce trust between themselves as temps (Giddens 1984:129) and create some distance between themselves and others.
The 'not proper' nature of being temps because of their 'stranger' status within the three-way structure of the relationship may allow temps the freedom to be temps or to be something else other than temps. As seen in Section 9.4 above, the temp accountant was perceived as not a 'real' accountant. Perhaps, then, the temp secretary is not a 'real' secretary. Similarly, temps may be not 'really' temps for the 'easy come, easy go' structure means that there may be times when temps are undefinable as 'strangers'. They may be 'easy come' to temping and 'easy go' out of it (that is, mobile into and out of temping). In this situation temps use 'easy come from where and easy go where' to create an identity of their own. Their temporality means that a 'temp' status may not last long and, therefore, may be inadequate to describe what they really are.

"I find it's quite nice when you go to parties and people say 'What do you do?', this awful question, they say 'What's your job' and it's like people really sum you up...and I will miss not being able to say 'I'm a temp' because people can't define you and I quite like that." [Temp 1, Graduates 1:3]

And:

"There is something about doing temporary work that I like...because you're less easily labelled, you know, in a way...I think rather I am a temp is that sort of psychologically I am a temp, a bit...because I suppose, I suppose I've got a thing about being a secretary. I don't really like, I feel it's got no status, so I'm rather ashamed I suppose of being a secretary. But if you're a temporary secretary, you can go in and do the job and you're not sort of labelled really in the same way...I think that's it. And I actually say, when people ask me what do I do I say 'I'm a temporary secretary'. And I much rather say 'I'm a temporary secretary'. And I would put that word 'temporary' in front of it rather than 'I'm a secretary'. Unless I had a job I really liked then I wouldn't feel like that...So you could be a lot more than just a temp whereas as a secretary that's what you are." [Temp 5, Graduates 1:3]

These are examples of how temps may use a stereotype to create an identity for themselves. Where temps can be labelled as free it may mean that the job does..."
not have to interfere outside of the workplace. Temps as 'easy come, easy go' do not have to be temps outside of their working hours. They may perceive themselves, therefore, as free to do something else or free to be something else. They are not easily defined as 'real' workers because they participate in a three-way relationship and this may result in a feeling of freedom. This relates to the way in which workers who have certain responsibilities are perceived not to be stereotypical temps. There is an assumption that those with responsibilities cannot be 'easy come, easy go'. Temps may then use 'easy come, easy go' to define themselves as something else.

The three-way structure of this relationship means that shifting allegiances and alliances occur over time and there is the structural possibility of specific kinds of subterfuge and outmanoeuvring. Power may, therefore, shift in the relationship, and, from this discussion on stereotyping, it is clear that certain parties may be able to maintain a particular balance of power. The way in which temps are labelled may be seen as a sign of their weaker access to power resources. It also illustrates the different forms of the stereotype which are available and which are rooted in different perceptions of freedom. These forms may be used by different members of the relationship for various reasons. As seen, there are certain contradictions in the stereotyping and all parties contribute to the process.

Having discussed the causes of stereotyping the temp it is now worthwhile examining the consequences of this naming.

9.8 THE CONSEQUENCES OF STEREOTYPING

It must be recognised that the stereotypes which have been discussed so far do not exist in isolation from each other. All are structurally situated in the three-way relationship and have a particular meaning in workplace locales where they may be used as an excluding device and/or as a mark of identity. If temping is perceived as not a 'proper job', because of the temp's 'stranger' status within the three-way relationship, what are the implications of this when applying for permanent jobs? Will the prospective employer view a temp as insecure, a 'butterfly', and not suitable?
"I mean, obviously you question 'Are you sure', or something. You put it in some way that they're sure. It would sort of make you ask a question as to why they suddenly wanted to go permanent. But we certainly wouldn't rule people out for that...You can soon find out if somebody's a butterfly that is going to float around." [Personnel Officer, Oil 1:27-28]

For other personnel officers in the fieldwork the length of time being a temp was important when assessing a temp's 'flightyness'.

"I'd get very suspicious...Well, I'd wonder why they haven't managed to get themselves a permanent position especially in London...If they're what I call a professional temp, there are some people who do it as a job, you know. I'm looking at CVs now, and you see people who've done lots of periods of temporary work. It makes you wonder why...I mean, I've looked at CVs and some of these girls have temped for at least a year, 18 months. I mean, as I say, if someone's doing, I think after about 18 months I'd be very, I'm very wary of taking people like that...Well I'd be very wary of, as I say, why haven't they managed to get a permanent position." [Personnel Officer, Media 3:9-10]

Another personnel officer said:

"But I would...be very careful, question somebody very carefully who had left a job, a secretarial job, for no particular reason to take up temping. And has moved along, moved on from temporary assignments...Because, I don't know, the requirements here, we would like people to stay for a reasonable length of time to build up some kind of loyalty to the...[College 1]...maybe and to actually get involved in the job. And if people who seem to have moved around a lot, you know, it will, it's going to imply some lack of commitment to work, I suppose. It's probably personal prejudice..." [Personnel Officer, College 1:11-12]

This personnel officer though that a maximum amount of temporary work on a curriculum vitae would be:

9.20
"I would say a year. A year, easily. And then start looking very closely. I mean, from personal experience it's not, we've recruited one or two people who I mean have...quite extensive temping on their CV, and in a couple of cases haven't worked out. They've left very soon after starting. Of course, that might be, you know, other reasons as well, but the fact that you know, they couldn't settle into a permanent job."

[ibid:13]

Where personnel officers are involved in labelling temps as 'outsiders' and/or 'strangers', there may be a slight reluctance to employ temps permanently because such temps have a 'history of instability'. This may be apparent where temps are applying for permanent jobs.

"That was the attitude of my former employers. They all thought that temps were basically unemployable, that's why they had to do temp work." [Temp 3, Secretarial 1:3]

The consequences of labelling temping as 'not a proper job' may be more serious for temps who want to have a career outside of temping. The structure of the three-way relationship means that temps may be engaged and released very easily. If the user company requires workers who are 'easy come, easy go', temps may well find themselves working for short periods in different user companies. This, however, may be perceived as a sign of the temp's instability and may not be well received on a curriculum vitae.

"...within accounting they will be in temporary jobs for a minimum of three to six months. Once you get into that environment then it's difficult to leave it, because they treat temporary work as a permanent job, and they find it a bit of a shock to find at the end of six months that the client says 'Well, thanks very much, the project's finished' and now you're back where you started six months ago. And then they start looking harder for a permanent job, but it becomes more difficult because their CV is six months older and they've been in yet another job for six months." [Director, Accountancy 2:10]

Another agency representative said:
"Also temporary work may not look well on the CV. Short-term temporary work is okay, but if they are career people then long-term temporary work is not attractive to permanent employers." [Temporary Controller, Accountancy 4:9]

These examples illustrate the way in which being a temp is somehow perceived as not 'real' work. Stereotyping, however, may have less of an impact if temps apply for a job in a user company in which they work. In this case, bonding over time between the user company and the temp may have an effect upon the perception of the temp as 'irresponsible' and 'flighty' and the development of this bonding may influence the temp's prospects.

"I told them that it was just periods when I was doing things, creative things, and just filling in with some temporary work. And I think she raised her eyebrows if I recollect it. But I think the main reason I got that...[job was]...because the people who were on the panel knew me as a person, perhaps than just a CV that had been sent through the post. Now if it had just been sent through the post I would question whether I would have got that job. I would question that." [Temp 1, Secretarial 2:5]

This example illustrates developments over time in a workplace locale. It therefore shows the way in which structure and time are bound up together and have consequences for the relationship's members. In other words, both determine interaction within the relationship.

9.9 CONCLUSION

This chapter has shown that the different stereotypes of the temp are structurally rooted within the three-way relationship. Furthermore, they are also closely associated with the temp as 'stranger' and 'outsider' and demonstrate the way in which characteristics of the relationship are attributed to temps as individuals (following Barron and Norris 1976). There are several stereotypes of the temp. The truth of the stereotypes which have been examined in this chapter is that temps come and go. All the stereotypes may be
seen to overlap in this notion, and therefore, in different perceptions of freedom. The causes of the stereotypes are structural and temporal. The three-way structure of the relationship means that the temp is 'easy come, easy go'. The temp as 'stranger' moves between the agency and workplace locales and is 'easy come, easy go'.

The stereotyping process of the temp is used in different ways by the different parties. It may be used by permanent workers to exclude temps because the temp 'disturbs' the permanent workers and the user company in workplace locales both structurally and temporally. This may result in stereotypes being used by permanent workers to exclude the temp and to defend their territory from 'outsiders'. Stereotyping may be used by the user company to define the labour which they need and to justify the risks which occur in the three-way relationship, such as the lack of commitment, for example. The agency may use several stereotypes to attract temps and then to promote them as acceptable commodities to user companies. Temps may use different stereotypes in order to create an identity. They may use the notion of freedom to be or do something else. They may perceive themselves as free to be something other than a temp, therefore, because temping is not seen as 'real' work. The consequences of stereotyping may mean, however, that a temp's curriculum vitae is perceived in a particular way by prospective permanent employers.

The next chapter will examine some biographical case studies of temps which will illustrate several issues which have arisen so far.
10.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter examines the life histories of three temps. These three temps were chosen because they have had different experiences of temping. They were also chosen because not only were representatives from their agencies interviewed (as with all temps in the fieldwork), but representatives from user organisations in which they had worked were interviewed as well. Furthermore, the example of Maeliosa was chosen to demonstrate the experience of one male clerical temp, given the fewer numbers of men in temp work. It was decided to present the life histories of these temps so that their personal experiences and interpretations of their working lives as temps would be recorded (Becker 1970:64, Plummer 1983:64-83).

This chapter will serve to illuminate points which have already been made. First of all, these three studies demonstrate how triads differing in content are similar in form. By using a formal analysis as a starting point it is possible to analyse the data. These studies will show the complexity of interaction in the three-way relationship. All illustrate the effect of both structure and time on interaction. They also demonstrate the ambiguity to be found.

All three examples show the interdependence of locales in this relationship and the complexities of this articulation. They also show the duplicitous role of the agency as a mediator in the market triad and the emphasis that agencies place on acceptability. Each of the three temps was aware of the agency's appearance of being a mediator, but, as will be shown, this awareness was expressed in different ways. All three temps had differing opinions about their employee status. Two of them (Maeliosa and Sibheal) show the consequences that the stereotyping of temps may have when applying for permanent jobs. Maeliosa's experience demonstrates the 'double stranger' status, and the way in which he found it easier to work as a temp than as a permanent secretary.
The studies show the collaboration of the user company and agency in *tertius perdens* and how this is reflected in issues such as training and the user companies' search for flexible workers. They also show how these three temps have been 'outsiders' at certain times in the workplace. This, as will be seen, is emphasised by their mobility as 'strangers'. The different attitudes to mobility expressed by these three temps is interesting. For Cliodhna, it was the main attraction of temping; for Sibheal, it was a necessity in her search for a permanent job; for Maeliosa, it was sometimes imposed and was therefore limiting.

Irish names were chosen to conceal their identities. It should be noted that none of these temps is Irish.

**10.2 Maeliosa O Murchu**

Maeliosa was aged 26 at the time of interview in November 1987. He had been working with Graduates I since October 1984 after leaving university. Graduates I was a small agency based in Central London which was established in the early 1960s. It specialised in providing graduate temps to non-commercial organisations such as charities and universities. Its rate of hourly pay to temps was relatively low, but this was an attraction for user companies. It did not provide any benefits to temps such as holiday pay or training. For long-term temps, however, a flat taxable sum of money was paid for public holidays.

Maeliosa started temping to pay off debts accrued at university. He also used temping to provide him with an income while he applied for permanent jobs. He enjoyed the challenge of being a temp for the first two years because of the mobility and the freedom of 'coming and going'. This accumulated experience made him into a "professional temp", he said, who was very adaptable and flexible.

"I'm now a professional temp because...I know I can handle anything. If my job finishes on Friday and...[Graduates I director]...says to me 'On Monday you're going to...' I'll think 'Fine. What time do I start? Who do I
report to?' No big deal. Whereas three years ago if...[Graduates 1
director]...had said 'Well on Monday you're going to...' I'd have got
everything. I mean, I'd have mastered everything. The name of the
person I was reporting to, her shoe size, time she gets up, what time
train she gets into work...'Do I have to be smart?' 'Do I have to wear a
tie?' I'd have asked everything and I'd have panicked about that. I
wouldn't have slept the night before. I'd have been worried. I'd have
tried to make an impression. Now I know, because I'm a professional
temp, I know that the kind of people who want temps aren't going to
expect too much. So their expectations are low, therefore my ability to
perform them is going to be hopefully marginally better than their
expectations. So I'm not worried about my ability. I know I can do the
job that they're expecting from me. So I'm not bothered. That's how my
attitude to temping has changed." [Maeliosa:7]

He felt that over the time he had been temping with Graduates 1 he had proved
his acceptability. This increased his feeling of security with the agency
because he felt assured of getting assignments. This did not mean, however,
that he liked the user companies in which he was placed. Maeliosa felt that
the agency was satisfying the user company's needs more than his. So,
although he was important to the agency as a source of business, the user
company was more important.

"Nowadays she presages every assignment with 'I think you'll like it'...I
think she does choose to send me places rather than other places. But I
think, having known...[Graduates 1 director]...for as long as I have
known her, there's a great deal of self interest involved there as well. I
don't think it's entirely philanthropic, ensuring that I'm happy. I
think it's because she knows that certain places will tolerate certain
people and certain other places won't. And she knows I have a fairly
ambivalent approach to everything...I think she sends me to places
that a) she thinks I'll fit in, or that a) she thinks people won't
complain about me, and b) - it's definitely b) - whether I'm happy there
or not." [Maeliosa:10]
The agency director was aware of Maeliosa's acceptability because he was a male secretarial temp. Yet, Maeliosa found it easier to temp than to find permanent work as a male secretary and had encountered resistance in this area. He found that in most of his temping assignments the fact that he was a temp lessened somewhat the effect of his holding what was perceived to be a non-male occupation. On applying to work permanently (through advertisements in the daily newspapers) he found that he was not so acceptable. He was also encountering some difficulty because he had been a temp for three years. What was occurring was two-fold. On the one hand because he was a temp there was some assumption made that he would leave a permanent job because he would not be able to settle down. On the other hand, as a male secretarial temp there were also assumptions made that he would get bored as a permanent secretary. This illustrates the ambiguity of the way in which temping is perceived.

