

920  
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# The Occupational Achievement Process of Farm-Reared Youth in Urban-Industrial Society

The present paper, based on data from farm boys in a highly urban-industrial region with excellent educational facilities, is an attempt to infer a valid explanation for the farm-planner's low levels of educational and occupational aspiration and to explain differential plans regarding farming. The explanation inferred holds that farming is the normal occupational self-conception of farm-reared boys. This normal self-conception may be abandoned if the boy has an unusually self-reliant and inquisitive personality, if his parents are deviants in that they want him to be mobile, or if he perceives farming as inaccessible. If he develops a self-conception of non-farmer he will tend to utilize the information available in the area to develop the higher levels of aspiration needed for successfully entering urban work; if his self-conception remains that of farmer he will tend not to utilize the information. Thus those wishing to increase the levels of occupational achievement of farm-reared youth should attempt to modify the boy's expectation that he will be a farmer.

The findings may be useful for agriculture in other urban-industrial societies and, with modifications, in other types of societies. But before this conclusion is reached, the explanation should be retested.

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ONE of the great problems of our age concerns the remolding of agricultural populations into effective urban work forces. Most European

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nations have confronted this problem and still confront it to some degree even today. The problem is even more important for the economically deprived nations now trying to increase their productive capacity. Altogether, the problem involves drastic shifts in the typical life orientations of many millions of people. Given a change of such magnitude, it is to be expected that the sociologist would have at his command a large amount of verified knowledge concerning the social and psychological conditions under which rural youth enter the urban occupational world. In fact, however, such data appear to be limited. There appear to be no published quantitative sociological or social psychological analyses of differential levels of occupational achievement among rural people moving into cities outside of the West, and there are only a few such even in the West. For the most part even these tell us only that the farm-reared person tends to enter the urban labor force at a low level and to stay there.<sup>1</sup> Almost none of these data provide sociological explanations for the phenomenon they describe, but there are exceptions.

Lipset has tried to provide an explanation for the low occupational levels of the rural people in his sample of persons employed in the San Francisco Bay area of the United States. He notes the general lack of educational facilities and limited occupational differentiation in rural areas, and argues that these restrict the rural youth's range of knowledge, thus resulting in low levels of educational and occupational aspiration. It is the low levels of aspiration which he believes produce the low levels of achievement which he and others have observed. Unfortunately Lipset provides no data for the details of his argument.<sup>2</sup>

Recently, social psychologists at the University of Wisconsin and Michigan State University have attempted to state Lipset's explanation in testable form and to employ it if possible among farm people of the industrial North Central region of the United States. The resulting studies have been conducted mostly among farm and nonfarm people in the rural hinterland of our great industrial centers of Milwaukee and Detroit, sites which were chosen so as to learn about the

<sup>1</sup>Otto Ammon, *Die Gesellschaftsordnung und ihre natürlichen Grundlagen* (Jena: Verlag von Gustav Fischer, 1895), p. 145. See also Pitirim Sorokin, *Social Mobility* (New York: Harper, 1927), p. 144 ff. and p. 451, and Pitirim A. Sorokin, Carl C. Zimmerman, and Charles C. Galpin, *A Systematic Source Book in Rural Sociology*, III (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1932), p. 531; Howard W. Beers and Catherine Heflin, *Rural People in the City* (University of Kentucky Agr. Expt. Sta. Bull. 478; Lexington, 1945); Gunnar Boalt, "Social Mobility in Stockholm," *Transactions of the Second World Congress of Sociology II* (London: International Sociological Association, 1954), pp. 67-73; Seymour Martin Lipset, "Social Mobility and Urbanization," *Rural Sociology*, 20 (1955), 220-228; Ronald Freedman and Deborah Freedman, "Farm-Reared Elements in the Nonfarm Population," *Rural Sociology*, 21 (1956), 50-61.