"I've fallen into that trap...if I go to a secretarial job they say 'You're too clever. You'd get bored so we're not going to employ you because we'd lose you'. So I apply for good jobs and they say 'But you've only been a temporary secretary. You've been out of university three years and what have you done. You've just been a temporary secretary'. So I'm stumped at first base, man! I can't win. And I've definitely been a temporary too long...A lot of the jobs I've applied for - it's not just sour grapes I'm certain of it - have been channelled towards women. They've wanted a woman...sort of low-key editorial jobs. They've wanted a woman. That's why they've specified typing." [Maeliosa:4-5]

Maeliosa had enhanced his acceptability in the workplace triad with the acquisition of word processing skills. Graduates 1 did not offer any training to its temps. Maeliosa's initial training had been a privately funded four-week intensive typing course. He had started in Graduates 1 as a clerk typist. As he moved through different workplace locales he accumulated experience and his status with Graduates 1 changed to a secretarial one. Two years after commencing with Graduates 1 he became a word processor operator. The way in which he achieved this promotion was interesting.
He had been working in Media 1 for eight weeks. He felt that the work in Media 1 was boring and unchallenging. He found that none of the permanent workers were interested in him because he was a temp and his immediate boss was ensuring that the user company got its "money's worth" from him. The director at Graduates 1 refused to move him, despite his asking her to on numerous occasions, because she did not want to upset Media 1. Finally, another temp, whom Maeliosa had met the previous year in a different assignment, recommended Maeliosa as his temp replacement in College 4. The vacant position was a word processor operator's job and College 4 was using temps until the vacancy was permanently filled through outside advertising. Graduates 1 director reluctantly agreed to move Maeliosa to College 4 and gave College 4 the assurance that Maeliosa was adaptable and with a little induction on the word processing system would be very flexible. Maeliosa was given 30 minutes training on College 4's word processing system but claimed that it was a "vetting procedure" and not training. College 4 did not have a policy of training temps and expected them to be supplied as fully-trained commodities. In Maeliosa's case, the Personnel department had to agree to provide some training because of internal conflict between it and the Computer Centre over using temps on computing systems. The Computer Centre had insisted on permanent staff being used but Personnel was having difficulty in finding permanent employees because the salaries offered were relatively low.

This example illustrates the splitting of the role of employer in *tertius perdens* in the market triad. Neither agency nor user company wanted to assume responsibility for Maeliosa's training. Internal conflict in the user company, however, meant that Maeliosa did acquire some training. Maeliosa, therefore, gained some advantage from the conflict between the two departments. This meant that in the market triad College 4 was providing some training, albeit reluctantly, yet it was quite clearly showing its position as 'employer' and was ensuring that Maeliosa's training was not too comprehensive but was adequate for him to do the job. Indeed, Maeliosa felt that none of the user companies in which he had worked had offered him enough training.
"I've only been given training as a means to an end for the organisation. I've been trained to do something because it's going to help the organisation rather than it's going to help me." [Maeliosa:8]

In College 4, Maeliosa's induction and training were very different from that provided when a permanent word processor operator was eventually employed. A second temp from Graduates 1, co-working with Maeliosa, was immediately released due to the arrival of this permanent worker. Maeliosa was maintained, however, as a temp to assist her. College 4, because it had provided training to Maeliosa, now expected him to train the new permanent worker. Maeliosa complained to Graduates 1 director.

Graduates 1 director, annoyed at College 4's treatment of the previous temp, agreed to Maeliosa's leaving and took up the matter with the department head. She felt that she was not gaining anything from her 'employee' training the user company's employee. Conflict ensued between College 4 and Graduates 1. Maeliosa gained his freedom as a result and another assignment. The user company lost its temp but the following week agreed to a replacement from Graduates 1.

"When I arrived I was just thrown in... and expected to make do. And when...[permanent worker]...arrived, she was given a full guided tour to the works and as much help as she required, access to everything and I was expected to train her. I was expected to tell her everything. Because when I told...[Graduates 1 director]...about that she was furious. That was one of the justifications she gave for me leaving. She said 'Our temps are not expected to train permanent staff'. She was really, really, really, that's the most cross I've ever seen her about anything when I told her that this hideous thing, this being had arrived and I was told to train her. She was absolutely furious, livid, I mean, seriously livid... so that I guess is why...[department head]...climbed down, because I can imagine an enraged...[Graduates 1 director]...is quite a frightening thing. And she was seriously enraged." [Maeliosa:8]

This example illustrates how the market triad had shifted in time. At the beginning of this assignment Maeliosa had lost out somewhat due to
collaboration between the user company and the agency. At the end of the assignment conflict between them had resulted in his gaining. It also shows the interdependence of the triads for the permanent workers, not present in the market triad, had still been instrumental in this vignette.

Maeliosa had had several long assignments in the three years he had spent in Graduates 1. His perception of his employee status had shifted according to the length of time spent in the workplace triad. On longer assignments his contact with the agency became much less frequent. He felt relatively secure because there was some guarantee of work and therefore of income. At the beginning and towards the end of long assignments and during short assignments Maeliosa experienced more insecurity. This was illustrated by his concern for his income and resulted in more frequent contact with Graduates 1. On these assignments he felt he was more of an employee of Graduates 1 than of the user company.

With the passing of time in the relationship there are shifts between the members in the market and workplace triads. These influenced the relationship that Maeliosa had with Graduates 1 for his association in the agency locale was constituted by his times in other workplace locales. As can be seen, Maeliosa's freedom had a financial price. He felt free to leave and yet constrained by the presence of the agency. He felt free to take time off and yet limited by only being paid for the hours he actually worked.

"I like the idea if I get in at 10 o'clock in the morning because I overslept or I just couldn't be bothered getting up, they can shout at you but they can't do a lot about it. You're not going to get paid. It's your own fault that you didn't turn up at 9.30...I like that. If you turn up late or you leave early it's entirely up to you. They know you're not going to get paid and you know you're not going to get paid if you're not there. So if you want to go you can go. And that appeals to me. That does certainly appeal to me. If I wake up and I just couldn't be bothered getting into work, I don't have to go into work. Whereas if I had a permanent job I'd have to phone up. And that, in fact, is the only positive thing I can think about temping...The thing I like least about temporary work is that if I wake up feeling absolutely grotty and don't
want to go to work at all I know I can't because I won't get paid. I mean, it sounds like a paradox from what I just said. But there's a difference between turning up half an hour late and losing half an hour's wages and spending the entire day in bed watching Afternoon Plus and knowing you're going to get paid for it. That's the sort of thing I miss...The outside benefits and knowing you're going to get them and not having to worry about having your rent paid or covering your car insurance if you're going to be sick. That sounds really bloody 'How much is my pension going to be when I'm 72'[but]...it matters. That's the sort of thing I least like about temping...I mean, if I feel genuinely grotty. I mean, if I wake up with the flu, or if I fall down the stairs tomorrow and break my leg, I'm going to have to go on the dole, whereas if I was working I'd get full sickness benefit." [Maeliosa:6-7]

This is an illustration of the contradiction inherent in this relationship because of its three-way structure.

By the time of his interview, Maeliosa was only temping for money. He enjoyed some aspects of the life but the more he temped the more he wanted to find a permanent job. He was tired of short-term assignments as they presented him with no challenge. He felt some control over his life, but that was greatly diminished by the presence of both other parties in the relationship and he felt exploited by both of these at times. He was aware that his mobility was sometimes imposed on him, whereas at other times it was limited by both agency and user company.

"Because temps are disposable. So if a temp doesn't do the business, lob it out and try again. Whereas they spend so much money, a fortune! The amount of money they spend on getting permanents in! You know, you've plumped for this thing...and you've got a vested interest in keeping it because Personnel are going to be seriously pissed off if you lose it. So you bend over backwards to keep it happy I suppose." [Maeliosa:8]

There were occasions, however, where he felt that his long association with the agency had meant his existence as a temp was more secure because he had

10.8
proved his acceptability. Yet he felt constrained because the agency left him too long in assignments which he did not like and put him in assignments where he felt it was because he could cause no trouble. This summary of Maeliosa's 'life history' as a temp shows some of the ambiguities and contradictions determined by this relationship's three-way structure.

10.3 Sibheal Ni Dhomhnaill

Sibheal, interviewed in October 1987, started with Secretarial 1 in February 1985 and had been temping with several agencies since June 1980. Prior to this she had been a permanent personal secretary and had left permanent secretarial work to go to university. On completing an Economics degree, she had started temping while applying for permanent non-secretarial jobs. Up to the time of interview she had not been successful in her application attempts. She had finally moved to Secretarial 1 because she thought that their temp assignments may have led to a permanent position wherein she could move out of secretarial work. By the time of interview she still had not found anything suitable and felt that both her experience as a temp and her age (37) were influential in this.

Secretarial 1 was one branch of an agency based in London's West End with other offices in the City. Established in 1977, Secretarial 1 specialised in providing director-level temp secretaries and consequently required secretaries who were highly-skilled. It paid a lucrative rate per hour and also offered a holiday bonus on the accumulation of 750 consecutive hours worked. It did not supply any training but had a special cross training rate of pay negotiated with user companies where the user company would provide some basic cross training to an experienced word processor operator if required.

Sibheal had chosen to work with Secretarial 1 because she thought that she might have a better chance of getting a suitable permanent position. She felt that because she had been a temp for so long her only opportunity of find a job was from "the inside".
"...if you've got a lot of temping on your CV it becomes more and more difficult to get jobs especially if you apply through an advert or an agency. It's not so difficult if you're there in person, because they see you and they have an idea what you want...Or either you have to approach them. But I stand more of a chance when I'm within the organisation." [Sibheal:7]

The consequences of stereotyping the temp were being experienced by Sibheal.

"But I think now they'd look at me, they'd look upon me as somebody flighty and irresponsible and she can't hold down a job." [Sibheal:9]

Secretarial 1's representative endorsed Sibheal's views and stated that after a certain length of time as a temp it appeared that the temp's opportunities for seeking permanent work lay within the three-way relationship.

"...once they see the person and they've worked there, it's a question of seeing the person first and the CV second...If they saw the CV first they would possibly discount a person, whereas if they see the person first as a temporary secretary that's the most important." [Director, Secretarial 1:20]

Sibheal's experience of many locales and her mobility, therefore, were perceived in a particular way by potential employers. It suited the agency as it was retaining its temp and it may be seen as an incentive which an agency may utilise in attracting potential temps.

Sibheal tried to keep her assignments short so that in a "dead end" assignment where there was no prospect of a permanent job she could move on. As a result of occupying many locales, she felt she was an employee of both user company and agency and this status did not appear to shift in the way that Maoliosa's had.

"I'm doing things for their clients, so I feel well yes, I am employed by them to achieve certain goals. But on the other hand my money comes
Sibheal not only changed assignments but moved through agency locales as well. As stated above, she had worked for several agencies since starting temping seven years prior to the interview.

Due to her mobility she felt that she was only involved in the workplace triad for parts of certain work tasks. For her, this emphasised her 'stranger' status as 'here today, gone tomorrow'.

"I think I've become a temp. I'm not happy about it, but I think I have...That in lots of ways I only see the middle bit of the job. I'm just pitched into the middle of something, see a bit of it, or one aspect of it, or one stage of it and now I'm gone. Even on the longer term bookings. I think the attitude, again it depends on the particular booking, but quite often the attitude is 'Oh well she's a temp, so we're not going to bother to tell her about it'. And if you ask it's 'Oh I can't be bothered with this, it's wasting time', so you're never really involved in anything. Apart from the one or two really good bookings that I've had when they have involved me." [Sibheal:12-13]

It also meant that, because time is money, Sibheal was a constant reminder of the waste of time to the user company. This illustrates her status as an 'outsider' and, in many cases, Sibheal had found that she was excluded by permanent colleagues because she did not 'belong'.

"Sometimes the colleagues, I mean the other secretaries who would be on the same level, are hostile, because they see you're better than them, you know more than them, or you don't have as many problems as they do when they first started...unwanted competition." [Sibheal:17-18]

At times she was the victim of tertius perdens where user company management and permanent workers 'ganged up' on her. At other times the conflict was experienced between permanent workers and herself whereas management was quite helpful. Management could be said to be gaining
because Sibheal was proving her flexibility and in so doing conflict was occurring between herself and permanent workers.

"...I think it's just that they don't want to be shown up in a bad light, because if you feel well it's taken a year to be able to do something and here comes a temp who just mucks in and does it and doesn't make any fuss, there's something wrong..." [Sibheal:18]

Sibheal was aware, however, of the user company's machinations to gain advantage from using temps. She stated that user companies liked temps because, due to their mobility, they were more flexible than permanent workers. According to her, they used temps in order to circumvent the commitments which they had towards permanent staff.

In so doing, the user company may be seen as instigating conflict between temps and permanent workers so that it gains some advantage. She had found, however, that the mobility of temps was a bonus for user companies only when user company management could make the decisions on when temps could leave. When temps exercised their own freedom the user company lost out. She had found that user company management would ask for a certain commitment from the temp in order to maximise its flexibility.

"Because what they want is, as I said, not to have any obligations on their part. But then they come up against the problems of lack of continuity. They want someone who is there all the time who knows enough about the company that the work just flows without having problems. And obviously what must have happened to all of them, all the ones I've worked with, is that they haven't had that continuity, that the temps come but they leave. And obviously people are temping for various reasons, and lots of them don't want to stay in one place for a long time. If they did they'd be in a permanent job, so obviously there's this between all temps, and employers are always trying to push, to find a way of keeping them in. And what they normally do is they ask for a verbal agreement, it's all unofficial. What they say is 'Well, you will agree to stay with us for three months or until we decide we don't need you.'" [Sibheal:29]
This illustrates the tension in the relationship because its three-way structure means that the flexibility gained may not please those concerned. What this example shows is how the mobility of temps may constrain the user company although it may also be a reason why temps are used in the first place. The user company in this instance felt that in order to gain some flexibility it had to constrain the temp. It also illustrates the ambiguity of the three-way relationship. The user company may wish not to be committed to the temp but this may result in problems with continuity where temps may be showing their non-commitment by leaving.