<sup>2</sup>Lipset, *op. cit.*

occupational behavior of farm-reared youth who live within the zone of influence of some of the most highly urbanized areas of the world.<sup>3</sup> Naturally this restriction prohibits immediate generalization to societies in other stages of industrialization, but the studies still may help us guess what may be in store for some of these societies in the future. One of these, a longitudinal study, shows one segment of Lipset's explanation to be at least partly correct. Levels of educational and occupational aspiration are positively correlated with levels of educational and occupational achievement.<sup>4</sup> But other studies show that the main part of his explanation, holding that the limited educational and occupational alternatives supposedly characterizing rural society result in low levels of aspiration for the rural youth, does not hold at all in the test areas. In Wisconsin in 1948, the main apparent relation of farm residence to levels of educational aspiration has been shown to be mostly due to the presence among the farm-reared of a large group who plan to farm.<sup>5</sup> Essentially the same phenomenon has been noted in a Detroit area test site where the presence among the farm-reared of a large group who plan to farm accounts for all of the apparent relation of farm residence to levels of occupational aspiration.<sup>6</sup> Research has shown this relationship to be more complex than had been thought. For this reason, it has become evident that a detailed analysis is needed of the relation of farm plans, personality, and social structural influences on levels of educational and occupational aspiration. Such an analysis should tell us the points in the personality system or social system where changes may be most effectively inserted.

The purpose of this paper is to show the results of an exploratory study which may provide the needed empirically accurate explanation. More precisely, it is the purpose of this paper to present a plausible explanation for the influence of farm plans on levels of educational and occupational aspiration which can also account for the development of the farm plan itself. Since this explanation is for the most part inferred from data rather than derived directly from theory, it

\*A. O. Haller, "The Influence of Planning to Enter Farming on Plans to Attend College," *Rural Sociology*, 22 (1957), 137-144; A. O. Haller, "Research Problems on the Occupational Achievement Levels of Farm-Reared People," *Rural Sociology*, 23 (1958), 355-362; A. O. Haller and W. H. Sewell, "Farm Residence and Levels of Educational and Occupational Aspiration," *American Journal of Sociology*, 62 (1957), 407-411.

\*William H. Sewell and A. O. Haller, unpublished data on file at the University of Wisconsin Department of Rural Sociology.

\*One study (Haller and Sewell, *op. cit.*) shows that there is no significant difference in the levels of educational aspiration of nonfarm boys and farm boys who do not plan to farm. Another (A. O. Haller, "The Influence of Planning to Enter Farming on Plans to Attend College," *loc. cit.*) shows that among farm boys, levels of educational aspiration are significantly associated with plans regarding farming.

\*A. O. Haller, "Research Problems on the Occupational Achievement Levels of Farm-Reared People," *loc. cit.*

must be considered tentative. In any case, it applies only to the relatively literate rural people of highly urbanized industrial areas. Clearly, then, it needs to be tested under similar conditions elsewhere, and to be reformulated for use in economically deprived societies.

#### DATA

*Subjects and site:* Data for the study were provided by the 109 seventeen-year-old farm boys in school in Lenawee County, Michigan, during the spring of 1957. These boys constitute about 70 per cent of the total age group. The others were no longer in school, but it is doubtful that their absence changes the conclusions substantially. Lenawee County is rich in agriculture and in light industry. Its farmers are independent operators, specializing in dairying, corn raising, beef-feeding, and the like, for sale on the national and international market. Many of them, about one-half of the fathers of the boys in the present sample, have nonfarm occupations in addition to their farmwork. The geographic, administrative, and trade center of the county is a city of 20,000 residents; in addition, the county contains a few satellite villages and towns. The farm, rural nonfarm, and urban populations are approximately equal in number. The county has a full range of American social class levels, including a few wealthy families, a number of families of professionals as well as the families of clerical, skilled and semi-skilled workers, and of course a number of farm families. There are four universities and some smaller colleges within the county or nearby, and excellent highways provide ready access to them from all points in the county. Moreover, it has full coverage by means of radio, television, and newspapers. It was this set of factors, plus the proximity of Detroit's complex occupational structure and its own diversified occupational structure, which dictated the selection of Lenawee County as the research site. This provides an environment for youth which, though agricultural, is nevertheless rich in its potential for imparting to them the detailed knowledge of the urban-industrial occupational world which Lipset believes produces high levels of educational and occupational aspiration.