Sibheal also felt constrained by the agency to be acceptable

"I think actually appearance counts for a lot more than anything else. It shouldn't do, but at the end of the day I think if somebody came along who was very well qualified, but looked not necessarily scruffy but not what they think of as suitable, say, for a City company she would be turned down for the booking. Whereas somebody who looked again not glamorous, but serious and smart and had middling skills would definitely be sent out in preference." [Sibheal:22]

She was aware that despite the agency's claims to hold a mediating 'agony aunt'-type role, Secretarial 1 was attempting to keep the user company happy. This may have taken the form of placating both temp and user company in a situation where a senior temp refused to make tea:

"I think they would outwardly be sympathetic and say 'Oh yes, yes, well of course we send you to senior bookings, you shouldn't be expected to do that sort of thing', but I think at the same time they'd go back to the employer and say 'Oh this is terrible, we'll send you somebody who will make the tea'." [Sibheal:24]

Alternatively, Sibheal had found that, on occasion, the cross training she had received was not of benefit to her:
"In fact this agency...they have sent me on a couple of assignments, such as the present one, where the firm's cross trained me. But I feel very much that it was helping them out of a spot doing them a favour rather than they were cross training me...And well for example I know quite a few machines now, so the agency shouldn't ever really be stuck for a booking for me, yet they keep me in reserve sometimes for bookings for cross training, that they haven't got anybody for. And they know that I don't mind having a go and I'm not afraid of machinery. So I feel I'm doing them a favour, I don't need to know any new machines." [Sibheal:15]

In conclusion, Sibheal was temping while applying for permanent jobs. The longer she temped the more she found that she was relying on the prospect of future user companies offering her a permanent position. Seven years of temp work on her curriculum vitae meant that she was viewed as "flighty". Certainly, a personnel officer from one of her previous user companies (Oil 1) had expressed quite firm opinions about her opposition to "butterflies".

Sibheal appreciated the mobility or the freedom to leave assignments when she required, but was limited in this action by Secretarial 1. The agency director had made her stay in "dead end" assignments on quite a few occasions because the user company would not have been receiving a good service. Sometimes, however, Sibheal felt tired of being a wanderer and liked longer assignments in the winter when she could settle down for a while.

10.4 Cliodhna Ni Chlósolg

Cliodhna was interviewed in December 1987 and had started with Secretarial 1 in June 1987. She had moved from Australia to London in April 1987 and had been temping since 1981 when she had left school. On arriving in London she had worked for a general agency, but changed to Secretarial 1 when, on meeting some Secretarial 1 temps in an assignment, she realised they were paid more money. She asked the general agency to increase her hourly rate and, on receiving no word from them, moved to Secretarial 1. This example
"...it turned out that they wouldn't pay me what the other girls were getting. And I said to myself 'I'm at this job and I know exactly what the girl next to me is getting' and I said 'This is ridiculous. I'm worth the top rate'. I mean, they were paying me something like 6 and I mean, the going rate at this company was 7.50...I phoned them up and I kept saying, 'you know 'Will you come back to me?' and they just didn't. They just put it off, put it off. And then I believe they found out that I had done this...swapped over agencies...It wasn't as if...[Secretarial 1]...were stealing [General Agency's]...client, because they already had girls there...I mean, I kept phoning them. I gave them a chance."

[Cliodhna:2]

Cliodhna had received her initial training in typing and shorthand at school. During her years as a temp she had acquired substantial word processing experience. She had not received any formal word processing training, but had "picked up" the training in user companies. She felt that as a temp she had to be flexible.

"I was in this job and there were like three girls who had just been on a course for this machine. So I get in there and I hadn't done this machine before and I'm saying 'Can somebody just show me how to', you know, the basics. And jeepers, was it a problem! I mean, they just couldn't, like they were working on the machines themselves, but they just couldn't, like, I had to work out, like some things they were coming to ask me after a while and I hadn't even done the machine before."

[Cliodhna:10-11]

She felt that her attitude to work made her more acceptable and she defined herself as a "professional field staffer". She was aware that the agency placed a lot of emphasis on her appearance, but felt that her ability to be adaptable was very important.
"The ability to just walk into a job and it doesn't matter what the job is to be able to take over and not be nervous walking into a job in the morning, you know. Some people say 'How can you temp? You're going into all these different jobs. I'd be so embarrassed'. But you don't. You walk in there and you take over. Whatever job you've got to do, you walk in and that's it. And you do it to the best of your ability." [Cliodhna:7]

For Cliodhna it was the feeling of freedom which she liked best about temping. This feeling of freedom also meant that she felt she could work well.

"I think you become just a number when you're in a permanent job and things just become so monotonous. You're doing the same thing over and over and over. And you just can't work that well. Because I feel I put in my absolute best in every job I walk into." [Cliodhna:7]

Cliodhna had only had three permanent positions since leaving school and had left each after a few months. She had also had one long-term assignment as a temp which had lasted for about 16 months.

"...I was in a temporary job for a year...I didn't get bored. I loved it. I absolutely loved it...But as soon as I know something's permanent. Oh my goodness! I just want to get out of there. I don't know why. I suppose I've been so spoilt with temporary work now. It's like I'm my own boss, really...if I want to go to the doctor's, or if I want to go shopping...[I can]...He was really nice about it 'Oh go and enjoy yourself!'. So it's nice. Whereas if you're permanent, there's no chance. I mean, your boss is going to look at you and say 'Hmmm', that sort of thing." [Cliodhna:3]

For Cliodhna, it was the status of 'stranger' and the ability to be mobile which made temping so attractive. It was also this, however, which she felt had at times influenced that attitudes of some of her permanent colleagues.

"Like, for instance, the job that I'm in at the moment, the first couple of days, the girls in the office that I'm working now were. I just couldn't believe it, they were coming out with, like, all these horrible comments,
really being nasty...I just ignored it and carried on chatting and being nice. And if they still were horrible to me I...would just have phoned them...[Secretarial 1]... and said 'Look get me out of here', because I couldn't be bothered with that...Sometimes they are like that and I don't know what they're worried about, for goodness' sake." [Cliodhna:8]

In some of her assignments she felt that both management and permanent workers treated her like a 'stranger' and an 'outsider'.

"New permanent employees are briefed, well they get much better briefing than what we would. If we're lucky we get about 15 minutes or so...They couldn't be bothered because...it's like a waste of time for them to introduce you. In the meantime, you're only going to be there for a couple of weeks, or that's what they think, you know. And I suppose they...couldn't be bothered really." [Cliodhna:10]

She felt that she was an employee of both Secretarial 1 and the user company. Although she appreciated Secretarial 1's rate of pay, she was critical of Secretarial 1's treatment of its temps. In her previous agency in Australia, the agency manager had built up a good rapport with the temps which Cliodhna felt had provided her with an incentive to work hard. In contrast, Secretarial 1, she felt, was too interested in the user company and their collaboration together in the market triad was very obvious.

"They're going to Inn on the Park or something, taking their clients. Okay, fair enough you've got to look after your clients. But it's the temps that are keeping the business. I mean, that's where your money's coming from, from your temps...Because it makes a lot, you know, even little things like Friday afternoon get-togethers back home...And it made you motivated because you were friends and you wanted to do well for her..." [Cliodhna:12]

As a consequence, although Cliodhna did not like the assignment she was in at the time of interview, she was reluctant to approach Secretarial 1 about it.
"I mean, the job that I'm in at the moment it really is like one of my worst. Seriously. It's so pressurised...but they haven't even phoned me. I would like a change actually...But I'm too scared to sort of phone them. Whereas...[former agency manager in Australia]..., I'd phone...[her]...'Please, get me out of here', you know, no problem. That's the difference. It's a big difference, I find." [Cliodhna:3]

In conclusion, of the three temps profiled in this chapter, Cliodhna felt most happy as a temp. She enjoyed the freedom, although she felt that this was sometimes constrained by Secretarial 1's indifference. She had also encountered some hostility from permanent workers which made her feel like an 'outsider'. Yet it was also this feeling of being an 'outsider' which meant she felt flexible and adaptable and different from permanent workers. Before coming to England she had heard that temps from the Antipodes were well received because it was believed that "English girls...just are lazy, don't work as hard as we would." [Cliodhna:7]. Although welcomed by both of the agencies with whom she had worked, she had not found her treatment any different in the workplace triad. This example shows the cultivation of some myth around Antipodean temps based, to some extent, on their status as explicit travellers and 'strangers' who are viewed as very acceptable by agencies.

10.5 CONCLUSION

These three case studies show different aspects of temps' lives which have been discussed in the preceding chapters. They also illustrate the ambiguities to be found in this relationship. The effect of time and changing locales is important. As has been seen, unfolding developments over time have an influence on the operation of the triads and therefore for all the participating members. These three examples also illustrate that the form of the triad determines the interaction within it. Triads which are different in content, which these three examples were, are similar in form and using a formal analysis as a starting point, some sense may therefore be made of the different 'lives' of temps.

These three life histories illustrate several points made in Chapters Six, Seven, Eight and Nine. They show the complexities of the relationship generated by

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its structure and its temporality. They also show the process of stereotyping and the consequences that this may have on a temp's curriculum vitae. Above all, they demonstrate the temp's status as 'strangers' and 'outsiders' articulated within their specific triadic employment relationship. What emerged from this, too, was the importance of a certain notion of freedom. Maeliosa's experience showed the contradictory freedom which may be found. Sibheal demonstrated the constraints placed by other parties on her freedom. For Cliodhna, the feeling of freedom meant that she could work well because she was mobile and therefore free to leave workplace locales.

'Strangers' have a certain freedom (Simmel 1971:146), and certainly freedom is associated with temps (see Chapters One and Nine above). Ambiguous notions of freedom, however, have been articulated throughout this thesis. It is now time to return to the original aim of this study and to unpack and summarise what this freedom is. Are temps really free?
11.1 INTRODUCTION

A recurring theme throughout this thesis has been the notion of freedom. Indeed, it was the original issue which I wished to investigate at the onset of this research. As was shown, it is a key element of the temp stereotype (Chapter Nine), it is used by agencies in advertisements to attract temps (see Chapter One) and it has been noted in other studies as an advantage of being a temp (McNally 1979, Syrett 1985, Leighton and Syrett 1989). Temps themselves in the fieldwork made use of the notion of freedom. It must be asked, then, is this freedom just illusory?

This chapter will examine the freedom of the temp. Freedom, it will argued is relational and situational. This means that temps' notions of freedom are closely connected with their position in their triadic relationships as 'strangers' and 'outsiders'. Specific kinds of freedom exist alongside certain types of constraint. Due to the fact that these freedoms are relational, they are structurally determined by the three-way relationship. This means that there is always a certain ambiguity in the temp's freedom. Indeed, the temps' perception of freedom may be much greater than the freedom that they actually have. Although freedom does exist, its ambiguity means that it may be elusive and subject to specific constraints.

11.2 FREEDOM AS RELATIONAL

Freedom is relational and must be recognised as co-existing with certain kinds of constraints (cf. Durkheim 1933, Marx 1954 and Simmel 1955). Any or all of the other parties in the tripartite relationship, therefore, may constrain the temp. There is also a temporality to the freedom that exists in this relationship. As 'strangers', temps have a certain kind of freedom. They are free because they are mobile. This mobility is dependent upon structural and temporal conditions which may be constraining as well as liberating. Although there may be the freedom of mobility, there may be times when this is restricted or
else is imposed and is undesirable. Freedom, then, is complex, contradictory and ambiguous because it is determined by the relationship's structure. The relationship must now be examined in order to analyse this freedom.

11.2.1 Structural and Temporal Determinants of Freedom

As seen in Chapter Seven above, the user company and the agency share the role of employer and enjoy a certain freedom from employment responsibilities in the market triad. Temps may have a certain amount of freedom too because there are two 'employers'. This may be expressed as a lack of commitment towards both 'employers'. Temps may say that they have fewer commitments because they have two 'employers', and they may feel that they fall in the gap between both.

"I prefer temporary work, because it isn't as tying. There is less responsibility although responsibility doesn't bother me. It gives me a feeling that you're not beholden to somebody else as you are when you're under contract with a permanent employer." [Temp 4, Medical 1:2]

The structure of the three-way relationship means that temps not only have two 'employers' but that either one or both 'employers' probably change. Freedom may be found in the gap between 'employers'. In addition, temps move and this mobility entails some freedom. Temps as 'strangers' have roots in other locales. They may be free not to be involved in any one particular locale because of their association with other locales. This appears to be emphasised, furthermore, by the perceived immobility of permanent workers.

"...the freedom to know that I can go. I've never done it, but it's very comforting to know you can just go when you please. And I have more control over my life. When I work permanently, somebody tells me when I can take a holiday. In temporary life, I can take one whenever I please, theoretically, for as long as I please, providing I've got the money...As I said, I feel as though I can take two or three months off, but I have that little niggle at the back of my mind that

11.2
saying 'There may not be a job waiting for you.' 'What if you haven't got any money' and all these things go through your head when you've got your long holiday... But then there are plenty of temporary agencies. You can always go to one of them. It's just a hassle traipsing around and going through... I always go potty in tests... 'I don't know what happened. I can type faster than this!'... They must hear this so often!' 

[Temp 6, Secretarial 1:8]

This quote illustrates the structural and temporal conditions of freedom in this relationship. This temp expressed some freedom because the collaboration of the user company and agency in the role of employer meant that she was not fully committed to either 'employer'. She was also mobile and she was able to leave at any time. This quote also shows the way in which the temp's freedom may be constrained by the other parties, and it shows, too, the ambiguity of this temp's particular situation.

In addition, it must be noted that the user company requires labour that can be engaged and released at any time. This may mean that temps may be mobile when they do not wish to be. Mobility may entail a sense of freedom but at times it may also mean constraint. The next section will examine the kind of constraints which temps may experience.