*Data:* The data consist of school records and responses to standardized tests and questionnaires administered by trained social psychologists and filled out by the students in school.

The *Occupational Aspiration Scale* (OAS) is a multiple-item forced-choice instrument designed to measure the youth's general social prestige level of occupational aspiration.<sup>7</sup> It is based on the NORC study

<sup>7</sup>A. O. Haller, *Occupational Aspiration Scale* (East Lansing: Michigan State University, 1957). This and all other test instruments and coding keys used in the paper, as well as copies of publications and papers based on the same general data, are available on interlibrary loan from the Michigan State University Library using the following citation: A. O. Haller, comp., *Basic Data For the Lenawee County Project*

of prestige of occupations in the United States<sup>8</sup> and has a range of 0 to 72 points, with a median of 35 points. The *16 P-F Test* (16 P-F T) is an instrument designed to measure the sixteen orthogonal dimensions of personality which have been derived empirically by R. B. Cattell and his co-workers.<sup>9</sup> The *MSU Work Belief Check-List* (WBC-L) is still another instrument used.<sup>10</sup> It is designed to measure six different areas of belief, each of which has been hypothesized as affecting ability to adapt successfully to the conditions of urban economic life. They include such areas as attitude toward change and attitude toward migrating. The *Test of G-Culture Free* (CFIQT), a measure of general intelligence, is another form used.<sup>11</sup> It is used to measure the reasoning ability presumably necessary for adequate performance in urban-industrial society. Pretested questionnaires, called *Occupational Plans of Michigan Youth* (OPMY) and *Educational Needs of Farm Boys* (ENFB) were used to elicit information about the youths' future plans, their beliefs about education, family, attitudes, background, and related matters.<sup>12</sup> The final datum, scholastic achievement level, is measured by grades in school in 1956-1957, and was taken from school records.

*Method:* This study is intended to derive new hypotheses to replace the previous ones which have been found to be inadequate. For this reason, it uses methods of exploration rather than derivation and tests of hypotheses. In general, the method is to compare personalities, social contexts, and educational and occupational orientations of those who plan to farm with those who do not plan to farm. Standard two-tailed tests of significance are used to decide whether or not those who plan to farm differ from those who do not. This procedure yields two groups of variables, those related to the plan regarding farming and those not related to it. The final tentative explanation for the relation of planning to farm to low levels of educational and occupational aspiration and for differential plans regarding farming is an interpretation of the variables found to be related and unrelated to plans regarding farming.

*in Social Structure and Personality* (unpublished). Also see I. W. Miller, Jr., "Normalized Data for the O.A.S. Raw Scores" (East Lansing: Social Research Service, Michigan State University, Apr., 1958 [mimeo.]).

<sup>8</sup>National Opinion Research Center, "Jobs and Occupation: A Popular Evaluation," *Opinion News* (September, 1947), pp. 3-13.

<sup>9</sup>R. B. Cattell, *The 16 P. F. Test, Form B* (Champaign, Ill.: Institute for Personality and Ability Testing, 1950).

<sup>10</sup>A. O. Haller, *The MSU Work Beliefs Check-List* (East Lansing: Department of Sociology and Anthropology, Michigan State University, 1957).

<sup>11</sup>R. B. Cattell and A. K. S. Cattell, *Test of G-Culture Free-Scale 3A* (Champaign, Ill.: Institute for Personality and Ability Testing, 1950).

<sup>12</sup>The first of these questionnaires includes a socioeconomic status scale which is a slight modification of W. H. Sewell, "A Short Form of the Farm Family Socio-Economic Status Scale," *Rural Sociology*, 8 (1943), 161-170.

## RESULTS

Summaries of the statistical analysis are presented as follows. As the section called *Personality Variables and Plans Regarding Farming as a Vocation* indicates, the Lenawee County farm boy who plans to farm tends to lack ego strength and to be emotionally unstable, to be withdrawn or shy and timid, to lack resolution, and to lack will control and character stability. On the other hand, the boy who does not plan to farm tends to be emotionally stable, to be adventurously resilient, to be independent or self-sufficient, and to have firm will control and character stability. None of the other personality factors significantly discriminate between those who do and do not plan to farm.

## PERSONALITY VARIABLES AND PLANS REGARDING FARMING AS A VOCATION\*

*Related*

Emotional stability or ego strength (NF) *versus* dissatisfied emotionality (F). 16 P-F T.

Adventurous autonomic resilience (NF) *versus* inherent withdrawn schizothymia (F). 16 P-F T.

Independent self-sufficiency (NF) *versus* lack of resolution (F). 16 P-F T.

Will control and character stability (NF) *versus* lack of will control and character stability (F). 16 P-F T.

*Not Related*

Cyclothymia *versus* schizothymia. 16 P-F T.

Dominance or ascendance *versus* submission. 16 P-F T.

Surgency *versus* desurgency, or depressive anxiety. 16 P-F T.

Character or super-ego strength *versus* lack of internal standards. 16 P-F T.

Emotional sensitivity *versus* tough maturity. 16 P-F T.

Paranoid schizothymia *versus* trustful altruism. 16 P-F T.

Hysteric unconcern *versus* practical concernedness. 16 P-F T.

Sophistication *versus* rough simplicity. 16 P-F T.

Anxious insecurity *versus* placid self-confidence. 16 P-F T.

Radicalism *versus* conservatism. 16 P-F T.

Nervous tension *versus* lack of nervous tension. 16 P-F T.

General intelligence. GFIQT.

\*(NF): Characteristic of boys not planning to farm. (F): Characteristic of boys planning to farm. Other abbreviations are identified in the text.

These data appear to show that the average Lenawee County youth who plans to farm is one who lacks self-control and is either disinterested in people or is afraid of them, while the youth who plans to leave farming is confident of himself and of his relations with others,

and is actively interested in people and things outside himself. This suggests that the one who plans to leave farming is most capable of adapting to new situations and new people.

The section called *Social Context Variables and Plans Regarding Farming as a Vocation* is concerned with differences in the social situations of those who do and do not plan to farm. The parents of the boys who plan to farm tend to have relatively low levels of college or university educational aspiration as well as low levels of occupational aspiration for them. In addition, those who plan to farm tend to be members of small (three siblings or less) families. The other social context variables tested—family socioeconomic status, father's education, father's occupational prestige position (many fathers have more than one occupation), whether or not the family owns the farm, and the occupational prestige position of the fathers of the subjects' best friends—are not related to the plan regarding farming.

#### SOCIAL CONTEXT VARIABLES AND PLANS REGARDING FARMING AS A VOCATION

##### *Related*

Parental levels of educational aspiration for the youth "high" (NF) versus "low" (F). *OPMY*.

Parental levels of occupational aspiration for the youth "high" (NF) versus "low" (F). *OPMY*.

Sib group size "small" (F) versus "large" (NF). *OPMY*.

##### *Not Related*

Family's socioeconomic status (consumption level scale scores) "high" versus "low." *OPMY*.

Paternal occupational prestige status "high" versus "low". *OPMY*.

Family's farm tenancy status owner versus renter. *OPMY*.

Best friends' fathers' occupational prestige status "high" versus "low." *OPMY*.

Thus the data show that of all Lenawee County farm youth, those most likely to choose to leave farming are the ones whose parents hope to see them become relatively well educated and to see them enter relatively high-level occupations. Those planning to farm are the opposite. The data regarding family size and farm plans are probably a reflection of the greater accessibility of a farm to persons perceiving themselves as having fewer competitors for it.