11.2.2 Constraints on the Temps' Freedom

There are constraints external to the relationship as well as constraints determined by the other parties within it. For example, temps may find that their mobility is determined by external conditions.

"You are sort of at the mercy of the temp market in the sense that if the market quietens, I mean, we had Black Monday and the market died. Temps got finished up... We lost a hundred temps in one of our offices in the City. A hundred temps were finished up straight away. Taken on again gradually but finished up that afternoon, they all went. Absolute panic set in. So, and what do you do, that's it, your job's gone. You have no comeback you know. Temps can be finished up within the hour if
the client wants to do that. That's unfortunately how the temporary market is. So if the market's quiet, you just have to wait. There's nothing you can do until the market picks up. And so basically if you're ill or if anything happens to you and if you don't get back on time then that's, that's the end." [Temporary Controller, Accountancy 5:10]

Alternatively, there may be occasions when temps may be unable to be mobile because there are no other workplace locales available. Temp work may be seasonal and subject to greater demand at certain times of the year.

"Because it's slightly seasonal there are times when they may want to work and they just can't find it. That at the moment, certainly over the last year, is no problem. Generally anyone who comes here we can actually find them work. But obviously when this boom turns down and when we actually started up in business it was different. There was enforced time off in the winter for secretaries and in the summer for accountants." [Director, General 3:5-6]

The temp, consequently, may feel constrained to stay in a particular assignment because there may not be much choice of other work.

"You know, for all I know they could get rid of me before Christmas, really, which I really wouldn't like because there's not a lot of temporary work about at the moment. It's a bit sparse on the ground at the moment, temporary work...Over Christmas...there'll be a few more jobs in because people you know, they're all going abroad for Christmas and what have you. But in the winter the agency, they say, you know 'There's not a lot of work around.'" [Temp 1, General 1:9-10]

What temps experience, therefore, are financial constraints for if they do not work they will not be paid. This means that they may be constrained by illness, by statutory holidays and even by taking other holidays. For temps, then, the fear of not getting work, and therefore not getting paid, may limit their freedom.

11.4
"I liked it in the beginning because I felt, because of the freedom of it, because of the false sort of feeling that I had that I was going to have so much time off that I was going to enjoy myself, and I was going to get a load of money when I was working. In fact, the rates that were advertised in the paper, I mean, they always sort of exaggerate a bit. The money wasn't as brilliant as I thought it was going to be. You know, I started off thinking the money was going to be good. The money wasn't excellent. I started off thinking I'd be able to take lots of time off and then I realised that I couldn't because I need to work. And again towards the end it was just the feeling of wanting a permanent job really." [Temp 2, Graduates 1:8]

Indeed, given the financial constraints which temps may experience, some temps may find it easier to be 'free' during times when there is not much work. As the following quote shows, this may take some manoeuvring.

"I didn't take much holiday...Initially it was because of fear of not getting work. But later on I started to get a feel after 4 years...of when the seasons were in temporary work and I found that spring and autumn you were liable to work only two-and-a-half days a week some weeks. So I would look to going away around then or trying to use that time when work obviously wasn't going to come up to do something a bit different, just to take a bit of a break. But that took some sussing out obviously because the agency want you to be on call as much as possible." [Temp 8, Secretarial 4:3]

This quote explicitly shows some of the constraints that accompany freedom in this three-way relationship. This temp was constrained by the unavailability of work to use this time to be 'free'. The above quote also showed the constraints internal to the relationship which the temp may experience. Each party in the three-way relationship influences the freedom available for others. As this example illustrates, the agency may limit temps by insisting that they are available should assignments arise.

11.5
The agency, as seen in Chapter Six (Mediator, Section 6.2), may also constrain temps to be acceptable. This may mean that temps feel obliged to represent the agency (see Chapter Eight above).

"I mean...if you weren't good you'd walk in there and they wouldn't like you and maybe send you away after a week or even a day. So you've got to be good. Otherwise you know they're not going to ask you back. Or they're not going to use...[Secretarial 1]...again, are they? I mean, you are a reflection on the company. So if you're not good, they might decide not to use...[Secretarial 1]...again, just because of you." [Temp 2, Secretarial 1:12]

The agency may also curtail the temp's potential freedom of mobility because this may endanger the agency's collaboration with the user company as the supplying 'employer'.

"...for instance one woman here has given me a very hard time in my first few weeks and I did ask my agency that I didn't want to work here any more. But they wangled it somehow that I would stay. They said 'Well stay till the end of the week' and I said 'Okay' and after that I didn't hear any more. I put up with it because I needed the money. I mean, but you have on that theory that you can walk out...Perhaps if I was a little bolder and younger I would have walked out. But I never have done. I have complained to my agency a couple of times about an assignment but I think they either forget or hope that if they keep quiet you'll keep quiet and stay on the job." [Temp 6, Secretarial 1:13-14]

Agencies (as seen in Chapter Six) collaborate with user companies and may protect their own self interests by 'ganging up' on the temp. This illustrates the way in which agencies may give the appearance of being mediators but how their interest as supplying 'employers' is greater. Agencies may dislike the mobility of temps because it presents the risk of conflict with the user company. They may limit the temps' mobility because it undermines their acceptability as agencies to user companies.
"Oh we want them to stay where they are, because I mean they're much more effective to the client. And there's a learning curve on every job, and if they chop and change the client's getting bad value for money. And we like to see our clients get good value for money."

[Director, Secretarial 3:10]

The role that agencies play is interesting and again reveals the duplicity of their mediating stance (see Chapter Six). Agencies may attract temps by stressing the advantages of freedom to be enjoyed (see Chapter Nine above). They also have an interest, however, in manipulating temps to their advantage. Temps may be constrained to work in the interests of the user company, therefore, for, as an 'employer', the user company's concerns may, at times, coincide with those of the agency. Certainly, as has been seen in Chapter Six above, both may collaborate in the market triad to achieve similar aims. The freedom that temps have, therefore, may be constrained because it threatens the other parties in the relationship. The ultimate sanction for temps is the loss of income which may be threatened by both user company and agency. The temps' acceptability has implications for their future mobility and therefore for their ability to earn money. Yet, temps may still value their freedom. The freedom of temps may therefore be quite ambiguous, and furthermore, temps may, as quotes have shown so far, express ambivalence about it.

11.3 FREEDOM: AMBIGUITY AND AMBIVALENCE

Where financial constraints are very real, why do temps perceive freedom to be so important? As freedom is relational, it is obviously determined by the three-way structure of the temps' employment relationship. With three elements present, there is the possibility of shifts in allegiances over time. Subterfuge can also be found to exist in specific ways which can influence the existence and perception of freedom. Furthermore, where it is possible to outmanoeuvre one element, or to go behind one party's back, freedom may appear greater. In other words, ambiguity is inherent in this relationship because of its three-way structure. This means that the freedom that is available is ambiguous. It seems readily available because of the three
elements and the structural gaps between them, but this may obscure the constraints which also exist. These constraints shift with time and the movements of each member. In a three-way relationship, one element may be confronted with two, one may hide behind another element, one may collaborate with one to oppress the third, or one may show different sides to each of the others. The three-way structure means, therefore, that an oppressor does not have to be directly faced. There is a certain room for manoeuvre in a three-way relationship so that freedom appears greater than it is. Furthermore, as well as freedom being ambiguous in this relationship, temps themselves may also be ambivalent about their situation.

"I don't want a permanent job because secretarial work is so tedious in itself that, unless it happened to be a very good job, you know. If it were a very interesting job, then I would certainly do so. But I do like to feel I've got some control over my working life...at least you feel that it's not going on for a long period. If you have an irritating job like I have now, at least I have the thought well it's just till Friday and I don't have to go any more. And I don't even have to stay now. I could walk out if I wanted to. But I won't because, you know, I feel some sort of obligation to continue." [Temp 1, Secretarial 4:2]

And

"They don't want to commit themselves...But it's also because it gives them that flexibility, even if that flexibility is only in their mind, and it doesn't actually happen and they work harder than a permanent member of staff, they can walk out of the door at the end of the week if they want to. They don't. But they could do if they wanted to. They could go for six weeks to the Far East, and sometimes they do, but not very often." [Director, Secretarial 1:21]

In the temp's relationship, the three-way structure influences the freedom which is available, but freedom is also determined by the interdependence between the locales which may be constraining. In the market triad, temps may be constrained by the agency to be acceptable, yet they may also feel free because there are two 'employers' and there is room for manoeuvre between
both. In workplace locales, temps may be victimised by both the permanent workers and user company who 'gang up' on them. This may limit their freedom, yet they are still mobile. As 'strangers' they may leave at any time, given the instability of the relationship and other parties' movements, and this means that they feel free. Temps, therefore, may be ambivalent about their freedom. They may recognise the constraints and the ambiguities that exist yet they may still feel free because they are 'strangers'. This means that they may stay in a 'dead end' job, because the feeling of freedom holds great value for them, and furthermore, this feeling may also enable them to stay. The following section will examine this feeling of freedom.

11.4 FREEDOM: FEELING AND BEING FREE

One temp said that "...the feeling of freedom" [Temp 10, Graduates 1:3] was the greatest advantage of being a temp. One agency representative also said that the advantages of being a temp included freedom:

"The advantages are freedom. Whether that is only perceived as freedom. We have quite a lot of people who work for us continuously, and when we, in a particular area, when we try to recruit these people on our contract for 18 months they said 'Well I don't really want to be tied up for that length of time'. The fact that they'd actually worked maybe 18 months or a year already didn't strike them as being the same, because that was a commitment for 18 months. Whereas although they had worked anyway for 18 months they had felt freer. So the freedom, the lack of ties...The freedom of not having to ask for time off. To actually organise things themselves and then tell people they're having the time off. Again, it's mainly they don't abuse it, but they feel where a permanent person has to say 'Can I go, I am going to get my hair done tomorrow at 4 o'clock?' They feel they can make the appointment, they can look at their schedule, make the appointment and say 'Oh by the way, I won't be here after 4 o'clock tomorrow'. It's only perceived." [Director, General 3:5]
Temps may feel free as 'strangers'. This may mean that they feel freed from the obligations which permanent workers have. Although constrained financially and by the other parties, temps may feel free because they are mobile as 'strangers' and they have two 'employers'. This means that they feel free in comparison with permanent workers. Although possibly ambivalent about being free, it is the feeling of freedom which may take on great value for temps, as the following quote shows.

"But yes, I mean, I do think of myself very much as a temp and therefore being separate. People sometimes say 'How do you keep so cheerful around here?' or say things like that, you know and I say 'It's because I'm a temp, I'm not sort of stuck in the place' and I know that although I probably shan't I could leave whenever I wanted to."

[Temp 7, Graduates 1:16]

Freedom as relational is therefore contradictory given the temp's position as 'stranger' within this three-way relationship. The perception of freedom is greater than the freedom that temps actually have. Freedom may be peddled in agencies' advertisements as advantageous, although its very existence is seen as a threat to both agencies and user companies and the temp's freedom must be curtailed, as a consequence. The difficulty in constraining this freedom for user companies and agencies, however, also resides in the temp's position as 'stranger', with the result that ambiguity and ambivalence can be seen to exist.

11.5 CONCLUSION

Freedom is relational. Within the temps' three-way relationship it has a particular application because of their status as 'strangers'. For the temp, freedom can be contradictory. It may exist and can be exercised to some extent, but constraints on this freedom will be experienced. The constraints are, of course, due to the presence of three elements in this relationship. All three parties may, therefore, experience freedom due to the space available because of the three-way structure, and may also experience constraints. For temps, this will be emphasised by their mobility and 'stranger' status. Furthermore, freedom also serves to emphasise their identity as 'strangers'.

11.10
Temps are perceived as free because they are 'strangers'. Temps, however, may be unfree because they are 'strangers'. They may be constrained to be mobile as 'strangers' and they may find this imposed mobility to be limiting. Their mobility as 'strangers' and their potential to be 'wanderers' may also mean that they are constrained because both agency and user company may not wish this mobility to be exercised.

It is, therefore, not just any freedom and constraint that must be considered here, but specific kinds of freedom and specific kinds of constraint. Much of this thesis has been about the operation of those freedoms and constraints. They are rooted, in particular, in the way in which the temp as 'stranger' interacts with the other participants in the three-way relationship. Freedom is therefore both relational and situational and it appears to take on great value for temps. It was seen in Chapter One that freedom may be used by agencies to attract temps. As has been made quite clear, however, the 'freedom' of such advertising is ambiguous and may be illusory, while the constraints experienced by temps are quite real.
CHAPTER TWELVE - CONCLUSIONS

12.1 CONCLUDING REMARKS

It is now necessary to summarise what has been argued and to tie up several loose ends. In contrast with other studies on temporary workers, I have suggested that when assessing the work experience of the temp the first thing to recognise is the specific structure of the temp's employment relationship which is tripartite and composed of interdependent triads. Secondly, what is distinctive about this particular triadic relationship is the temp's status within it as 'stranger' and 'outsider'. Temps are mobile. They move from one assignment to the next. They move between the agency and the user company. As 'strangers', they have roots outside of any one particular user company and they may be "here today, gone tomorrow" (Simmel 1971:143). What emerges is a picture of several interrelating and articulating triads (as shown in Chapters Five, Six and Seven). The temps' work experience involves their existence in a triadic relationship with the agency and user company - called the market triad in this study - and a triadic relationship in the user company workplace called the workplace triad. The temp as 'stranger' moves within and between both of these triads.