The last section to be examined concerns *Educational and Occupational Orientation Variables and Plans Regarding Farming as a Vocation*. The data show that boys planning to farm tend to view change as undesirable, to be wholly committed to farming as their one vocational choice, to have low levels of college or university educational aspiration, to have low general social prestige levels of occupational aspiration, to

believe that college or university training is not needed by farm boys who do not plan to farm, and to have taken relatively more course work in agriculture. Conversely, those who do not plan to farm tend to think of change as a good thing, to be less committed to any one vocational choice (thus being psychologically prepared to utilize different opportunities), to have high levels of college or university educational aspiration, to have high general social prestige levels of occupational aspiration, to believe that college or university training is needed by farm boys who do not plan to farm, and to take less course work in agriculture (and, of course, more in other areas).

### EDUCATIONAL AND OCCUPATIONAL ORIENTATION VARIABLES AND PLANS REGARDING FARMING AS A VOCATION

#### *Related*

- Evaluation of change positive (NF) *versus* negative (F). *WBC-L.*
- Degree of commitment to a particular vocational choice "high" (F) *versus* "low" (NF). *OPMY.*
- Level of college or university educational aspiration "high" (NF) *versus* "low" (F). *OPMY.*
- Level of nonfarm occupational aspiration "high" (NF) *versus* "low" (F). *OPMY.*
- Belief that college or university training is needed (NF) *versus* not needed (F) by boys not planning to farm. *ENFB.*
- Number of agriculture courses completed in high school "few" (NF) *versus* "many" (F). *School records.*

#### *Not Related*

- Orientation to work instrumental *versus* expressive. *WBC-L.*
- Evaluation of punctuality positive *versus* negative. *WBC-L.*
- Attitude toward migrating positive *versus* negative. *WBC-L.*
- Belief that events are determined by external *versus* internal forces. *WBC-L.*
- Attitude toward deferring gratification positive *versus* negative. *WBC-L.*
- Belief that college or university training is needed *versus* not needed by boys planning to farm. *ENFB.*
- Performance in school subjects "good" *versus* "poor." *School records.*

The two groups do not differ on the degree to which they believe work serves expressive rather than purely instrumental purposes, on evaluation of punctuality, on attitude toward migrating, on the belief that forces external to the self determine the course of events, on their attitudes toward deferring gratification,<sup>13</sup> on the degree to which they

<sup>13</sup>Sverre Lysgaard, "Social Stratification and the Deferred Gratification Pattern," *Transactions of the Second World Congress of Sociology*, pp. 364-377.



believe that college or university training is needed by farm boys who plan to be farmers, and on the adequacy of their performance in school subjects.

These data thus appear to show that the boy who plans to farm tends to have beliefs and aspirations which are not well suited to success in pursuits other than farming. The boy who plans to leave farming tends to have the opposite characteristics. Of special importance to the ensuing discussion is the fact that the two groups do not differ regarding the amount of college or university education believed to be necessary for boys planning to farm; they agree that he does not need much. But they differ regarding the amount of college or university education believed to be necessary for boys *not* planning to farm.<sup>14</sup>

### INTERPRETATION

The objective of this paper is to explore differences among farm boys who do and do not plan to farm in a rich agricultural area in the hinterland of the Detroit urban-industrial area, so as to formulate a tentative explanation for the low levels of nonfarm occupational aspiration of farm-reared people. In turn, this explanation may be coupled with the known relationship between level of occupational and educational aspiration and levels of occupational achievement of farm-reared boys. In a few words, the interpretation proposed depends upon the effective environment of farm boys, their differential reactions to it, the occupational self-conceptions which result from this, and the information-seeking behaviors which result from their self-conceptions.

*The effective environment:* Despite full coverage by the mass media, despite the proximity of the urban-industrial area, and despite the adequacy of the schools, most farm people appear to be more nearly oriented to life-styles and beliefs relevant to agriculture than to other ways of life. The farm-reared boy is therefore reared in an effective environment which tends not to utilize the information available about the urban world of work. The belief that change is of doubtful value and the belief that boys who do not plan to farm need little college or university training are cases in point. Straus makes a similar observation among Washington farm boys: those who plan to farm have values functionally useful to farming. These may or may not be useful in the nonfarm world.<sup>15</sup> It appears, then, that farm people tend not to be aware of the objective requirements of the nonfarm world of work. Yet these are the people who usually provide the effective learning environments for the farm youth. They are the people whose

<sup>14</sup>See I. W. Miller, "Educational Beliefs and Educational Aspirations of Farm Youth" (East Lansing: Social Research Service, Michigan State University, Oct., 1958 [mimeo.]).