Previous literature has suggested that temps may be used in an organisation's search for flexibility (Atkinson 1984a,b,c, 1985, Meager 1985, 1986, for example). It was also suggested that temps form part of the secondary labour market (Doeringer and Piore 1971). This thesis has shown that before thinking of temps as either 'flexible' or secondary labour it is necessary, first of all, to recognise their triadic employment relationship and, secondly, their status as 'strangers'. As was suggested in Chapter Five, the user company and the agency share the duties of 'employer' between them. This division of duties between both these organisations is an example of a particular triad position which was called tertius perdens in this study. It was further noted that, despite Simmel's work on triads (1950), which was used as a starting point in this thesis, the tertius perdens position was not formally developed by him. Not only does this represent an oversight, but, as was argued, this tertius perdens position is quite significant in explaining several issues which have been
noted in the literature. For example, the division of 'employer' duties between the agency and the user company can result in the temp's losing out on training and the provision of benefits such as paid holiday entitlements. These issues, as stated earlier, have been noted in the literature. The contribution made by this thesis to the literature is the suggestion that in order to explain how this situation occurs it is necessary, first of all, to take into consideration the temp's tripartite employment relationship. As was noted in Chapter One above, apart from the legal literature on temps, few writers have recognised the existence or importance of this relationship. Furthermore, there has been little systematic attempt to analyse it. This imbalance has been redressed in this study, but the analysis has been taken further. As was argued above, not only are temps involved in a three-way employment relationship, but they also occupy a particular status within this relationship, that of the 'stranger'. This is what is distinctive about the temp's particular triadic relationship, for as will be shown later on, other workers may also be involved in three-way relationships in the workplace. For the temp, then, it is necessary to understand the way in which triadic relationships operate (as was shown in Chapters Six and Seven in particular) and to recognise the specific articulation of the temp's status as 'stranger' within this three-way relationship.

The temps' mobility as 'strangers', not only means that they move between the workplace and market triads, but that they are perceived in quite specific ways. As was shown above, the agency and the user company share the duties of 'employer' between them. Neither considers the temp to be a 'full' employee of their's. This means that not only are differences perceived between the permanent workers of both organisations, but that such perceived 'differences' feed into and articulate with the temp's status as 'stranger'. As 'non-employees', because they are 'strangers' within a three-way relationship, temps may be treated in particular ways. This may be used as an explanation for not providing them with training and with benefits. As 'strangers', and 'here today, gone tomorrow', an agency representative or a user company personnel officer may reason that there is no point in training temps for they may not be 'around long enough'. This non-provision of training and benefits then emphasises the temp's status as 'strangers'. Similarly, a user company manager could reason that because temps are going to leave 'at any time' it is
not worthwhile allowing them a long induction period. This is also connected with their ‘time is money’ status, for temps as ‘strangers’ represent an explicit example of time as money for the user company. It is therefore necessary for the user company to get its ‘money’s worth’ from the temp.

The temps’ status as ‘strangers’ is articulated in the workplace triad in a particular way (as was shown in Chapter Seven). Temps arrive later in time to the user company workplace, and this lateness in time, coupled with their mobility means that they are perceived as ‘outsiders’. Using the work of Elias and Scotson (1965), I suggested that temps are sociologically ‘new’ and, as such, are denied access to certain resources by the permanent workers in the user company. The permanent workers align themselves with the user company for they ‘belong’ and temps do not. This collaboration of permanent workers and the user company is an example of tertius perdens in the workplace triad, and temps may ‘lose out’ by being given ‘nasty jobs’ or boring or routine jobs (which was noted in Alfred Marks 1982, Syrett 1985).

This may also be related to the literature on the ‘flexible firm’. It has been suggested that temps are numerically flexible (Atkinson 1984a,b,c, 1985, Meager 1985, for example). It has also been noted that temps perform jobs which require low skills or skills of a general transferable nature (Meager 1985, 1986), which implies some functional flexibility (Atkinson 1984a), for their use may release other workers to perform more tasks. It must be recognised, however, that this use of ‘flexible’ labour requires the aid of the agency. Furthermore, within the workplace triad this is an example of tertius perdens, for temps may be ‘losing out’ by not being provided with training and, as a consequence, only being used for low skilled or general skills’ jobs.

Requiring temps for such jobs releases the user company from a commitment to train (for temps are ‘strangers’, ‘outsiders’ and ‘non-employees’), but it may also mean that relations within the workplace may be more smooth, for training may only be provided to permanent workers. What may occur is a self-fulfilling prophecy: temps as ‘strangers’ are not trained and are therefore only used for low skilled or general skills’ jobs, which may serve to emphasise their ‘stranger’ and ‘outsider’ status, and may then be used as a rationale or justification for their use as particular kinds of workers. This, of course, is articulated within the three-way relationship and the position of the agency
and the permanent workers must be recognised in this scenario. What this example serves to show is that to consider temps as 'flexible' workers, it is necessary to take account of their 'stranger' status within their triadic relationship.

Temps as 'strangers' and 'outsiders' may also be subject to labelling. As was shown in Chapter Nine, there are several stereotypes of the temp. These are all structurally rooted in the three-way relationship. It was shown that the characteristics of the triadic relationship are attributed to temps as individuals (following Barron and Norris 1976 on women workers), so that temps were seen as free and easy, for example, or as 'easy come, easy go', which is a feature of their status as 'strangers' within their relationship rather than themselves as individuals. The truth of the stereotypes is found in the temp's mobility, for temps as 'strangers' do come and go. The stereotypes, however, were perceived as the temps' personal traits. The advertisements of several major agencies in London also played on the notion of the temp as a 'free spirit' (see Chapter One). What is noteworthy about these advertisements is their concern with freedom which has very close associations with temps. It has been noted that freedom is an advantage of temping (McNally 1979, Syrett 1983, Leighton and Syrett 1989), but the literature did not make any systematic attempt to analyse what this freedom meant.

As Chapter Eleven suggested, the freedom of temps is relational and situational. It is emphasised by their status as 'stranger'. Temps may say that they 'feel' free because of their ability to be mobile. This freedom is, however, illusory as temps may be subject to the constraints of both user company and agency in the market triad and user company and permanent workers in the workplace triad. As was suggested, their status as 'stranger' represents a threat which may need to be curtailed. This means that temps may 'feel' free and be constrained. This ambiguity about freedom was shown to be structurally rooted.

Finally, mention must be made of time. As temporary, temps obviously have some relation to time. This notion was unpacked, and like the rest of this thesis was shown to be linked to the three-way relationship and the temp's status as 'stranger' and 'outsider'. Time is a constituent of all social relationships (Marx 12.4)
1954, Giddens 1979, 1984, 1987), so it is quite obvious that relationships change in and over time. Within the three-way relationship of the temp, however, it was suggested that there are several layers of articulating times. Not only is the temp involved in a time with the agency, but also with user companies. Both provide the settings for interaction and were called locales (following Giddens 1984). Temps are mobile within and between these locales, and this may also determine the way in which they experience work.

In order to assess attitudes and orientations to work (Goldthorpe et al., 1968, Brown et al., 1983, for example), it is necessary to consider the individual's involvement with an employing organisation. With the temp there are two 'employers' to take into account. Furthermore, to assess the temps' orientations to work, it may be necessary not only to consider their involvement with the agency, but with several user companies. In other words, the temps' involvement with articulating and interdependent locales is necessary in order to examine their orientation to work (following Goldthorpe et al., 1968, Brown et al., 1983). As was shown, temps may view their experience of work in terms of their time with the agency or the user company or both.

Within these locales, temps, as was shown, may be either front or back space in time. In other words, regionalisation in time-space may be seen to occur within the temp's three-way relationship. Temps as 'strangers' may align themselves with other temps in order to create some space for themselves away from the watchful eye of the 'audience' (Goffman 1959). This may demonstrate an expression of their freedom, but their being constrained as front space, and the way in which they move between the front space of the agency and the user company, demonstrate their lack of freedom. It can also be seen how the process of stereotyping can be an articulation of the way in which temps are controlled as front space. Alternatively, if they use a stereotype in order to express their difference from permanent workers, and their freedom, then it can be seen how temps are using back space for themselves. It can be seen, therefore, how regionalisation in time-space may have clear associations with the process of stereotyping the temp, but also the way in which the temps' 'stranger' status has particular application within this.
The agency was seen to occupy an interesting position in the temp's three-way relationship. Not only does it share employer duties with the user company, but it is also a supplying 'employer'. The agency therefore has an interest in ensuring that the temp is acceptable to the user company and that there is no conflict between them which would jeopardise the agency's position. To do this, the agency occupies a mediating role. At times, however, as seen, the agency's interest as a mediator sometimes extends into making both other parties (user company and temp), aware of their differences and their incompatibility. The agency may not want the user company and temp permanently reconciled unless there is some advantage to be gained from this. The agency's role as a supplying 'employer' coincides with its role as a mediator in this case. Agencies, as supplying 'employers' and mediators within the market triad, have a very real interest in keeping the three parties together for they are getting some advantage from this, most notably financial gain. This may mean that, in the provision of training to temps which improves the acceptability of the agency to the user company, the agency may also have to ensure that the temp reciprocates the interest which the agency has shown by providing training. Agency representatives may argue that in training temps 'at the expense of the agency' they are improving the temps' chances of both temporary and permanent employment. It must not be forgotten, however, that within the triadic relationship, the temp's enhanced acceptability benefits the agency too, for the user company may look favourably on an agency which supplies a trained temp, and this augurs well for the agency's future business. In return for providing training, an agency may commit temps to stay with the agency for a certain period of time, during which they may not take a permanent job. Alternatively, where the temp is offered a permanent placement with a user company, agencies may charge the company a permanent placement fee so that the agency receive some monetary benefit on relinquishing the duties of mediator.

An examination of the agency's role as mediator provides some illustration of certain ambiguities within the three-way relationship of the temp. On the one hand, the agency wishes the temp to 'fit in' and to be acceptable to the user company. Temps are constrained by the agency in this, but they may also receive training provision in order to enhance their acceptability. On the other hand, the agency may stop short of full reconciliation between the temp
and the user company for the agency may wish to ensure that this does not disadvantage the agency. This also illustrates the duplicity of the agency's position, for despite adopting a mediating role, its self interest is apparent.

Greater emphasis was placed on secretarial/clerical temps than on other temps in this thesis. This may mean that what has been described here may not be wholly applicable to other kinds of temps, such as computer specialists. One thing, however, which all temps have in common is their triadic relationship within which they have the status of 'strangers' and 'outsiders'. It may well be, though, that computer programming temps do not experience stereotyping in the same manner that clerical temps do. This may be influenced by their different external labour market position where their bargaining power is greater than clerical temps (although it must be noted that in London the bargaining power of the secretarial/clerical temp may be significant (Casey 1987)). Computer programming temps may also have a different perception of an occupational identity, and they may be influenced by their prior occupation of primary labour market employment. It is now necessary to turn to an appraisal of the perspective used in this thesis to see how and whether such an approach may be feasible.

12.2 SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER WORK

There are two main strands to the approach used in this study, the first is the notion of triadic employment relationships, the second that of the 'stranger' operating within such an arrangement. This, I have argued, is the distinctive position of the temp. Furthermore, as I suggested in Chapter One, it is necessary to recognise the way in which this 'stranger' status is articulated within their three-way relationship before regarding temps from the perspective of dual labour market theory (Doeringer and Piore 1971, Barron and Norris 1976, Loveridge and Mok 1979, Berger and Piore 1980, Ryan 1981), or that of the flexibility model (Atkinson 1984a,b, 1985, Meager 1985, 1986, Atkinson and Meager 1986a,b,c), for the temp as an 'employee' of both agency and user company must be taken into account. Rubery and Wilkinson (1981) suggest that in assessing workers' status it is most useful to rely on perceptions of employers and outworkers, however, as this thesis has shown, there is a
third party to be taken into account when the temp is considered. This indicates that it is necessary to consider the temp's specific triadic relationship before applying it to a secondary labour market model, for where the user company and agency collude in tertius perdens as 'employers', this acts as a catalyst in helping the user company move into secondary employment. The importance of the agency has been noted in the 'flexibilisation' of labour (Berger and Piore 1980, Bull, Ornati and Tedeschi 1987). This thesis supports these assertions and provides evidence of a way in which to understand the way in which this process is taking place.

The concept of 'stranger' may be quite useful to apply in situations where a standard employee status may be difficult to decipher, as is the case with temps. It has already been shown that there is some legal confusion over the employment status of several kinds of workers (Leighton 1986, Napier 1986, Hakim 1987b). This has resulted in a number of different kinds of workers being deemed 'marginal' (Leighton 1986, Deakin 1986). For sociological purposes it may be more useful to apply the status of 'stranger' rather than marginality for, as Walsh (1990) has suggested, certain workers may perform a 'core' function, and to label them as marginal is to erroneously suggest a situation of non-productivity. Certainly, the 'stranger' is not new to the labour market (Caplow 1954), but it may need to be reinstated in the literature. Furthermore, it may be the case that a recognition of different kinds of triadic relationships and what these mean may also need to be inserted into the literature.

There may be examples of workers who are 'marginalised' and involved in triadic relationships which may entail their occupying 'stranger' status because they do not appear to 'belong'. This can influence their attitudes to work and an analysis of such can provide some explanation of how these workers view their work experience. One of the more obvious examples of such marginal workers would be other outworkers who would appear to have some affinity with the temps' situation and who deserve some attention here.

Outwork labour can be purchased in discrete and variable amounts (Rubery and Wilkinson 1981) which instantly implies the notion of time and the simple and explicit equation of time and money. Furthermore, outworkers are said to
be useful because of their ease in hiring and firing (Rubery and Wilkinson 1981), which indicates their status as 'strangers' and 'here today, gone tomorrow' (Simmel 1971:143). The putting out of labour, for example, involves production held by a central "employer merchant" (Child 1990:241) put out to physically dispersed workers. Putting out can involve networking arrangements (Child 1990, Murray 1990), subcontracting (Villa 1981, Moore 1981, Solinas 1990) and artisans (Villa 1981, Murray 1990, Solinas 1990). All of these involve a 'semi-permanent' relationship between firms (Murray 1990), or, as could also be argued, some kind of mobile and shifting relationship. Furthermore, these arrangements may also involve some notion of 'devolved' control (Leighton 1986), that is, some kind of three-way relationship where control operates through a mediator (in the form of an agent, subcontractor or 'ganger'). Indeed, Moore (1981) says that subcontracted workers in construction are in a dual dependent relationship; dependent upon the subcontractor for wages and upon the main contractor for the supply of work. Villa (1981) has also noted the existence of several different kinds of putting out arrangements, one of which involves a lump contract operating between a gang of workers formally employed by the subcontractor and the main contractor.