<sup>15</sup>Murray A. Straus, "Personal Characteristics and Functional Needs in the Choice of Farming as an Occupation," *Rural Sociology*, 21 (1956), 257-266.

opinions he trusts. The normal case is to be like those upon whom one depends. If one's reference groups are satisfied farmers, he will conceive of himself as a farmer-to-be; that is, he will plan to be a farmer. But if he does, he will exhibit the other characteristics typical of his reference groups, including a relatively low awareness of nonfarm occupational requirements.

*Differential reactions to the effective environment:* The person who must be accounted for is the one who does not plan to farm. The data suggest three kinds of things which may result in planning not to farm: (1) the development of an unusually well-controlled, independent, and inquisitive personality, probably as a consequence of early training; (2) being a son of parents who are more oriented toward the nonfarm world than is usual; (3) perceiving farming as being an unattainable occupation. The personality data in this study clearly support the first of these points, and data from another source corroborate part of it: Ramsey's study among Wisconsin farm boys shows a personality variable called "self-reliance" to be related to planning not to farm.<sup>16</sup> The third point is not so clearly supported by these data. But it is highly plausible, and the one bit of inferential evidence available is consistent with it: the fewer the number of siblings who could be competitors for the family farm, the greater the probability that the youth will plan to enter farming. This is a relatively accurate assessment of a highly competitive situation. Farms can be bought, but their cost in Lenawee County is many thousands of dollars, so inheritance is the most likely way of gaining one. Moreover, the number of sons of farmers greatly exceeds the number of farms available, even including those that may be rented.

*Occupational self-conceptions:* Probably the early expectation of most farm boys is that they will be farmers someday. Since their early vocational self-conceptions appear to be dependent upon what is presented to them in the effective environment, and since in occupations this is nearly exclusively farming, it is to be expected that in so far as they have any occupational self-conception at all, it will be that of the farmer. That is, the farm boy who has no stimulus to grow away from farming maintains and probably strengthens his initial self-concept of farmer-to-be. On the other hand, as time goes on, those who are unusually self-reliant and inquisitive begin to utilize more and more of the occupational information generally available, depending more and more on reference groups beyond the family, and thus begin to perceive new occupational alternatives. Others, those whose parents want them to be more successful than is possible in farming,

<sup>16</sup>Charles E. Ramsey, "Vocational Intentions of Wisconsin Farm Boys" (Doctoral dissertation, University of Wisconsin, 1952).

are consciously trained to look to the nonfarm world for their occupations. Still others begin to look to nonfarm occupations because they believe farming is not accessible to them. The outcome of all three of these is the development of self-conception as nonfarmer.

*Information-seeking behaviors:* In contrast to the effective environment of farm youth, the general environment in Lenawee County is saturated with information relevant for learning about the requirements of the urban-industrial occupational world. All of the boys in the sample have been exposed to this information in the schools, in Detroit, and in the county's towns and cities. Yet only some of the boys use it. The occupational self-conception appears to be the central factor which determines the extent to which the available information is utilized to raise levels of educational and occupational aspiration. That is, the emerging nonfarm occupational self-conception cannot be actualized without changes in other orientations to the world of work. When a boy plans not to farm he is therefore more attentive to the requirements for success in the nonfarm world. This accounts for the higher levels of educational and occupational aspiration and for the readiness to utilize opportunities (occupational flexibility) characteristic of those not planning to farm, as well as the more obvious tendency for them to take fewer agricultural courses in school. On the other hand, the boys who see themselves as farmers-to-be simply are not attentive to the available information about the requirements for success in the nonfarm occupational world. This accounts for their generally lower levels of aspiration and for their occupational inflexibility. This is most strikingly shown by the data on beliefs about education needed for farming and for nonfarmers. Boys who plan not to farm tend to believe that all who plan not to farm need higher education, and boys who plan to farm deny it; yet both groups believe that college or university training is not needed for boys who plan to farm. Clearly, the occupational importance of higher education is more apparent to those who are least identified with farming.