Homeworkers, another kind of outworker, may be involved in a type of triadic work relationship, as well. Rubery and Wilkinson (1981) have said that homeworkers may be organised by "middlemen" (1981:125) who operate as the intermediary between the homeworkers and the supplier of the work. The example of homeworking in manufacturing is interesting to examine in the light of how a triadic relationship different from that of the temp can operate. In this situation, the homeworkers may be mobile; moving in and out of the labour market as and when there is a supply of work (Ewing 1982, Leighton 1986, Hakim 1987a). They are physically isolated (Ewing 1982, Leighton 1983a, Hakim 1987a), yet their work may be central to the firm's productivity, indicating that their function is not necessarily marginal (Child 1990). Certainly, homeworkers could be seen as outsiders in a *tertius perdens* situation, the victim of collusion between the supplier and the agent. Unlike temps, however, homeworkers work outside the premises of the supplying factory and they may also provide their own tools of trade, such as sewing machines, for example (Leighton 1983a).
Solinas (1990) gives examples of homeworkers who move through the 'hierarchy' and occupy different positions within diverse triadic relationships. For example, homeworkers may become self-employed artisans, then artisan-employers and finally intermediaries between one or more firms and a group of homeworkers. This serves to illustrate the diversity of triadic relationships which may exist in the labour market and the different kinds of positions which may be occupied by an individual worker over time. In this example, the ex-homeworker becomes an intermediary and, as such, a 'visible' 'stranger' and traveller. As agents these intermediaries may be physically mobile and they may be perceived by both sides with whom they deal as rootless travellers. This situation is obviously quite different from that of the temp, indicating that the temp is not the only worker to occupy a triadic relationship within work, but also the temp is not the only type of 'stranger' to be found.

What this also shows is that defining workers as 'merely' peripheral, or secondary labour market workers, may obscure certain peculiarities of their situations. Some freelance workers, for example, may enjoy certain primary labour market benefits and attract a market demand for their skills which prevent their becoming fully secondary labour market members (Child 1990). They may have control over the execution of work and their working time, but are under the 'employer's' control for labour costs (Child 1990).

This does not mean that it is necessary to reject fully any notion of secondary labour market employment or the existence of a 'core' and a 'periphery'. Temps, as was shown in Chapter One, do exhibit certain characteristics of secondary labour market workers. Instability, for example, is a characteristic of both jobs and workers in the secondary labour market (Doeringer and Piore 1971). In the case of temps, however, their instability has a structural basis in their three-way relationship, and, following Barron and Norris's argument (1976), this instability becomes associated with them as individuals (as was shown in Chapter Nine). Furthermore, an 'employer' may have little or no incentive to train on the job if the labour force is unstable (Doeringer and Piore 1971). This was seen to be the case with temps (Chapters Six and Seven). What was significant about their situation, however, was the role played by both user company and agency. As was shown, many temps do not receive
training, but that because of the position taken by user company and agency (tertius perdens) the temp is losing out. In other words, temps may exhibit certain secondary labour market characteristics, but what is important about this is that the user company and agency as 'employers' may be assisting each other in their denial of responsibilities, and in gaining some flexibility. Indeed, as has been shown, the temp's three-way employment relationship is flexible, but there may be times when this flexibility is not very apparent (Chapters Six and Seven). As can be seen, therefore, to adopt a secondary labour market perspective, or to view temps from the approach of the 'flexible firm', it is necessary to understand that their situation is influenced by both agency and user company, and that the temp cannot be seen in isolation from either of these, nor from the position of just having one 'employer'. This means that having recognised the specifics of the temp's situation, it is possible to reinstate the notion of the triadic relationship and their status as 'strangers' within such models. Both of these 'employers' may view temps as unstable, but as was made clear in this thesis, this instability is structural.

While using the concept of triadic relationships with the status of the 'stranger', it is also necessary to assess the individual worker's bargaining power within the labour market. This may have consequences for the way in which workers perceive themselves and experience work. Chapter Nine showed how temps were involved in a process of self definition. As clerical workers, such temps may accept the label of being a temp. Clearly, other kinds of workers involved in triadic relationships may not necessarily do so. The increasing importance of the 'new' temp has been noted in the literature (Meager 1985). This 'new' temp is generally seen as the emerging 'professional' temp, such as the computer programmer working through an agency (mentioned earlier in this chapter). It may be that such 'new' temps reject the label of 'temp' because they do not see it as part of their occupational identity. The quantitative survey used in this research was not representative and it has already been noted that there were problems with questionnaire distribution (Chapter Three). This means that although this thesis presented a general model from which to view temps, there may be differences between different kinds of temps. Several 'new' temps may be involved in the external primary labour market (Child 1990), indicating that although they, like 'traditional' temps, are involved in certain kinds of mobility as 'strangers',

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their experience of this mobility may be very different, just as their experience of their own type of triadic relationship may be very different too.

It may also be the case that triadic relationships operate within firms and between firms in diverse ways having implications for different workers' experiences of work. An example was given in the literature of an advertising agency executive whose working (but not employment) relationship involved him in triads which operated across the boundaries of his own firm (Caplow 1968). This resulted in his employer's perception of him as disloyal and/or the fear that he might be disloyal because his relationship and ties with his clients could be quite strong. This account executive experienced work in a particular way influenced by his involvement in different kinds of triadic relationships. This could mean that he had access to certain power resources (his own company secrets, his client company secrets) which could be used in order to further his own ends. What this example indicates, is the way in which working relationships have a bearing on the experience of work and these must be taken into consideration when orientations to work are discussed (Goldthorpe et al. 1968, Brown et al. 1983), particularly when such relationships provide a definition of what work means for certain workers.

Future research could therefore consider and apply the perspective outlined in this thesis to different employment situations. If working relationships are diverse (Rubery and Wilkinson 1981, Leighton 1986), it may well be necessary to take account of these and reinstate their importance in the literature in order to understand what work means, and secondly, how triadic relationships interact with dual labour market theory and flexibility. It may therefore not merely be a case of stating that homeworkers are marginal, but a recognition of whom they are marginal to and how this is influenced by their position within a specific triadic relationship. The use of outworkers may entail the possibility of hiring and firing (Rubery and Wilkinson 1981), but this must be examined within the context of their working relationships and whether such mobility is consequent upon the collusion of two 'employers'.

Finally, I must end with a note on women workers. Most of the temps in this study were women (86.3% of temps in the quantitative survey, and 85.1% of temps in the qualitative survey). This is not surprising given the greater
numbers of women in temping (FPS 1975a, Parker and Sirker 1976, McNally 1979, Alfred Marks 1982)). Two points must be noted. First, women may occupy a position as strangers in the external labour market, given their greater likelihood to be mobile between the responsibilities of home and work. Secondly, their self perception as female temps may be different from that of male temps. This perception may influence their perception of their bargaining power in the external labour market, but it also raises the notion of the temp stereotypes, which as Chapter Nine showed, male temps may not be too keen to attribute to themselves (nor may they be as quickly stereotyped, either). Gender, therefore, is an important feature, which this thesis did not explicitly deal with. It has been noted that gender has been overlooked in the 'flexible firm' model (Beechey and Perkins 1987) and that women have different orientations to work than men (Martin and Roberts 1984). I would suggest that in the perspective used in this thesis, gender is obviously very important, but that, given the higher proportion of women in the research, it may be necessary to reformulate a position for male temps, and, as has been noted earlier, male professional temps. The experience of such temps may be very different from those of the more traditional female clerical/secretarial temps. This obviously raises an area to be explored in future research.
APPENDIX A - SAMPLE TERMS AND CONDITIONS OF EMPLOYMENT

SAMPLE AGENCY LIMITED

Employment Agencies Act 1973 - Licence Number Sample

Conditions of Employment (Temporary Workers)

Between Sample Agency Limited (hereinafter called the Contractor) and .................................................................................................................. (hereinafter called the Temporary Worker).

This contract for service commenced on (date) ...........................................................................

1. The Contractor agrees to offer to the Temporary Worker opportunities to work as a ........... job title .......... where there is a suitable assignment with a client for supply of such work. The Contractor reserves the right to offer any assignment to such temporary workers as it may elect where the assignment is suitable for several workers.

2. The Temporary Worker is under no obligation to accept such an offer but if s/he does so s/he owes to the Contractor as employer the normal common law duties of an employee as far as they are reasonable.

3. The Contractor should pay to the Temporary Worker wages calculated on a minimum hourly rate of ...... to be paid Friday (in arrears) the end of each working week subject to the deductions for the purposes of National Insurance PAYE or any other purpose for which an employer is by law required to make deductions.

4. The Temporary Worker should at all times when services are due to a Client comply with the following conditions:

(i) to be present during the time or for the total number of hours during each day and/or week as are required by the Contractor
(ii) to take all reasonable steps to safeguard her/his own safety and the safety of any other person who may be affected by her/his actions at work

(iii) to comply with all reasonable instructions and requests within the scope of the agreed services made either by the Contractor or the Client

5. There is no obligation by the Contractor to provide or the Temporary Worker to serve any normal number of hours in any day or week. In the event of the Temporary Worker declining to accept any offer of work for any period of the Contract, this should be considered not normally to involve work for such a period.

6. The Temporary Worker is not entitled under this Contract to secure payment from the Contractor for holidays (including statutory holidays) or absence due to sickness. The Contractor provides no pension rights.

7. The Contractor should be responsible for making all statutory deductions relating to earnings, related insurance and income tax under schedule E in accordance with the Finance Act (No. 2) 1975 and transmitting these to the Inland Revenue.

8. The Contractor and Temporary Worker agree that the nature of temporary work is such that there may be periods between assignments when no work is available.

9. The Contractor may instruct the Temporary Worker to end an assignment with a client at any time.

Date.................................. Applicant.................................. Manager..................................
APPENDIX B

INTERVIEW SCHEDULE FOR AGENCY REPRESENTATIVES

A. BACKGROUND

1. In what year was the agency established?
2. Would you like to tell me briefly about the organisation?
   Why was it established?
   Have there been any changes in the last few years?
   What changes, and why? (probe)
3. What is your official title?
4. When did you start working with this agency?
5. Have you worked with any other agencies?
   With whom?
   For how long?
   Did they differ from this one?
   In what ways?
6. Has this agency any formal policies as regards its working practices?
   For example do you deal with any one specific area of the labour market?
   If so, why?
   Do you have a limit on the numbers of temps that you register?
   Why/why not?
   Do you deal with particular kinds of occupations?
   Why/why not?
   Do you deal with any particular kind of user organisation?

B. USER ORGANISATIONS

1. How many user organisations do you have on your books at present
   (approximate number)?
2. Has this number altered significantly in the last few years?
3. Could you describe how you recruit new client organisations?
4. Have your methods of attracting business changed over the last few years?
   How?
   Why?
5. What kinds of user organisations do you look for?
   What specifications do you require from them?
   Working conditions? (probe)

B.1
6. What do your client organisations usually expect from you?
   What specifications do they require? (probe)
   Have their requirements changed over the last few years? For example,
   do they require more temps than before? Do they require temps for the
   same reasons?
   What reasons were they then?
   What reasons are they now?

7. Are there any grounds on which you would reject a user organisation?

8. Has a user organisation ever terminated an account with your agency?
   (probe)
   Any incidents of tension/conflict at all?
   How would you describe your relationship with your user organisations?

9. Do many of your temps get permanent jobs with your user organisations?
   Do you have a policy on this such as a placement fee?
   Has there been a move towards more temp-to-permanent placements in
   the last ten years?
   Do you think many clients use temps as possible recruits?
   Is it advantageous/disadvantageous for them to do so?
   List advantages and disadvantages (probe)

C. TEMPS

1. How many temps do you have on your books at present?
   Working this week?
   Do the numbers fluctuate seasonally?
   What is the ratio male:female?
   What is the occupational range?
   Are female and male temps in different occupations?
   Why is this?

2. How do you recruit your temps?
   Daily newspaper? (which)
   Specialist magazines? (which)
   Word of mouth?
   Advertisements in public places (tubes, buses)
   Radio and television advertising?
   Any other method?

3. What sort of people are you looking for?
   For what do you specifically advertise?
   Education?
   Skills?
   Training?
Past employment record/curriculum vitae?
Appearance?
Personality?
Anything else?

4. Have many of your temps been continuously with you for a long time?
   For example, for over one year?
   How many? (percentage)

5. Why do most of your temps do temp work?
   Male/female split?
   Long-term/short-term split? (probe)

6. What are your temps mainly concerned about in doing temp work?
   Office conditions?
   Respect as workers?
   Type of work?
   Job satisfaction?
   Career move?
   Is it "just a job" for them?
   Money?

7. What are the advantages of doing temp work?

8. What are the main disadvantages?

9. Are many looking for permanent jobs in the same field in which they are temping?
   Percentage/Proportion?
   Occupation?
   Female/male split, if any?
   Non-graduate/graduate division, if any?

10. Do you like your temps to stay in one place as long as possible, or do you mind their chopping and changing (probe)

11. What, would you say, makes a 'good' temp? (probe)
   Age
   Gender
   Nationality/ethnicity
   Skills
   Education
   Appearance
   Personality
   Attitude to work

12. On what grounds would you 'let go' or reject a temp? (probe)
13. Would you call yourself the employer of your temps (probe)

What do user organisations regard themselves? is there ever any conflict, do you think, between the agency and user organisation over employer status, or how is it worked out (probe) Would you fight for temps in a situation where they were up against a client? Or would you support the client? Any examples, have you ever done so? (probe)

14. Once a temp is on your books do you try to keep them with you?

15. What do you think is the cut-off point for long-term temps after which time it becomes very difficult for them to get a permanent job? (probe)

What is the effect of long-term temping on their CV? Do you think it ever becomes possible for a long-term temp to get a permanent job?

16. In your view is it preferable for temps to have specific training? WP, invoicing, data ledger...

Where do your temps get their training - formal courses which are financed by them, or is it gained on the job?

Does the agency provide any specific courses for temps?

If yes: - Why did you decide to provide them, was there a 'gap in the market?'

Are there any requirements made of temps who go on such courses? Such as length of service, commitment to stay for a particular length of time (probe)?