For these reasons, it is hypothesized that the one who plans not to farm is, by virtue of his occupational self-conception, more highly motivated to seek out information which will enable him to be a success in the nonfarm occupational world.

#### SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

Previous research has shown that farm-reared people tend not to be successful in the urban-industrial occupational world. It has also been shown previously that levels of educational and occupational achievement are positively correlated with levels of educational and occupational aspiration. It has been speculated, therefore, that farm people

tend to have lower levels of educational and occupational aspiration owing, presumably, to the lack of information available in most areas. Other previous papers have shown that in the industrial North of the United States the crucial variable is the plan to farm, for all of the apparent relationship of farm residence to low levels of aspiration is accounted for by farm plans.

The present paper has attempted to explore data on farm boys in a rich agricultural and light-industrial county near Detroit in the hope of formulating an explanation for the influence of planning to farm on low levels of aspiration, and the development of the plan to farm itself. This plan, interpreted as a self-conception influencing the learning of available occupational information, is the pivotal element in the proposed explanation. Since farms are available to only a fraction of those who plan to farm, it follows that many will have to take non-farm work. If they do not change their plans before marriage and family intervene, they will undoubtedly enter and remain in the lower levels of the nonfarm occupational world.

If this analysis is correct, and if it is not restricted to the United States, the urban-industrial society which wishes to make fullest effective use of, and give the greatest personal satisfaction to, its excess farm youth will be well advised to develop occupational counseling techniques specifically designed to rearrange their normal occupational self-concepts. Such counseling measures should be directed particularly at those farm boys who unrealistically plan to be farmers. Their main aim should be to make the youth somewhat doubtful of the possibility of entering farming—that is, to prevent the development of an inflexible self-conception of farmer-to-be. A change in the self-conception should be sufficient to activate the information-seeking tendencies in the person, thus resulting in increased levels of educational and occupational aspiration.

The quasi-experimental conditions which dictated the selection of Lenawee County are believed to be quite generally relevant for agriculture in other urban-industrial societies. Nevertheless, we cannot be sure that this is true. Moreover, the study is exploratory, yielding hypotheses derived out of data, rather than tested hypotheses. For these reasons the conclusions are tentative. The explanation proposed should be retested under similar conditions in other areas. Also, studies should be undertaken to test the explanation's efficiency in predicting occupational achievement. And, since the explanation concerns the development of occupational self-concepts, it follows that longitudinal research specifically designed to study the development of occupational self-concepts should be undertaken. In the meantime, experiments in changing occupational self-concepts should be undertaken to see whether in fact they result in the predicted changes in

information-seeking behaviors. Finally, this tentative explanation is intended for use among literate farm people of urban-industrial societies. In its present form it probably does not apply to the people of peasant societies. Nevertheless, it may be useful to explore the possibility that differential self-conceptions influence the utilization of occupational information among agricultural people of societies now undergoing industrialization. If self-conceptions are found to perform a similar motivational function under these conditions, it may be that techniques designed to change them can help such societies to develop effective labor forces. Also, it may well be that Lipset's hypothesis is valid in less highly industrialized economies.<sup>17</sup> Naturally, it is entirely possible that the factors in his explanation and those in the explanation presented here may operate together under some circumstances.

<sup>17</sup>In fact, it has been found that even in Florida, which is certainly not an undeveloped area, Lipset's explanation appears to be more nearly valid than our research shows it to be. See Russell Middleton and Charles M. Grigg, "Rural-Urban Differences in Aspirations," *Rural Sociology*, 24 (1959), 347-354.