If no: - Do you see a need for providing courses?

In general do you see a need for training? How are temps to get such training? What about cross training with user organisations? (probe)

17. Do you tend to match the temp with what the organisation wants on a skill level, or is the question of whether the temp will fit in more important? (probe)

Have there been any problems with this?

18. Are there any problems that user organisations are particularly keen to avoid in using temps?

Competence of temps? Any examples of temps 'not up to scratch', why?

19. What is the attraction of your temps for user companies?
special qualifications, skills?
higher 'calibre' temp (describe)

20. What about temps' relations with permanent workers in the user organisation?

Are temps regarded as better workers or on a par with permanent workers? (probe)

21. Have you ever had any situations where a user organisation has been on strike?

If yes:
What about existing temps in that organisation, what did they do?
What did you advise?
What about providing extra temps?
What was your attitude in general?
What was the user organisation's?
Was there any conflict between temps and strikers?

If no:
What would you do in such a situation?
What do you think you would advise temps to do?
Would you provide extra temps to the user company if they wanted them?

What do you think would be the user company's attitude?
What about permanent workers', trade union's?
Have there ever been any incidents of trade union opposition?

22. Do you offer any benefits to attract temps?

Why/why not?
Do you see a need to do this in future?
Any distinction between long-term temps and short-term temps as regards benefits available?
Conditions of benefits available?

23. Have you heard about the EEC Directive on temporary work? It aims to give temps the same rights as permanent workers and make them less susceptible to insecure employment. How would you feel about this if it was implemented? (probe)

24. Finally any comments about temping in general?

Impact of unemployment?
Future of temping?
USER ORGANISATIONS' INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

1. Do you have any temps at present?
   How many approximately?
   How many permanent staff do you employ?
   What percentage of your staff are temps?

2. Do the majority of temps come from agencies or are they directly employed by you?
   Percentage from agency?
   Percentage directly employed?

3. What type of agencies do you use?
   General
   Secretarial
   Specialist - specify which kinds
   Why do you use different kinds?
   Does it depend on the job for which you require temps?
   From which type of agency do most of your temps come?
   Do you notice any differences between temps from different agencies?
   Could you explain?

4. Do you feel that agencies, in general, do a good job in fulfilling your needs?
   How do they achieve this?

5. For what sorts of reasons would you engage a temp?
   Holiday replacement
   Illness cover/maternity leave
   Special one-off project
   Cover while seeking permanent replacement
   Cover for extra work load and don't wish to recruit permanently
   While trying to decide if permanent position available
   Specialist expertise
   To recruit permanently
   Any other reasons

6. Why are you using temps at the moment? (probe)

7. Have you noticed any significant differences in the reasons for using temps over the last few years?
For example, has there been more of a move towards special one-off projects? Any other kinds of reasons (probe)

8. Has your use of temps increased or decreased over the last ten years? Why would you say this is?

9. What about future use? Where do you see your present use going?

10. Do you like using temps? Why/why not? Do they work well/not? General attitudes to work compared to permanent workers? Education? Commitment to the job? Appearance? Personality? Skills? Just a necessary evil? Would you prefer not to have to use temps or do you feel that there is a definite need for them? What do you see as the advantages of using temps? What are the disadvantages of using temps?

11. Training of temps:
What level of training do you require your temps to have? Should they be as well trained as your permanent workers? Do your temps receive their training from agencies?

If yes:
In your opinion, are temps adequately trained by agencies?

If no:
Have you ever trained any temps? Do you think training is the responsibility of the agency or of the user company? Why? Do you see any change to this in the future? For example, if your demand for temps changes in any way, will that necessitate a change in training requirements? Do you use temps in skilled positions? Do you like to use temps in skilled positions? Why?/Why not?

12. Flexibility and Adaptability of temps
Do you think temps are flexible? Could you define what you mean by flexibility, and how temps are flexible/or are not flexible (probe)? Are they more or less flexible than permanent workers (probe)?
Are they more or less adaptable than permanent workers?
In what ways?

13. Do you feel that you have more or less control over your temps than permanent workers?
Can you describe the control you have?
Do you feel that because of the agency's presence temps are only under your nominal control?
Is there ever any tension between the agency and yourselves over the control of temps?
Does it help to have the agency to control the temps?

14. Have you ever noticed any friction between temps and permanent staff?
Any incidents in the workplace? (probe)
What about differences in salary, training, induction, briefing, timekeeping? Do any of these cause tension between temps and permanent workers (probe)?
Any incidents of trade union opposition to usage of temps?
Any incidents of industrial action?
What would your attitude be to using temps during strikes?
Would you expect temps to come into work regardless of picket lines outside?
Is this official company policy?
What do you think would be the agency's view on this?
What do you think would be the temp's view on this?
Do you think that this is something individual pertaining to the temps as individuals?

15. Have you noticed the effect of unemployment on temps? Are there any different kinds of temps now who are temping due to redundancy, for example?

16. Do you use temps as a recruitment route for possible permanent staff?
Do you recruit many temps permanently?
Would you employ somebody who had a lot of temp work on their CV?
What would you see as the maximum period of temping after which a temp would become unsuitable for permanent employment?
Would you explain how you think they would be unsuitable?
Why do you think this is?
Do you think that long-term temps are less employable as permanent employees?
Why do you think this is?
Are long-term temps 'good' temps?
Could you define for me what a 'good' temp is?
Is a 'good' temp the same as a 'good' permanent worker? Or do you think there are different qualities in both (probe)?
What do you feel about older temps? Do you think that age is a factor in determining a 'good' temp?
What about the older long-term temp - how would you feel about employing such a temp permanently?

17. What would you think about the unionisation of temps?
Do you think that you would use temps less if they were unionised? Can you explain?
Have you heard about the EEC Directive on temporary work? It aims to give temps the same rights as permanent workers and make them less susceptible to insecure employment. How would you feel about this if this was implemented? (probe)

18. How would you describe a temp? Is it a certain type of person, worker?
   Can you explain?
.TEMPS' INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

1. When did you first start with your agency?

2. Could you give me a brief description of your work history up to that date?

   Ever done temporary work before?
   For how long?
   With whom?
   Your position?
   Why did you stop doing temporary work then?
   What differences have you noticed between present agency and former agency(ies)? 
   (probe)
   Have you ever held a permanent job?
   How many?
   Your position?
   For how long?
   Why did you leave?
   What differences have you noticed between permanent work and temping?

3. Could you give me a brief description of your work history with your present agency?

   What position do you start as?
   What is your position now?
   How long do your assignments usually last?
   What is the usual reason for a client's requiring your services?
   Have you ever walked out of a temporary job?

4. Have you ever been offered a permanent position in one of your temporary assignments?

   Why did you accept/not accept?

5. Is the work you are doing at present different from your normal type of work?

   How?
   Have you got any specific training?
   Are you trying to get into any particular area or field?

6. Why did you first start doing temporary work? (probe)

7. Why would you say you are doing temporary work now (probe)

   Are your reasons related to your specific background/training?

8. Would you say that you are doing temporary work because such work is there or because there is no permanent work available?

   Explain (probe)
9. If offered a permanent job in your present assignment tomorrow would you take it?

Why/why not?

10. Would you like a permanent job?

When
As
How actively are you seeking permanent work?
Do you think that temping is a trap, and that the more you do temporary work the more remote your chance of getting a permanent job become (probe)

Typists:
Do you think that word processing and typing are channelling you for certain jobs and away from other areas in which you may be interested/qualified?

11. Do you like to change jobs frequently?

Is this an asset of temporary work?
Would you miss it if offered a permanent job tomorrow?

12. How important is money? (probe)

13. How important is flexibility? (probe and define)

14. What do you like most about temporary work and would miss if you took a permanent job? (probe)

15. What do you like least about temporary work and would not miss at all if you took a permanent job? (probe)

16. What do you think you would like most about permanent work? (probe)

17. What would you like least? (probe)

18. Do you like temping?

Why/why not (probe)

19. Have you found that the more you do temporary work the more you identify with the whole status of being a temporary worker?

For example, when you first started doing temporary work how did you feel about it, was it just purely or mainly a stop-gap measure? (probe)
Is it still one, or do you feel that you have changed? (probe)
Could you define for me what a temp is? (probe)
Did you, therefore, choose to temp at first?
To what extent are you choosing now? (probe)

20. Have you ever been unemployed?

B.11
Has temping in any way allayed a fear of unemployment or do you have such a fear?
Has the insecurity of temping ever been a problem?

21. Do you have any specific training?
   Where did you get this training?
   Has the agency ever offered any help towards training or offered any courses?
   What about user companies?
   Have you picked up any training in temp jobs and can you give details?

22. Do you think it would be good idea if temps were unionised?
   Do you think it would be feasible?
   What do you think it would achieve?
   What do you think would be the agency's view?
   What do you think would be the user company's view?

23. Do you think that permanent employees are less adaptable than temps?
   Can you explain?
   Do user companies usually spend a long time in briefing you or in your induction into the company?
   Have you ever noticed any significant difference in the way that new permanent employees are briefed from the way that new temps are briefed? (probe)

24. How are relations generally with permanent colleagues?
   Is there a lot of socialising?
   Do they ever treat you as 'just a temp'?
   Can you explain what this is, and how it manifests itself?
   Do they ever say that you are wasting your time temping? Why?
   Is there ever any resentment of temps? Why?
   What about management's reaction?

25. What would you do if the user company in which you are now working went on strike tomorrow?

   What would you do if the agency sent you to a user organisation that was on strike?
   Has this ever happened (probe)?
   What do you think would be the agency's reaction in such a situation?
   What do you think their attitude is to trade unions in general?
   Has there ever been any trade union opposition to temps in your experience?

26. How are relations generally with the agency?
   Is it better, do you think, to be with an agency than to be freelance? Why?
   Why this agency?
Does this agency maintain close contact with you?
What sorts of conditions and benefits does it offer?
Which do you feel you are judged on with this agency, is it your
suitability (qualifications and skills) or your acceptability? (Probe)
What about the user companies to which you are sent do either of these
matter much? (Probe)

27. Of whom do you feel you are an employee - the agency or user company?
Neither? Why? (probe)

28. Where do you think the future lies of temping?
And your future - does it lie in temping, or do you want to leave temp
work as soon as possible? Why?

29. Have you any further comments to make on this study? Any other
incidents to relate which you think might be of interest to this study?
TEMPORARY WORKERS IN THE LABOUR MARKET

QUESTIONNAIRE

Freda Donoghue
Department of Sociology
Ph. 0533 522522

This questionnaire is about your working life as a temp. I am a post-graduate student with the University of Leicester carrying out a survey on temporary workers. I would be very grateful if you would complete this questionnaires as fully as possible.

ALL INFORMATION GIVEN IN THIS QUESTIONNAIRE WILL BE TREATED AS COMPLETELY CONFIDENTIAL

If you would be willing to participate in a follow-up interview, would you please give your name and a phone number on which you can be contacted.

Name__________________________

Phone  Number________________
A.

1. Sex: M___ F___
2. Age___
3. Nationality_______________
4. Marital Status: Single___ Married___ Divorced___ Widowed___
5. Children: Yes___ No___
6. EDUCATION
   a) How Many Year Obtained
      CSE/Equivalent________________________
      'O' Levels/Equivalent_____________________
      'A' Levels/Equivalent_____________________
   b) Degree(s) Year Obtained
      ________________________________
      Prof/Tech qualification
      ________________________________
7. What is your present job____________
8. a) Is this different from your usual type of work? Yes___ No___
     b) If your answer is yes, what is your usual type of work?
      ________________________________
9. When did you start a) doing temporary work (date)____________
    b) with your present agency
10. How long have you been on your present assignment?
    1 week__2-4 weeks__ 1-3 months__ 3-6 months__ 6+ months__
11. How long has been your longest assignment ever?
    1-3 mths__ 3-6 mths__ 6-9 mths__ 9-12 mths__ 1+ years__

B.15
12 a) Are there usually periods of no work between assignments?
   Yes__ No__

   b) If yes, can you give the approximate duration of these periods?
      _____ week(s)

13 How many assignments have you had in the last year?
   1__  2-4__  5-7__  8-10__  10+__

14 Why are you required on your PRESENT assignment? (please tick one box only)
   Company looking for permanent replacement [ ]
   Company does not wish to have a permanent replacement [ ]
   Special 'one-off' project [ ]
   Permanent person on holiday [ ]
   Permanent person ill [ ]
   Permanent person on maternity leave [ ]
   Other (please state)______________________________

B.

1 Please list in order of importance (1-10) the reasons for FIRST starting temping:
   Inability to find permanent job [ ]
   Money while applying for perm jobs [ ]
   Money to supplement other career [ ]
   Job experience to further career [ ]
   Personal or domestic commitments [ ]
   Freedom to change jobs [ ]
   Freedom to take time off [ ]
   Flexibility of hours [ ]
   Other (please specify)______________________________
2. Please list in order of importance (1-10) the reasons for NOW doing temping:

- Inability to find permanent job [ ]
- Money while applying for perm jobs [ ]
- Money to supplement other career [ ]
- Job experience to further career [ ]
- Personal or domestic commitments [ ]
- Freedom to change jobs [ ]
- Freedom to take time off [ ]
- Flexibility of hours [ ]
- Other (please specify) 

3. Please list in order of importance (1-9) the criteria you would look for in a TEMPORARY job:

- Fulfilment/job satisfaction [ ]
- Respect as a worker [ ]
- Interesting work [ ]
- Job experience [ ]
- Freedom to change jobs [ ]
- Freedom to take time off [ ]
- Flexibility of hours [ ]
- Money [ ]
- Other (please specify) 

B.17
4 Please list in order of importance (1-9) the criteria you would look for in a PERMANENT job:

Fulfilment/job satisfaction [ ]
Respect as a worker [ ]
Interesting work [ ]
Job experience [ ]
Freedom to change jobs [ ]
Freedom to take time off [ ]
Flexibility of hours [ ]
Money [ ]
Other (please specify)_____________________

5 Were you ever unemployed in the period prior to becoming a temp? Yes__ No__

6. In your case, is POSSIBLE unemployment a factor in choosing to temp? Yes__ No__

7 How long do you EXPECT to continue with temporary work?
Several weeks [ ] Several months [ ] Several years [ ]
No specific length of time [ ]

8 How long would you LIKE to continue with temporary work?
Several weeks [ ] Several months [ ] Several years [ ]
No specific length of time [ ]

9. Would you accept your present temporary assignment as a permanent post if offered it tomorrow? Yes__ No__

10 Do you have any training for a specific job that helped you get temporary work? Yes__ No__
11 If yes to Q.10, where did you get this training (please tick all of the relevant answers)

- Self-financed course
- State-financed course
- Agency-financed course
- Course financed by previous employment
- Picked up in permanent job
- Picked up in temporary job

C

1. How many hours on average do you work per week?
   - Less than 16
   - 16-30
   - 30-34
   - 35+

2. When starting new assignments how long a briefing are you usually given by the firm?
   - 5-15 mins
   - 30 mins
   - 1-2 hrs
   - More than 2 hrs

3. What is the usual reaction by permanent staff to temps? (Please state whether the following are true or false in your case)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>T</th>
<th>F</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>'Just another temp'</td>
<td>[ ]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Some negative feelings because temps earn more</td>
<td>[ ]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Temps have higher status than permanent workers</td>
<td>[ ]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Temps have lower status than permanent workers</td>
<td>[ ]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Negative feelings because temps not part of trade union</td>
<td>[ ]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friendship and acceptance by permanent workers</td>
<td>[ ]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tendency by management not directly supervising temps to ignore them</td>
<td>[ ]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other (please specify)</td>
<td>[ ]</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

B.19
4 Are you usually included with permanent staff in  

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Staff gatherings</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Birthday celebrations</td>
<td>[]</td>
<td>[]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lunchtime socialising</td>
<td>[]</td>
<td>[]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>After-work socialising</td>
<td>[]</td>
<td>[]</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

5 Do you usually get higher wages than permanent colleagues?  
Yes__ No__

6. a) Please tick which of the following paid benefits you receive from your agency?  

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Bank holidays</th>
<th>Annual holidays</th>
<th>Christmas</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>[]</td>
<td>[]</td>
<td>[]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Easter</td>
<td>Sickness</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[]</td>
<td>[]</td>
<td>[]</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

b) Are any of the above important in your choosing to work for an agency rather than freelancing as a temporary? Yes__ No__

c) If yes to b), which___________________________

7. How close contact does your agency maintain with you (please tick all that apply)  

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Informal chats every week</th>
<th>Meet every 1-4 weeks</th>
<th>Regular phone calls to ensure everything okay</th>
<th>Other (please specify)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>[]</td>
<td>[]</td>
<td>[]</td>
<td>[]</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

8. Do you REGARD yourself as: (please tick one of the following)  

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Employee of user company</th>
<th>Employee of agency</th>
<th>Employee of both agency and user company</th>
<th>Other (please specify)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>[]</td>
<td>[]</td>
<td>[]</td>
<td>[]</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

B.20
If you have any further comments I would be grateful if you would use the space below.

Thank you for your co-operation

Freda Donoghue
University of Leicester
APPENDIX C - BACKGROUND AND PROFILE OF PARTICIPANTS IN THE RESEARCH

C.1 AGENCIES

C.1.1 Graduates I

This agency was established in 1960 and at the time of interview dealt almost exclusively with graduate temps and exclusively with non-commercial user organisations such as universities and charities. The director was interviewed in May 1987 and at the time had over 100 temps, approximately 10% of whom were male, and 15% of whom had been with the agency for over one year. She had approximately 30 user companies on file. Most jobs were secretarial and any clerical jobs that existed involved keyboard skills. No training was offered to temps and those with word processing training were preferred. Weekly advertisements were placed in a national daily newspaper. The director said, however, that word of mouth was a very successful method in finding temps. No benefits for holidays were paid, but long-term temps (those with the agency for one year or more) did receive a small cash bonus at Christmas, Easter, bank and annual holidays.

C.1.2 Secretarial I

A director of this agency was interviewed in July 1987. Secretarial I had two branch offices, one in the West End of London and the other in the City. Established in 1977 it also had two subsidiary companies at the time of interview for those temps who were considered less 'director level' than the ones in this agency. There were over 200 temps registered although only about 120 were working in the week of the interview. 10% of temps had been with the agency for over one year. This agency had over 100 user companies and advertised in a national daily. They had just completed an advertising campaign on the London Underground, at the time of interview. There was some seasonal fluctuation in demand for temps, the director said, with peak demand in holiday times (summer and skiing months in winter). A minimum of 60 words per minute typing and 100 words per minute shorthand were
required, coupled with at least two years' director-level experience in London or a "comparable capital city". For every 750 hours worked the temporary worker received a £200 holiday bonus. Cross training on other word processing systems was offered but basic training was not.

C.1.3 Accountancy 1

An agency representative was interviewed in July 1987. This agency was the temporary division of an American-based company with offices throughout England. The City of London office had been established in 1980. Accounts-related temps were supplied ranging from filing clerks to financial directors. There were about 500 user companies who would use their services over a six-month period and these ranged from major retail companies, soft drinks companies, computer companies, to banks and stockbrokers. Approximately 60 user companies required temps every week. There were about 250 temps on file, but only approximately 80 worked in any one week. Advertising was done in free magazines, particularly Australasian magazines because Australian and New Zealand temps were preferred. As there was no testing of temps, references were taken up with previous employers. 20% of the temps had been with the agency for over one year. The distribution tended to be two-thirds male to one-third female with male temps being sent on higher-skilled assignments because they tended to more highly qualified.

C1.4 Graduates 2

This agency representative was interviewed in September 1987. Established in 1962 the agency was based in the West End of London and was composed of five divisions - accountancy, sales, media, public relations and temporary. The temporary division had about 75 user companies with about 50 requiring temps each week. 90% of the temps were graduates. Most assignments were secretarial and clerical. About 20% of the temps had been with the agency for over one year. There were between seven and ten male temps and these tended to do clerical work rather than secretarial work. Advertising was placed in two national daily newspapers and the free Australasian magazines.

C.2
There were no benefits nor any training offered. Cross training was negotiated with the user company if it was required.

C.1.5 General 1

One of this agency's directors was interviewed in September 1987. This was one of the longest established High Street agencies and was established in 1946. Prior to the interview it had been taken over by a large American company. It had an unspecified number of clients and an unspecified number of temps and there were branch offices throughout London and Britain. All temps were tested depending on the type of assignment available. Assignments ranged from filing clerk to office supervisors. Basic training and cross training were offered. It was preferable if temps were trained before working with this agency, even though basic training was offered, as such training was expensive and there had to be some guarantee that this was not going to be wasted. Paid benefits were offered such as bank holidays, Christmas, Easter and annual holidays. This was offered as part of a scheme where a lower hourly rate was available. The temps therefore had a choice between a lower hourly rate with benefits payable after a certain number of hours, or a higher hourly rate with no benefits. According to the director there was less seasonal fluctuation than formerly and she said that she had noted movement towards more planned use of temps. This agency was one of the parties behind the Employment Agencies Act (1973).

C.1.6 Accountancy 2

Established in 1983, its director was interviewed in February 1988. It was based in the City and provided accountancy staff from filing clerks to financial controllers. Most temps were filling credit control assignments. There were approximately 80 temps and approximately 100 user companies. No benefits nor any training were offered.
C.1.7 Accountancy 3

An agency representative was interviewed in February 1988. This agency was established in 1977 and was based in Holborn. There were approximately 20 temps (this was a small division of a permanent placement agency). Most assignments were in credit or budget control. There were approximately 40 user companies. No benefits nor training were offered.

C.1.8 Accountancy 4

This agency was established in 1986 and an agency representative was interviewed in February 1988. This agency was quite a small subsidiary of a larger organisation based in London. Most assignments were for positions such as credit controller or budget control to filing clerks. The agency tended to specialise in advertising and publishing. There were approximately 50 user companies using the agency in the week of interview and 50 temps. No benefits nor training were offered.

C.1.9 Accountancy 5

A large agency with branches throughout London and the rest of Britain, the manager of this branch was interviewed in February 1988. Established in the late 1960s it was a well known as an accountancy agency. "Hundreds" of temps and user companies were on file, but no specified numbers were given. No benefits nor training were offered.

C.1.10 Secretarial 2

Secretarial 2 was established in 1967 to provide temp secretaries to architects and the building trade. There were approximately 20 temps at the time of interviewing its temporary controller in February 1988. The user companies amounted to approximately 40 and they used the agency for both permanent and temporary placements. No training nor benefits were offered.
C.1.11 Professional 1

Established in 1987 to provide specialist expertise in architecture, this was the "professional" side of Secretarial 2 agency and its director was interviewed in February 1988. Most of the placements were permanent with only four temps at the time of interview. Like Secretarial 2 no benefits were offered.

C.1.12 General 2

This agency was established in 1984 and its temporary controller was interviewed in February 1988. It had approximately 80 temps and approximately 30-40 user companies in the week of interview. There were a few male temps (less than 10% of temps). This agency was one of the first, the controller claimed, to provide training for its temps. It had an agreement with a nearby college to provide basic word processing and computer courses. Temps trained had to provide an undertaking that they would stay with the agency for a particular length of time on completion of the course. The temporary controller said that this was in order for the agency to ensure it did not waste any money in training temps. Temps were only sent on such courses (usually lasting from two days to one week in length) provided there were suitable assignments in which they could be placed on afterwards.

C.1.13 Secretarial 3

The founding director of this agency was interviewed February 1988. Established in 1984 this agency was based in the West End. There were 80-100 temps and 92 user companies. No benefits were paid. Nor was any training given. Secretarial 3 was involved in an inter-agency agreement whereby surplus assignments were passed out of the agency and onto other agencies in the group. Secretarial 4 was also involved in a similar, if not the same, operation. The temps were mostly female although there were a few male secretaries (less than 5%).

C.5
C.1.14 Secretarial 4

The founding director of this agency was interviewed March 1988. It was established by a former temp secretary in 1970 and operated from the West End. Most assignments were secretarial and clerical although there were a few computer assignments which were carried out by the one computer programmer on the register. There were approximately 300 temps, with approximately 250 user companies. Training courses were provided for some temps and some commitment to stay was required from those temps (like General 2 above).

C.1.15 General 3

One of its founding directors was interviewed in March 1988. This was a large agency with 400 temps and several branch offices. The assignments were mainly secretarial and clerical, with some accounting and computing positions. There were about 300-350 user companies although the exact number was not specified.

C.1.16 Medical 1

Interviewed in March 1988, its founding director established this agency in 1954 and specialised in medical appointments. These positions ranged from physiotherapists and pharmacists through to medical secretaries and filing clerks, but did not include nurses. There were about 200 temps in the London area servicing both NHS and private hospitals. An ex-medical secretary herself, the director had about 200 user organisations on file.

C.1.17 Medical 2

Established in 1984 the temporary controller of the medical secretaries' division was interviewed in March 1988. There were a few hundred temps
ranging from nursing, pharmacy, physiotherapy and medical secretarial and clerical. It was composed of different divisions for the different types of temps. Both NHS and privately-run hospitals used this agency.

C.1.18 General 4

This was a branch office of a large agency with branches throughout the UK. A temporary controller was interviewed in its main West Midlands branch and questionnaires were distributed in February 1989. There were over 100 temps and an unspecified number of user companies at the time of interview. No training nor benefits were given. The assignments ranged from drivers and warehouse packers to secretarial positions.

C.1.19 General 5

This was a subsidiary agency of General 6 below and was based in the West Midlands. This agency was mainly concerned with clerical and secretarial assignments. Questionnaires were distributed and the agency representative was interviewed in March 1989. At the time of interview there were 250 temps registered and an unspecified number of user companies. No training nor benefits were offered to temps.

C.1.20 General 6

This was a branch office of a large agency with branches throughout the Midlands. A representative from one of its West Midlands branches was interviewed and questionnaires distributed. There were over 100 temps and "many" user companies. No training nor benefits were offered to temps. Assignments ranged from secretarial and clerical to industrial such as drivers and cleaners with most assignments being secretarial and clerical.

C.7
C.2 USER COMPANIES

Representatives from three oil companies were interviewed and another oil company representative was sent a user company questionnaire. Generally temps were used when a project was getting under way. As the project reached its peak and was starting to wind down temps were laid off. In the offices secretarial and clerical temps were used. "Contract" workers were used in offshore projects and these had a similar type of arrangement as the office temps being involved in a three-way relationship, paid by the agency and supervised by the oil companies. Oil 1 had a particular relationship with General 3 agency above in its attempt to provide continuity among the temps it used. General 3 had a representative permanently on the premises of Oil 1 and this representative was the liaison point for temps for the whole company.

Personnel representatives from three media companies were interviewed in February and March 1988, and another was sent a user company questionnaire. The three media companies included two national television stations and one newspaper company. All used temps, usually in secretarial, clerical and accountancy positions. The use of temps had increased in Media 1 and Media 2 since the late 1970s. Media 3 had decreased its use.

Personnel representatives from two finance companies were interviewed in March 1988. One organisation was a stockbrokers, the other was a merchant bank. Both organisations had reduced the numbers of their temps and the personnel representatives said that Black Monday (October 1987) was a major factor in their decreased use. Secretarial and clerical agency workers were the main temps used.

Personnel representatives from three hospitals were interviewed, one in November 1987, the other two in March 1988. The lack of adequate funding was mentioned as a reason for using temps and their inability to successfully compete with other organisations to attract permanent staff. All the hospitals had increased their use of temps in the past ten years prior to interview. The types of temps ranged from nurses, secretarial, clerical, general administration to physiotherapists, pharmacists, porters and cleaning staff.
Personnel managers from four universities were interviewed and one representative from a polytechnic was sent a user company questionnaire. Like the hospitals in the fieldwork, the universities were using tems to provide cover while seeking permanent replacements. They also had a problem attracting permanent staff because of their low salaries. All the personnel representatives reported an increase in the use of tems and an increase in the length of assignments. Positions ranged from accounting and administration to secretarial and clerical.
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